

Conservative “Wins” in the FY15 Omnibus Bill

Below is a list of some of the major “wins” in the omnibus that address important national and conservative priorities.

Nullifies the President’s Budget. For years the president has tried to “reprogram” funding to use our tax dollars as he sees fit. In order to stop the damage the president is doing to our country, [I included language in the bill that will nullify the president’s budget and force the federal agencies to follow the budget passed by Congress.](#) Bill, page 649.

Protects Retiree Pension Plans. More than a million Americans currently have their retirement savings in multiemployer pension plans that are on the verge of collapse. The failure of these plans will bankrupt the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC). If the PBGC collapses, all 10 million workers with a multiemployer pension – even those in currently healthy plans – will be put at risk, leaving many retirees with nothing. House conservatives added language to the omnibus that will help ensure that workers and retirees in these plans get the benefits they are expecting. [The language in the omnibus saves these pension plans without a federal bailout and requires that plan participants approve any proposed benefit changes.](#)

Blocks New Funding for Obamacare. House conservatives blocked the President’s efforts to fully fund Obamacare. The bill includes no new funding for Obamacare.

Limits the Ability of the Administration to Implement Obamacare. House conservatives limited funding for the primary agency responsible for issuing new Obamacare regulations. The bill freezes funds for the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) in an effort to limit CMS’s ability to issue burdensome new Obamacare regulations. Bill, page 889.

Restricts the Ability of the Administration to Enforce Obamacare. House conservatives succeeded in [slashing funding for the IRS – cutting the Department’s budget by \\$345.6 million.](#) This level of funding is \$1.2 billion below what the IRS’s budget was when Obamacare was signed into law and \$1.5 billion below the President’s budget request for FY15. Bill, page 516.

Stops the Obamacare Insurance Company Bailout. House conservatives succeeded in completely eliminating Obamacare’s so-called “risk-corridors” program. President Obama created this program to protect health insurance companies from financial losses that they faced by selling insurance through the new Obamacare exchanges. [According to an estimate compiled by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, this bailout would cost taxpayers at least \\$775 million.](#) By eliminating the program, this bill [stops Obamacare’s taxpayer bailout of insurance companies.](#) Bill, page 892.

Cuts Funding for the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) Death Panel Rationing Board. IPAB was created by Obamacare to recommend Medicare cuts if health care spending grows too fast. This bill [reduces funding for IPAB by \\$10 million.](#) Bill, page 960. Report, page 173.

Requires Administration to Provide Information Needed to Fully Defund Obamacare. House conservatives included language in the omnibus requiring the administration to disclose how it is spending federal funds to implement Obamacare. Bill, page 884-885 and page 891.

Prohibits the Administration from Using the Prevention and Public Health Fund to Implement Obamacare. When Obamacare was signed into law, it included billions for a so-called “Prevention and Public Health Fund” that Democrats claimed funded public health programs and research. In reality, the administration has used this money to avoid restrictions in previous appropriations bills and to divert

money from public health to implement Obamacare. This bill prohibits the Secretary of Health and Human Services from transferring any additional money out of the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Bill, page 886. Report, page 86-87.

Requires the Administration to Disclose How Many People Are Being Paid to Implement Obamacare.

This important provision will add much-needed transparency to the administration's efforts to hide the true cost of Obamacare. Bill, page 887-888.

Prohibits the Administration from Using Federal Funds to Lobby for Obamacare. This bill stops the administration from using our hard earned tax dollars to lobby individuals, state officials, and federal officials regarding provisions included in Obamacare. Bill, page 948.

Protects Americans Living Overseas from Obamacare. The bill modifies the treatment of expatriate health plans under Obamacare with regard to the minimum essential coverage requirements. This would allow American insurance companies to continue to sell health care policies to Americans who are living overseas. Bill, pages 1586-1598.

Reining in the IRS. The bill prohibits the IRS from hosting lavish conferences, creating inappropriate videos, as well as from targeting groups for scrutiny based on their political beliefs. Bill, pages 520-521.

