



CHAIRMEN

BILL FRENZEL
TIM PENNY
CHARLIE STENHOLM

**Where Are Those Appropriations Bills?
December 7, 2009**

PRESIDENT

MAYA MACGUINEAS

DIRECTORS

BARRY ANDERSON
ROY ASH
CHARLES BOWSHER
STEVE COLL
DAN CRIPPEN
VIC FAZIO
WILLIS GRADISON
WILLIAM GRAY, III
WILLIAM HOAGLAND
DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN
JIM JONES
LOU KERR
JIM KOLBE
JAMES LYNN
JAMES MCINTYRE, JR.
DAVID MINGE
JIM NUSSLE
MARNE OBERNAUER, JR.
JUNE O'NEILL
RUDOLPH PENNER
PETER PETERSON
ROBERT REISCHAUER
ALICE RIVLIN
MARTIN SABO
GENE STEUERLE
DAVID STOCKMAN
PAUL VOLCKER
CAROL COX WAIT
DAVID M. WALKER
JOSEPH WRIGHT, JR.

More than two months after the start of Fiscal Year 2010, only five of the twelve appropriations bills necessary to continue government functions have been enacted. Congress's continued poor track record in fulfilling its fundamental obligation to fund the operations of government in an efficient manner exposes the need for budget process reform.

"If we can't do something as simple as passing the appropriations bills we review every year, how are we supposed to do any of the heavy lifting on the budget?" asked Maya MacGuineas, President of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

Although the House has passed all twelve of its appropriations bills, three have not been passed in the Senate, and another four are still being negotiated in Conference committee. Since October 1, these government functions have been sustained by stopgap continuing resolutions (CR), the latest of which is set to expire on December 18th.

"With the health care debate set to take up much of the floor time in the Senate, it's looking likely that Congress will either pass another CR or again rely on an end-of-year omnibus to wrap up all of its unfinished business just before leaving town," said MacGuineas. "Budgeting is one of the most basic functions of governing—there really is no excuse for failing to pass these bills."

"How can federal agencies develop realistic 2011 budgets if they don't even know what funds they'll have in 2010? We need to have a serious discussion of how to improve our country's budget process so that spending bills can receive the attention they deserve."

SENIOR ADVISORS

ELMER STAATS
ROBERT STRAUSS