



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

March 22, 2018
(House Floor)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1625 – Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018
(Rep. Frelinghuysen, R-NJ)

The Administration supports passage of the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 1625, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018. In accordance with the spending levels set by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, the bill provides \$1.3 trillion in discretionary funding for fiscal year (FY) 2018, including adjustments, with \$695 billion for national defense and \$600 billion for non-defense activities. While the bill is far from perfect, it funds numerous critical Administration priorities, including rebuilding the military, securing the border, combatting the opioid crisis, promoting school safety, empowering American working families, and providing a robust investment in infrastructure.

Since day one, the President and his Administration have been committed to ensuring the American military remains the strongest in the world. The bill supports an overall funding level of \$665 billion for the Department of Defense, including \$599 billion in base discretionary funds and \$66 billion in Global War on Terror/Overseas Contingency Operations funds. This tremendous investment in our Armed Forces includes a 2.4 percent pay raise for the troops, the largest since 2010; \$144 billion for new and upgraded platforms, weapons, and equipment, an increase of over \$20 billion from FY 2017; and funding for ongoing operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other adversaries around the world. Pursuant to the National Defense Strategy, these funds would ensure our military is postured to combat the full spectrum of threats we face today, invest in domains central to tomorrow's conflicts such as space and cyber, sustain American influence globally, and safeguard the free and open international order.

The bill provides a down payment on the President's promise to secure our borders. It provides \$1.6 billion for physical barriers and associated technology along the Southwest border, funding 110 miles of border wall system. However, it fails to fund the highest priority areas identified by border security professionals with decades of experience, areas where this investment is needed most and will have the most significant impact. It also increases funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement by 10 percent. The Administration is deeply disappointed in those Members of Congress who recklessly set funding for detention beds below levels that the Department of Homeland Security deems necessary to detain illegal aliens and enforce our Nation's laws. Without reservation, the Administration will execute its immigration enforcement mission, using all available authorities and resources.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act provides \$4 billion in high priority investments to fund the President's Opioid Initiative and combat this growing crisis. These resources will expand access

to prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. It also includes \$330 million for Department of Justice grant programs that support drug courts, treatment, and law enforcement and community responses, \$130 million for the Rural Communities Opioid Response program, and \$386 million for opioid-related programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). In addition, the bill prioritizes funding at the Department of Justice for the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Organized Drug Enforcement Task Force for fighting drug addiction and the opioid crisis.

The Administration appreciates that the bill provides robust funding levels for infrastructure. This includes \$635 million in rural broadband, \$500 million for rural water and wastewater grants and loans, and \$2 billion to repair and enhance VA medical facilities and State Veterans Homes. The bill also includes substantial increases for core infrastructure, such as highways, airports, railways, and waterways. The Administration also appreciates that the Congress has chosen to channel a significant share of this increase to competitive, merit-based infrastructure grant programs without providing an unfair advantage to certain projects.

The Administration is strongly supportive of both the *STOP School Violence Act* and the *Fix NICS Act* and appreciates their inclusion in the bill, along with other funding for critical public and school safety programs across the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice. The bill includes additional resources to improve school safety, including \$75 million to support the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative, full funding for mental health programs authorized in the *21st Century Cures Act*, and increased funding for research grants to improve bullying prevention, counseling, gang enforcement, and training for school personnel. The bill also includes funding to improve the National Instant Criminal Background System (NICS), and to incentivize States to submit complete, accurate, and timely records.

The bill helps American families secure better jobs by increasing funding for apprenticeships—an effective earn and learn training approach—by more than 50 percent. The bill also provides significant new investments in child care, including nearly \$2.4 billion in additional funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, which will help families access and afford the care they need while they work, go to school, or enroll in job training.

The bill also advances the President's historic *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act* by providing resources for implementation of the tax law, as well as addressing an unintended problem with section 199(A) that created market distortions in farm country. Further, the creation of a new wildfire suppression cap adjustment and accompanying land management reforms will improve the Federal Government's ability to prevent and respond to wildfires.

The Administration also commends the Congress for including the *Taylor Force Act*, which prohibits most U.S. foreign assistance that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority (PA) until the PA ends the abhorrent practice of providing payments to terrorists and their families in reward for acts of violence.

The Administration is strongly supportive of the *CLOUD Act*, which empowers law enforcement to better protect the public from serious crime and terrorism and will improve international comity.

A strong military and secure border are the centerpieces of the Administration's efforts to keep the Nation safe. H.R. 1625, the product of negotiation and compromise, includes wasteful spending increases in order to secure bipartisan support. The funding it provides would advance our national security and support numerous other Administration priorities.

If H.R. 1625 were presented to the President in its current form, his advisors would recommend that he sign the bill into law.

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