Prohibits "Fast and Furious" Operations by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Between 2009-2011, the Phoenix division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms allowed illegal gun sales to Mexican drug cartels to occur in a botched effort to track the purchasers. This resulted in the distribution of approximately 1,400 weapons into the hands of dangerous criminals. Some of these weapons even caused the death of U.S. Border Patrol Agents. This cannot be allowed to happen again, and [I included language that would prevent the federal government from distributing weapons to drug cartels](#). Bill, page 169-170.

Includes Funding for Border Agents. Maintains the funding increase that House conservatives included in last year's appropriations bill for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) so that CBP could hire 2,000 additional officers. The current funding allows CBP to maintain its highest operational force levels in history – 21,370 Border Patrol agents and 23,775 CBP officers. Bill, page 1584-1585.

Includes Funding for Immigration Enforcement. Maintains the funding increase for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that House conservatives included in last year's bill. This funding ensures that ICE has the resources they need for visa overstay enforcement and deportations. It also continues the existing requirement that ICE maintain 34,000 detention beds. Bill, page 1584-1585.

Strengthens the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. The State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) is a federal program designed to help states and localities with the costs of incarcerating illegal alien criminals. The bill provides \$185 million in funding for the program. Bill, page 151.

Includes Funding for New Immigration Judges & the Office of Immigration Review. With the recent surge in illegal immigrants crossing our southern border, it is critically important that we have the resources available to process illegal aliens and remove them from our country. The Office of Immigration Review's primary responsibility is to conduct removal proceedings, and House conservatives included \$351 million in the bill for removal proceedings. Bill, pages 128-129.

Blocks All Funding to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The bill provides no funds for the IMF. Report, page 73.

Prohibits the Administration from Implementing the Anti-Gun UN “Arms Trade Treaty.” The UN’s “Arms Trade Treaty” would infringe upon the rights of law abiding American gun owners. While Secretary Kerry signed the treaty, it has yet to be ratified by the Senate. The language included in the omnibus blocks President Obama from enforcing the treaty until it has been ratified by the Senate, as required by the Constitution. This language was added to the bill by House conservatives and will ensure that our Second Amendment rights are protected. Bill, page 1350.

Protects Second Amendment Rights. Our Second Amendment right to bear arms is fundamental to our American way of life. House conservatives included several provisions in the bill to protect our Second Amendment rights:

- **Prohibits the EPA from Regulating Lead Content in Ammunition.** The EPA is trying to prohibit the sale of ammunition and fishing tackle that contains lead. This bill blocks their efforts and will allow ammunition and fishing tackle to be freely sold. Bill, page 793.
- **Allows Firearms to be Imported.** Recently, the Obama Administration has tried to prohibit individuals from importing firearms that have “non-sporting” features, or that are antique or of other value to collectors. [I worked with my colleagues to include language that would allow these firearms to continue to be imported and legally sold in the United States.](#) Bill, pages 212 and 202.

Blocks Implementation of the Obama Administration’s Carbon Tax. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been attempting to tax individuals, businesses, and industry based on a flawed formula called the “Social Cost of Carbon.” The science behind this carbon tax is faulty and the process by which it is determined has not been transparent. This carbon tax has the potential to derail our economy, with no proven value to our environment. [I included language that will block its implementation.](#) House Report, page 28 (Energy & Water) and page 64 (Interior).

Cuts Funding for the EPA. For the fifth consecutive year, House conservatives have cut funding for the EPA. This bill reduces funding for the EPA by \$60 million below last year’s level. Since House conservatives took back the majority in 2010, we have cut the EPA’s budget by 21 percent (a total of \$2.2 billion in cuts). These funding levels have forced the EPA to reduce staffing by more than 2,000 positions, bringing staffing to the lowest level since 1989. Bill, page 726.

