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**U.S. House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC

**COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

CHAIRMAN,  
LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
EDUCATION

DEFENSE

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE

April 3, 2024

Dear Colleague,

One of the benefits of being in Congress as long as I have is that I can recall a time when the Appropriations bills would individually come to the Floor and garner over 300 votes.

Times have certainly changed.

The bills now are rolled in to some variation of an omnibus so frequently that we now have different names for them: omnibus, "CRomnibus", "minibus", and other labels that simply indicate failure.

This year's final appropriations package, H.R. 2882, was the product of a broken process which the current Leadership inherited last fall, that simply did not improve over the ensuing time. Speaker Johnson and others in Republican Leadership tried diligently to get a better deal with the Senate; however, the real problem is that the underlying process to produce the bills is fundamentally flawed.

On the day of the vote, Chairwoman Granger announced that she is stepping down as Chair of the Appropriations Committee. She and Vice Chairman Tom Cole have done an admirable job over the past years in averting one crisis after another, and for that I think we owe a debt of gratitude for their service.

This Congress has proven reforms to our appropriations process are needed and cannot be delayed any longer. Our well-intentioned goals of passing appropriations bills through regular order and on schedule, while also preventing divisive provisions from finding their way into the bills, have thus far failed.

A change in the appropriations Committee Leadership, however, presents a perfect opportunity to change the process. The bottom line? We cannot continue to go down the same path and expect a different outcome. The Appropriations process must change. It starts with transparency and trust.

While I know that some have criticized my efforts in making some controversial provisions known to Members of our Conference, I believe it is my duty as a Cardinal - and Chairman of the Labor-HHS Subcommittee - to make concerns within the conferenced version of my subcommittee's bill known prior to consideration on the House Floor. I would expect no less from my colleagues. We have a responsibility to the Conference.

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Simply put, we often ask Members to take what some believe to be tough votes. We cannot in good conscience ask our colleagues to do that without them fully knowing what is inside the bill. You deserve to vote based on facts. Based on the bill contents. Period.

We cannot continue to push the boundaries of what Members will or will not accept without first understanding what we are trying to accomplish as a Conference. Instead of hastily selecting a new Appropriations Chair, I believe that now is the time to focus on correcting the process and developing our theory of government on how we will manage our responsibilities. Our Conference must work together to define a clear direction forward before choosing a Chairman to lead us there.

I believe that there is a path to restore the trust of our Conference and our constituents in the appropriations process. I believe there is a path to involve more of our Conference in improving and strengthening this process. I remain committed to working with my colleagues - appropriators and authorizers alike - to find common ground and create a comprehensive approach towards fixing our appropriations process with a focus on restoring regular order, strengthening bipartisanship, and promoting fiscal responsibility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert B. Aderholt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "A".

Robert B. Aderholt  
Member of Congress