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Conservatives Blast House Republicans For Passing Spending Increase

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By [Barbara Hollingsworth](#)

Conservatives say they are dismayed and disappointed, but not surprised, by the House [passage](#) of a \$1.1 trillion spending bill that sailed through the chamber Wednesday on a 359-67 vote, noting that the [budget deal](#) negotiated late last year by Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) set the stage for higher federal spending. (See [HR 3547.pdf](#))

“It’s a defeat, absolutely, for small government Republicans, but the Ryan-Murray budget paved the way,” Chris Edwards, director of tax policy studies at the [Cato Institute](#) and editor of the *Downsizing the Federal Government* [blog](#), told CNSNews.com. “The big Republican cave-in was the Ryan-Murray budget deal. This bill just gives the hungry lions the opportunity to carve up a trillion dollars between themselves.”

Edwards previously [pointed out](#) in his blog that before the Ryan-Murray deal, “2014 discretionary spending was to be sequestered \$20 billion and capped at \$967 billion...But the deal hikes 2014 spending to \$1.012 trillion, or \$45 billion above the current law amount” without any entitlement reforms to justify the higher spending level.

Passage of the 1,582-page omnibus appropriations bill, which funds virtually every federal agency through Sept. 30th, “will have negative reverberations for years to come,” Edwards told CNSNews.com. “It sets up a very unfortunate [precedent](#) that the budget caps and sequester can be broken willy-nilly, so appropriators from both parties will come back every year pushing for bigger spending.”

Although the bill has some worthwhile provisions, it “exemplifies how ‘Big Government’ America has become,” Edwards noted, adding that the bill even blocks the U.S. Postal Service from ending Saturday mail delivery. “We won’t even let the Post Office save money. It’s insane,” Edwards exclaimed, predicting that another potential GOP cave-in on the national debt limit later this year “will suppress Republican turnout at the polls this fall.”

Other conservative leaders echoed Edwards' disappointment with House Republicans for not holding the line on spending.

"We opposed it and sent a letter to members of Congress asking them to oppose it," Dan Schneider, executive director of the American Conservative Union ([ACU](#)), told CNSNews.com, agreeing with Edwards that "the Ryan-Murray budget set the framework" for the bill's passage.

"This was a take-it-or-leave-it bill that nobody had the chance to read. This is not the way spending bills should be handled by Congress," Schneider pointed out. "We are hoping that Congress takes a deep breath and does better for the 2015 budget. Congress needs to look at each appropriations bill one at a time and have each bill fully amendable."

"There's not a whole lot to like," echoed Jonathan Bydlak, president of the Coalition to Reduce Spending ([CRS](#)). "At the end of the day, it's more spending and it's really disappointing."

But like other conservatives, Bydlak said he was not surprised that House Republicans voted to increase spending after passing the Ryan-Murray budget deal in December. With the exception of the House's fiscal conservative/libertarian wing, he pointed out, "most Republicans and pretty much all Democrats favor more spending."

"We're disappointed," Brandon Arnold, vice president of government affairs at the National Taxpayers Union ([NTU](#)), told CNSNews.com. "They should have stuck with the \$967 billion [spending] cap they passed in 2011. The Ryan-Murray budget that was passed in December was just a framework. This seals it into law."

Noting that taxpayers have "stopped believing their promises," Arnold says that the "multi-trillion-dollar question" is whether members of Congress who were willing to walk away from budget caps they enacted just two years ago will be able to tackle long-term entitlement reform before it's too late.

"Anybody with green eyeshades has to recognize the serious crisis that Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid are in," he told CNSNews.com. "It's a dire situation."

But Arnold said that as a result of the cave-in on the budget deal and the GOP's fear of being blamed for another government shutdown, House Republican leaders now have "only so much leverage to bring to the table."

- See more at: <http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/barbara-hollingsworth/conservatives-blast-house-republicans-passing-spending-increase#sthash.zj4cvNyU.dpuf>