

United States Senate

March 31, 2020

The Honorable Russell Vought
Acting Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C 20503

Dear Acting Director Vought:

The federal government has a responsibility to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. In times of crisis, we still have to consider how we spend money and how we can get the best possible return on investment for taxpayers.

Congress recently passed, and the President signed into law, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which helps those workers who have lost their jobs, had their hours cut or are getting lower tips, and small businesses that have been forced to close or have lost significant revenue. There are many good things in this bill, including funding for our health care workers, personal protective equipment and expanded testing, and support for small businesses.

The CARES Act also came with a more than \$2 trillion price tag, and contained numerous provisions that have nothing to do with helping those affected by the Coronavirus. As I have reviewed the final appropriations in the CARES Act, I am concerned that the following items are unnecessary or wasteful:

- \$25 million for Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
 - I was shocked to learn this weekend that the Kennedy Center, despite receiving \$25 million from taxpayers, decided to layoff many professional musicians in its workforce.
- \$75 million for National Endowment for the Arts
- \$75 million for National Endowment for Humanities
- \$75 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting
- \$50 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services
- \$88 million to the Peace Corps for “evacuating volunteers and U.S. direct hires from overseas”
 - According to reports, the Peace Corps fired all of their 7,300 volunteers working in 61 countries on March 15.


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- \$30.8 billion to the Department of Education for an “Education Stabilization Fund”
 - As our universities around the nation continue to dramatically raise tuition on our students, I am skeptical that they need additional funds from taxpayers.

If the President submits a rescission request to Congress, it triggers a special process in which the funds are then locked down and cannot be used by the agencies for 45 days. During this time, Congress can either approve, modify, or ignore the President’s rescission request. In the Senate, rescission legislation is treated in an expedited fashion as it must be acted upon within a set time period, and is subject to a simple majority threshold.

I therefore urge you to consider the above items as proposals for rescission under section 1012 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (ICA) (2 U.S.C. 683) to allow Congress to quickly consider rescinding these funds entirely, or allocating them to better help American families. As your team reviews the appropriations in the *CARES Act*, I encourage you to keep fiscal responsibility top of mind as you determine if other spending may be appropriate for rescission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a prominent "S".

Rick Scott
United States Senator