

September 28, 2023

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I urge you to support a continuing resolution that can achieve bipartisan support to fund the federal government and prevent an unnecessary shutdown. The current funding impasse is a self-made crisis that reasonable minds understand must be avoided. A lapse in appropriations will force federal workers to go without pay, shutter critical agency operations, harm the national economy and burden the American people in every congressional district. Congress must prioritize keeping the federal government open.

Previous shutdowns have proven that there is nothing to gain from closing the federal government. Ultimately, common sense prevails, and a coalition of lawmakers reaches an agreement. This situation is no different. Congress should quickly take up a continuing resolution to allow additional time to work through the full appropriations process. Time has run out to continue pursuing partisan spending legislation that has no chance of becoming law before the end of the fiscal year. Full attention should be given to passing a continuing resolution.

The continuing resolution should either be clean, without extraneous provisions, or only include extraneous provisions pursuant to a bipartisan, bicameral negotiation. **Please ask Speaker McCarthy to bring such a bill to the House floor. If he does not, I urge you to support use of – and sign – a discharge petition to bring such a continuing resolution to the House floor.**

There are already two plausible bipartisan proposals available to prevent a shutdown – the bipartisan Senate continuing resolution, and the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus proposal. These are not the only options, but both can earn bipartisan support, which is the only path to avoiding a shutdown given divided government.

The reality of a government shutdown paints a grim picture containing countless examples of harm. Border control agents tasked with protecting our nation and preventing the flow of illegal fentanyl will go unpaid. Disaster recovery by FEMA will be hindered just when it's needed most. Small business loan applications will go unreviewed, backlogs at Social Security Administration will grow and vital food assistance programs will shutter. The 2018-2019 partial shutdown cost the economy \$11 billion according to the Congressional Budget Office. Imagine the damage when not a single government agency is funded this time around.

It's time for the majority of responsible representatives to wrest control of the House from those who have no interest in governing. Throughout the funding debate, it's become evident that a contingent of representatives will never support a continuing resolution in any form. It's the responsibility of Congress to ensure government

operates, and the current situation demands you fulfill your obligations. Representatives should take responsibility for the collective failure of Congress and work together in a bipartisan fashion to pass a continuing resolution so the American people don't pay for lawmaker's mistakes.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please contact NARFE Staff Vice President for Policy and Programs John Hatton at jhatton@narfe.org or 571-483-1267.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William Shackelford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William Shackelford
NARFE National President