

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0604

January 13, 2016

Dear Colleague,

Article I serves as the Constitutional bulwark against consolidation of power in the executive branch. According to Article I, Congress, which directly represents the collective will of the nation, has the authority to decide how much, and in what way, taxpayer dollars are spent.

But executive branch overreach and judicial branch intervention have appropriated the power originally granted to Congress by the Constitution. Federal government spending has consequently ballooned out-of-control. New regulations have killed jobs and cost small businesses. Executive orders have fundamentally altered America's statutory code. The President, often with the judicial branch's consent, has wrested power away from the legislative branch. In so doing, the President has muted the voice of the people, who decide how the government affects their lives and destinies through the voice of their Representatives.

To recalibrate the Constitutional structure of the federal government, Congress must reassert its power of the purse. The Omnibus bill last December provided a perfect chance for Congress to set funding priorities and direct the policies carried out with those funds. Unfortunately, Congress failed to address its power deficit through the bill.

In 2016, we can and must do better, and that is why I am introducing the *Article I Consolidated Appropriations Amendments, 2016* to provide a consolidated platform of many of the riders and defunds that were discussed but not enacted in the Omnibus. Many of these important actions already have separate legislative vehicles and their inclusion in this legislation is complimentary to those separate efforts.

Many of the items included in the *Article I Consolidated Appropriations Amendments, 2016* have already passed as an appropriations rider by the House of Representatives, or were included in underlying appropriations bills that have gone through the Committee process. By doing our work, House Republicans have laid out a counterbalance to President Obama's wholesale assault on free markets and individual liberties.

Article I Consolidated Appropriations Amendments, 2016 consolidates some of this work in the hopes of providing each House Republican a solid platform from which to begin the process of reclaiming Congress' rightful place in our Constitutional government.

H.R. 4371 includes the following provisions (in addition to several others):

- Places a moratorium on any new rules or regulations proposed by the executive branch
- Prevents ambush union elections

- Defunds President Obama's illegal executive action on immigration
- Makes the Census's American Community Survey voluntary
- Defunds the EPA's Waters of the U.S. Regulations
- Prohibits HUD from implementing, enforcing or administering the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulations
- Blocks harmful regulations that would debilitate mining operations
- Blocks union representatives from participating in OSHA walk-arounds
- Restricts grant funding to sanctuary cities
- Prevents IRS use of funds to implement Obamacare
- Defunds of Obama's coal fired plant rules.
- Prohibits of the Justice Department from entering into settlements forcing defendants to fund third party groups.

If the legislative branch hopes to regain its rightful authority to legislate, then it must be willing to pass legislation that directly challenges the overreach of the executive branch.

Article I is not a keyword, a trend, a brand, or a Facebook graphic. It's a principle that protects the Republic. But the Republic only benefits if Members of Congress assert their Constitutional mandate. Please join me in sponsoring H.R. 4371, and let's come together as a Conference behind these common principles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Buck". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ken Buck
Member of Congress