

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 7, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen Chairman Committee on Appropriations U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen:

On April 26, 2018, the Legislative Branch Subcommittee considered the fiscal year (FY) 2019 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill. The Administration recognizes that the Legislative Branch needs adequate funding to maintain operations and ensure the safety and security of Members of Congress, their staff, and visitors, and appreciates the opportunity to weigh in on this bill.

The President's 2019 Budget request, as amended, accounts for the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA's) new defense and non-defense discretionary spending caps for FY 2019. The Administration strongly supports the overall defense levels included in the BBA. However, given the Nation's long-term fiscal constraints and the need to right-size the Federal Government, the Administration does not support spending at the BBA's non-defense caps.

The President's 2019 Budget reflected the Administration's view that spending for the Legislative Branch should be restrained. As the Committee knows, the Budget includes an adjustment to the Legislative Branch's overall budget request to bring it in line with other non-Defense discretionary spending; in total, the Subcommittee bill is \$327 million over the level assumed in the 2019 Budget. The Administration appreciates the opportunity to highlight several accounts in the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill that are not in line with this approach. Notably:

- The Subcommittee bill includes a \$32 million increase for House Salaries and Expenses compared to FY 2018, nearly a third of which is to increase Members' Representational Allowances, which Members are allowed to use for personnel compensation; travel; rent, utilities, and communications; printing and reproduction; and franked mail, among other things.
- The Subcommittee bill provides \$642 million to the Architect of the Capitol (excluding Senate-only projects), a \$32 million increase above FY 2018 Enacted, including nearly \$95 million to continue the restoration and renovation of the Cannon House Office Building and Rayburn House Office Building Garage.

- The Subcommittee bill earmarks \$20 million to enhance public exhibits and visitor services at the Library of Congress, which is on top of \$10 million provided for similar purposes in FY 2018.
- While funding for the Government Accountability Office (GAO) is flat with the FY 2018 level at \$579 million, this is only because the Subcommittee bill maintains \$10 million in funding that was for one-time 2018 investments to fund 80 additional FTE in FY 2019.

As the Committee takes up the Legislative Branch Subcommittee bill, the Administration looks forward to working with you to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Mick Mulvaney Director

cc: The Honorable Kevin Yoder The Honorable Tim Ryan

Identical Letter Sent to The Honorable Nita Lowey