Prohibits the EPA From Regulating Puddles, Ponds, and Ditches. Stops the EPA and the US Army Corps of Engineers from expanding the definition of “water” under the Clean Water Act. This will block the so-called “Waters of the USA” rule from taking effect and will protect property owners, farmers, and ranchers from overregulation and burdensome federal mandates. Bill, pages 444-445.

Allows the Sale of Incandescent Light Bulbs. Prohibits the administration from implementing former Speaker Pelosi’s ban on the sale and use of incandescent light bulbs. Report, page 54.

Decreases Our Dependence on Foreign Oil. It is critical that our nation develop reliable domestic sources of energy that do not require high rates of taxpayer subsidization. This legislation includes \$571 million for research and development to advance coal, natural gas, oil, and other fossil energy technologies. Investments like these will help our country make better use of our own domestic resources, making us more energy independent and secure. Report, page 38.

Increases Resources Available to Expedite Domestic Oil and Gas Drilling. This bill blocks the administration’s proposal to impose burdensome new fees on onshore oil and gas producers. It also provides the resources needed to expedite onshore oil and gas production. The [president’s recent video announcement that he is blocking oil and gas drilling in Bristol Bay, Alaska](#) illustrates just how important these provisions are. Report, page 55.

Fully Funds Pay Raise for Our Troops. Fully funds a one percent pay raise for the military and includes \$128 billion to provide pay for 1,310,680 active-duty troops and 820,800 reserves. Report, page 10.

Increases Military Readiness. Includes \$161.7 billion for our military's operation and maintenance – \$1.8 billion above last year's level. Within this amount, funding is prioritized for key areas such as essential readiness programs to prepare our troops for combat and peacetime missions, flight time and battle training, equipment and facility maintenance, and base operations. Bill, pages 267-278.

Funds Additional Virginia Class Submarines. With national security threats emerging throughout the world, it is more important than ever to deter our enemies with state of the art military capabilities. Fast attack submarines are critical to maintaining our nation's deterrent posture, and [I worked with my colleagues to include \\$5.8 billion total to invest in adding more of these swift, highly capable vessels to our fleet in the coming years.](#) Bill, page 284.

Increases Funding for National Security and Weapons Activities. Provides a total of \$11.4 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration to maintain the safety, security, and readiness of the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile. This is a \$387 million increase above last year's level. \$8.2 billion of the funding for the National Nuclear Security Administration is allocated for weapons activities that uphold the nation's nuclear deterrence posture. Report, page 55.

- **B61 Nuclear Bombs-** Provides \$643 million to extend the life of B61 nuclear bombs. Report, page 107.
- **Cruise Missile Warhead-** \$9.4 million is allocated to extend the life span of cruise missile warheads. Report, page 88.
- **Naval Reactors-** Provides \$1.2 billion in funding for naval reactors. This money will go towards supporting the Ohio-replacement ballistic missile submarine and to address aging nuclear infrastructure. Report, page 88.

Prohibits the Transfer or Release of Guantanamo Detainees into the United States. Blocks the president from transferring Guantanamo detainees to the U.S. or its territories, and prohibits funding to modify any facility in the U.S. to house detainees. In addition, the bill includes restrictions on the release of detainees to other countries. Bill, pages 208-209.

Rejects the Administration's Efforts to Decrease Funding for Embassy Security. The bill rejects the President's proposed reductions to embassy security. It also provides necessary funding to prevent and protect against future terrorist attacks, unrest, and other acts of violence. It also contains funding to address instability in the Middle East – including assistance to key allies such as Israel and Jordan – and additional funding for Ukraine and other countries in the region to counter Russian aggression. Report, page 8.

Increases Funding for Israel's Iron Dome. Israel is one of our nation's greatest allies, and its continued presence lends stability to an unstable part of the world. It is important for our national security that we support Israel's efforts to defend against those who would destroy it, and [I worked with my colleagues in the House to include more than \\$350 million in funding for its Iron Dome missile defense system.](#) Bill, page 353.

Ensures Congressional Oversight on Iran Negotiations. Requires the Secretary of State to inform Congress about the ongoing nuclear negotiations in order to prevent the administration from conducting these negotiations unilaterally. Bill, page 1247.

