October 2, 2017

Member of the U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 71, the fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget resolution approved by the House Budget Committee and scheduled to be considered by the full House. This budget plan would impose considerable hardship on many Americans in order to slash taxes for the wealthy and corporations and to boost defense spending.

The budget decisions made by Congress each year are vital to ensuring that the economy is strong and that our communities are safe and prosperous. Yet, this budget completely undercuts responsibility for shared prosperity by applying the same misguided priorities proposed by President Trump. It sets woefully inadequate spending levels for critical public services and cuts over a trillion dollars from non-defense discretionary spending (NDD), in order to significantly boost defense spending and provide massive tax giveaways to wealthy individuals and large corporations.

The budget slashes $5.7 trillion over 10 years including $1.3 trillion from NDD programs that have already been compromised by austere budget caps. FY 2018 statutory caps lower funding for NDD programs by 17 percent adjusted for inflation below FY 2010, and the House budget cuts this by an additional $5 billion. The additional cuts proposed in the House budget would weaken public services that all Americans rely on, create massive budget problems for states, and lead to enormous job losses. It would force dramatic cuts in education, job training, federal employee pensions, and nutritional assistance. Over 10 years, the budget cuts $4.4 trillion from entitlement programs, such as, Medicare and Medicaid, including at least $203 billion in entitlement cuts to be made through the “fast track” reconciliation process. As a result, safety-net programs that millions rely upon are once again a target, further shifting enormous and unsustainable costs to the elderly, disabled, students and states.

Rather than increasing revenues for investment that creates jobs and spurs economic growth, the proposed budget creates a fast-track process for tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit corporations and the wealthy. In fact, according to the non-partisan Tax Policy Center, the Trump/GOP tax cut would largely benefit the richest 1 percent. The budget also relies on the gimmicks of dynamic scoring and sham accounting, hiding the true cost of unnecessary and harmful tax cuts.
The budget approved by the House Budget Committee would hurt families, kill job growth and send the economy into a downward tailspin. I strongly urge you to oppose. H. Con. Res. 71, the proposed 2018 concurrent budget resolution.

Sincerely,

Scott Frey
Director of Federal Government Affairs

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