

September 13, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy,

As we made clear this past May when you announced the debt ceiling agreement with President Biden, and as we reiterated again in [June](#) and [July](#), our Coalition stands ready to put partisanship aside and find common ground to fund the federal government and deliver on behalf of the American people. Unfortunately, the House majority has decided to abrogate the May agreement, and now seems willing to disregard its responsibility to ensure the uninterrupted operations of the government. Looking ahead to the September work period and looming fiscal deadline, it is imperative that we find a path to reach a constructive outcome.

Per the May agreement, the Senate Appropriations Committee has successfully reported out all 12 appropriations bills on a strong bipartisan basis and is beginning floor consideration. These bills include funding levels that reflect the bipartisan, bicameral budget caps enacted in the debt ceiling deal that you negotiated with President Biden and which we supported.

In stark contrast to the Senate's bipartisan approach, the House Appropriations Committee has run an entirely partisan process and has consequently failed to report out all of its funding legislation. The bills the Committee has been able to advance have passed along strictly partisan lines and include unnecessary "culture war" poison pills that leave the associated legislation with no chance of becoming law. Even more alarming, the funding levels enacted by these bills reflect a deeply unserious, hyperpartisan approach to governing — for example, the proposed Agriculture appropriations bill slashes funding by over 30% compared to FY23 levels, to a funding level not seen since 2007. If enacted, these bills would make deep cuts to critical federal programs, including programs that fund local police departments, invest in critical transportation and infrastructure projects, and make housing more affordable for families.

We urge you to reject the hyperpartisan approach and focus on passing government funding legislation that can actually become law. In the absence of viable appropriations bills from the House Appropriations Committee, we urge you to, at the very least, bring bills similar to the bipartisan bills that have already passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee for a vote on the House Floor. Whether the Senate bills pass or fail, all Representatives — Republicans and Democrats — deserve the opportunity to show their constituents that they are working to responsibly keep the government open.

In addition, recognizing that the House and Senate are unlikely to finish consideration of regular appropriations bills by the fiscal year-end deadline, the House should expediently consider legislation in

order to avert a government shutdown. Furthermore, any stop-gap bill should include President Biden's supplemental appropriations request to fund critical domestic and international priorities, from recent natural disasters and the fentanyl crisis, to the ongoing fight to protect Ukrainian freedom and sovereignty.

Finally, Congress must pass extensions of critical federal programs set to expire, including Farm Bill programs, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the National Flood Insurance Program.

As Members of Congress, our most basic duty is to keep the government running. Once again, as we face the looming deadline of September 30, we stand ready to work on a bipartisan, bicameral basis to uphold our responsibilities as lawmakers and ensure our government works on behalf of our constituents.

Sincerely,

Bradley Schneider, Vice Chair for Communications of the New Democrat Coalition

Ann McLane Kuster, Chair of the New Democrat Coalition

Derek Kilmer, Vice Chair for Policy of the New Democrat Coalition

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