

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 24, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington , DC

Dear Majority Leader Reid,

As you develop the legislative calendar for the rest of this fiscal year we believe it is critical to allocate an appropriate amount of time for the Senate to consider, vote and initiate the conference process on each of the twelve appropriations bills independently through a deliberative and transparent process on the Senate floor.

For a variety of reasons, over the past several years, the Senate has failed to debate, amend and pass each of the bills separately prior to the end of the fiscal year. Far too often this has resulted in the creation of omnibus appropriations bills that have been brought to the floor so late in the fiscal year that Senators have been forced to either pass a continuing resolution, shut down government or consider an omnibus bill. These omnibus bills have not allowed for adequate public review and have clouded what should otherwise be a transparent process. As our President said on March 11, 2009, he expects future spending bills to be, "...debated and voted on in an orderly way and sent to (his) desk without delay or obstruction so that we don't face another massive, last minute omnibus bill like this one."

The Senate should begin floor consideration of the appropriations bills during the early summer months to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is available to examine, debate and vote on amendments to the bills. We believe the Senate should pass at least eight of the appropriations bills by the August recess. In order to press for a more transparent process, we will consider using all available procedural tools to guarantee regular order for appropriations bills.

Noting our intentions, we hope you will plan accordingly as you work with the leadership of the House to develop the legislative calendar for the rest of this fiscal year. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



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John McLean

Robert Winters

Jim [unclear]

John Truena

Ernest Alexander

Sayre Claubert

Jim Clark

Frank [unclear]

Bill Martiney

John Barasso

Rick Bond

John [unclear]

Jeff [unclear]

Jim [unclear]

Tim [unclear]

John [unclear]

John [unclear]

John [unclear]

[unclear]

John [unclear]

Michael B. [unclear]

Pat [unclear]

George V. Winovich

Mike Johannes

Richard Shelby

John Conyer

Alyson Snow

Richard B. Lugar

Kay Bailey Hutchison

Jim Bunning

Mike McConnell

Chuck Grassley

Allen Bester

Leg Calendar

Mike Crapo

Chris G. Hatch

Susan M. Collins

Johnny Isakson

Tom Harkin

SAM Brownback