Includes Limits on Foreign Aid Sent to the Palestinian Authority. Even if the Palestinian Authority succeeds in joining the UN, this bill would prohibit the Palestinian Authority from receiving any U.S. aid

until they reach an agreement with Israel. In addition, the bill prohibits foreign aid for Hamas. Bill, pages 1256-1259.

Requires the VA and DoD to Develop an Interoperable Electronic Health Record. For years, Congress has mandated that the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs integrate their health records systems to ensure service men and women who are transitioning into veteran status can continue to get the medical care that they need in the most effective manner. Both departments ignored Congress and failed to work together until, as Chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, [I started fencing off money from VA and DoD telecommunications budgets](#). Simply put, they only get their money each quarter if they report to Congress their progress towards a fully integrated health records system. This has been the single most effective tool of the appropriations process, and I assure you I will continue to use the power of the purse to ensure the federal government does its job. Bill, pages 295-296.

Establishes a Pilot Program to Allow Volunteer Physicians at VA Facilities. I met with Dr. Beth Edeiken at MD Anderson this summer, and she expressed frustration that she and many of her colleagues had been turned down when they attempted to volunteer their time and expertise at local VA hospitals. With the waiting lists and staffing shortages at veterans hospitals, the VA should be accessing a resource that is available in communities nation-wide. [I included language that will require the VA to accept the services of volunteer physicians in facilities where veterans are kept waiting for an appointment, or where there is a need for doctors of certain types of specialties](#). Report, pages 24-27.

Requires Oversight of the VA's Drug Treatment Programs. I have been incredibly troubled by recent reports of veterans' deaths due to overdose while in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs inpatient drug treatment programs. There is no reason veterans should have access to these drugs while in treatment. All the information available conflicts as to how exactly these drug treatment programs work, how many veterans actually recover from their addictions, how well they are supervised while in treatment, and how long they typically receive such care. While our veterans work very hard to overcome addiction to drugs and medications, many struggle to reclaim the lives they left behind to serve our nation. We must make every effort to ensure that these drug treatment programs are an available and successful resource for our veterans. That is why [I included language that will require the Inspector General to conduct a review of the effectiveness of VA substance abuse rehab programs](#). Report, pages 38-39.

Increases Funding for NIH. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the world's largest funder of medical research, supporting nearly 50,000 competitively awarded research grants to more than 300,000 researchers at 2,500 universities, medical schools, and other research institutions in every state across the country. Promising discoveries made by these researchers are then handed off to private industry for further development. NIH funding has a proven track record of supporting discoveries that lead to the development of preventive tools like childhood vaccines; advanced diagnostics, including cutting edge genetic testing; and more innovative, effective, and targeted ways to treat complex diseases. [I worked with my colleagues to increase funding for the NIH by \\$150 million -- for a total of \\$30 billion in funding](#). Report, page 138.

Requires the Administration to Report on the Availability of Experimental Medications for Terminally Ill Patients. When individuals are terminally ill, there are cases when the FDA is allowed to give the sick experimental medications that are not yet fully approved for use in the general public. This so-called "compassionate use" of medications can sometimes save or extend lives. However, there have been troubling instances in which people seeking compassionate use treatments have been denied access, so [I worked with my colleagues to include language requiring the FDA to provide Congress with data about the number of compassionate use requests and the number of denials](#). Once we have this information, we can make sure that the FDA is helping those most in need. House report, page 63.

Pushes for Faster Development of a Safe Artificial Pancreas. [I worked with my colleagues to include language that will ensure the FDA continues to develop an artificial pancreas that could help those suffering from Type 1 Diabetes.](#) Report, page 60.

