

Chairman Sessions, Ranking Member Hastings, and Members of the Committee, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to testify today on my legislation, the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act, numbered H.R. 3577. I introduced this bipartisan bill in December with Chairman Paul Ryan, Chairman Jeb Hensarling, and several of my colleagues on the Budget Committee, including Representatives Marlin Stutzman, Todd Rokita, and Frank Guinta. This bill is part of the Budget Committee's broader process reform effort, and it currently has over 30 cosponsors.

Before I discuss my bill, I would like to commend Chairman Dreier, Representative Ed Whitfield and Representative Timothy Johnson for their work on this matter and for putting forth two remarkable biennial budgeting bills. I am a proud cosponsor of both of them. The three of us have taken slightly different approaches with our legislation, but we all support what is important – moving to a biennial budgeting process in order to fix our broken budget system. I look forward to working with these two gentlemen and others on the Committee to reform how the federal government spends hardworking taxpayer dollars.

I came to Congress just over a year ago with a cynical view of the institution. Having spent a year here, I can report that my view has not changed. If anything, I am even more cynical today. It has now been 17 years since Congress passed all 12 of its appropriations bills under regular order. We continue to budget and appropriate federal dollars through continuing resolutions and omnibuses, failing to allocate taxpayer money in a deliberate way. With our national debt over \$15.2 trillion, we in Congress cannot afford to treat Americans' tax dollars with such callous disregard.

The budget process is the perfect platform to have an honest discussion with the American people about our spending priorities, but that discussion does not happen with a broken budget process. To put us on the right track, the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act will help control spending by ending the ad-hoc budgeting process, while at the same time increasing oversight of how taxpayer dollars are spent. Under my bill, a biennial budget and all appropriation bills, covering both years in the biennium, would be passed in the odd-numbered years. Congress would conduct oversight and pass multi-year authorization bills in the even-numbered years. Authorization bills would cover no less than two years.

The basis for my bill was the Spending, Deficit, and Control Act of 2009 as introduced by Chairmen Ryan and Hensarling. This bill contained a number of budget reforms, including moving to a biennial budget. Under my bill, the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act, the timetable for the biannual budget and appropriation bills would follow the timetable in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, with Congress being required to complete a concurrent budget resolution by April 15. This would give appropriators, I believe, the necessary time to complete all of their work.

The budget timetable is one of the primary differences between my bill and Chairman Dreier's and Representative's Whitfield's bill and Representative Johnson's bills, both of which push back the date for Congress to finish action on the biennial budget from April 15 to May 15. Last year, the House passed our budget on April 15, meeting the required deadline. While I'm sure we on the Budget Committee would not mind having more time to work, I believe it is equally important to give the appropriators ample time to complete the 12 appropriations bills. By budgeting and appropriating in a calmer, wiser way, we could end the threat of government shutdowns, with which we all are all too familiar.

The Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act would help agencies and businesses to plan for their future as well. A biennial budget will allow agencies to plan for multi-year programs and projects, reducing procurement costs. This approach will help businesses that work with various agencies and need the certainty that comes from a stable budget environment. The federal government has become adept at creating uncertainty for businesses over the years, and this needs to stop.

Prior to coming to Congress, I owned my own roofing company for over 30 years. While I owned my small business, I crafted three year budgets because I needed to plan for the future. By doing this, I was able to buy goods in an orderly manner, reducing my costs. I would have had a difficult time succeeding had I not taken the time to project what my costs would be in the coming months and years and then planned accordingly. If I had run my roofing company the way the federal government spends money, stumbling from budget to budget, the uncertainty would have decimated my company. This is why I decided to introduce the Biennial Budgeting and Enhanced Oversight Act, to try to bring common-sense budgeting practices to Congress.

I thank you once again for inviting me to testify at this hearing today. I look forward to working with Members on this Committee on this important issue, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.