Funds Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Research. Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is the leading genetic killer of children. It affects about one out of every 3,500 boys born in the United States, has a 100 percent fatality rate, and currently does not have a cure. Progressive deterioration in muscle strength leads to death in the late teens or early twenties. There is important research being conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Defense (DoD) that could help us find treatments and one day a cure for Duchenne. [I worked with my colleagues to include \\$6 million for the CDC and \\$3.2 million for the DoD to help fight Duchenne.](#) Report, page 99C (DoD funding) and report, page 25 (CDC funding).

Includes Important Pro-life Protections. It prohibits taxpayer dollars from being spent for abortions or abortion services. Report, page 21; page 32; pages 81-82; and page 133.

Requires CMS to Work with Safety-Net Hospitals and Expand Access to the 340B Drug Discount Program. Many safety-net hospitals face challenges when enrolling a new hospital site in the 340B discount program. This program was established by Congress in 1992 to lower the cost of outpatient drugs for public or non-profit high-Medicaid hospitals and other safety-net providers serving large numbers of uninsured patients and other vulnerable populations. [I worked with my colleagues to include language in the bill that will make it easier for safety net hospitals to access the discounted drugs that they need to treat their patients.](#) House report, pages 11-12.

Reins in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Includes language that will overturn a ruling of the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals that the EEOC's actions are not reviewable by courts. [By including language in the omnibus ensuring that the EEOC's actions are reviewable by the courts, House conservatives are protecting the rights of small business owners in Texas and across the United States.](#) House report, pages 81-82.

Prohibits Taxpayer Dollars from Going to ACORN. Prevents federal funds from going to ACORN or any of its associates. Bill, page 963.

Limits Funding for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The bill freezes funding for the NLRB at \$274.2 million. It also includes a provision designed to stop the NLRB's anti-business regulations related to the implementation of "e-Card Check" which could promote coercion in union elections. Bill, page 939.

Increases Funding for Planetary Science. It is important that we revitalize NASA and restore this agency to where it was when it inspired a generation of Americans to "race to the moon." This bill includes the funding needed ensure that America will always lead the world in space exploration and scientific discoveries. Specifically, it [includes \\$1.45 billion for planetary sciences which includes probes that are sent to explore our solar system, \\$2 billion to develop a program called the Space Launch System, which will build the rockets to send us to the far reaches of our solar system, and \\$1.19 to help us build the Orion capsule that will carry astronauts to Mars in the coming decades.](#) Report, chart 30a; Bill, page 176; and report, page 32.

Funds Space Exploration. Since the dawn of time, a fundamental question – are we alone in the universe – has preoccupied and enthralled mankind. Now we have the opportunity to answer that question by exploring Jupiter's icy moon Europa. This distant moon is covered with more water than is available on

Earth and there is a high chance a probe may discover life. Such a discovery could fundamentally alter how we see our universe and ourselves. This mission is one of my top science priorities, and [I have included \\$100 million in funding to make sure that the planning for this mission moves forward](#). House report, pages 68-69.

Prohibits Funding for High-Speed Rail. One of the president's top transportation priorities has been increasing funding for high-speed rail. House conservatives blocked all funding for high-speed rail in the omnibus. Report, page 67.

Prohibits Federal Funding for Light Rail on Richmond Avenue and Post Oak Boulevard in Houston, Texas. In response to overwhelming opposition from my constituents to Houston METRO's proposal to build at-grade rail lines on Richmond Avenue and Post Oak Blvd through Houston's Galleria, [I included language that prohibits Houston METRO from building these proposed light rail lines that are unaffordable, unnecessary, unwanted, and in the case of Richmond, unapproved by voters](#). Bill, pages 1464-1465.

Cuts Funding for AMTRAK. Reduces funding for AMTRAK by \$90 million. Report, page 25.

Limits New Start Funding. Limits federal funding for New Start transportation projects to states and local governments that will pay at least 40 percent of the total cost. This important provision will help protect our hard earned tax dollars from being spent on transportation projects in states that do not have enough local funding to cover their fair share. Report, page 30.

Prohibits Use of Black Boxes. Prohibits funding to mandate GPS tracking in passenger vehicles without "providing full and appropriate consideration of privacy concerns." Bill, page 1580.