



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on August 15, 2023

House GOP Chairmen Complain About Conservative Demands for Spending Cuts

Multiple Republican chairmen of the 12 House Appropriations subcommittees are voicing frustration about conservatives' demands to reduce federal spending in the pending fiscal 2024 appropriations bills.

Congress is currently [working](#) to draft and pass its fiscal 2024 appropriations bills, which must be passed before September 30 to avoid a partial government shutdown. On the House side, one appropriations bill — funding the Department of Veterans Affairs — has been [passed](#) so far.

House conservatives are demanding further spending cuts in order to earn their support for the remaining 11 bills. In a July 10 [letter](#) to House Republican leadership, 21 representatives led by Chip Roy (R-Texas) and Freedom Caucus Chairman Scott Perry (R-Pa.) stated that “we cannot support appropriations bills that will produce a top-line discretionary spending level barely below the bloated FY 2023 level.” Representative Ralph Norman (R-S.C.) [reiterated](#) those demands on July 25, stating, “We want a budget that trims the fat, goes to programs that will defend and protect this country.”

However, these demands for fiscal responsibility are [not receiving](#) a warm welcome from the House Appropriations chairmen.

Representative Mike Simpson (R-Idaho; [54 percent Freedom Index score](#)), whose subcommittee handles the appropriations bill funding the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior, criticized demands for cuts, stating, “Then you just drop it on the floor and stomp on it. What else do you do with it? You can't make logical cuts in there.”

Representative Steve Womack (R-Ark.; [54 percent Freedom Index score](#)), one of the subcommittee chairmen, also voiced opposition to spending cuts, stating, “I just don't see the wisdom in trying to further cut to strengthen our hand.”

Kay Granger (R-Texas; [53 percent Freedom Index score](#)), chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee, claimed difficulty in finding additional areas to cut, stating, “We've done a lot of cuts, a lot of cuts. And so if it's cuts just for cut's sake, I don't agree with it. But if it's something that we can do



AP Images
Steve Womack



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without, that's fine."

Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.; [48 percent Freedom Index score](#)) agreed, claiming that "there's not a lot of wiggle room left" for further cuts, and that the foreign-affairs appropriations bill he is overseeing is already "below the 2016 levels."

Conservatives dispute these claims. For example, David Ditch, a policy analyst for the Heritage Foundation, [highlighted](#) several specific areas for further cuts, noting "many areas where the Appropriations Committee either increased funding or gave minor haircuts rather than doing the cutting that's necessary for the sake of responsible budgeting."

However, there is an easy way Congress can significantly further cut spending: follow the U.S. Constitution. The only federal spending that is appropriate is the small fraction that's constitutional — [specifically authorized](#) by [Article I, Section 8](#) of the Constitution. All other federal spending that falls outside Article I, Section 8 is not constitutional — nor is it needed.

[More than 80 percent](#) of the current federal government is unconstitutional — and it exists because Congress voted for it in direct violation of the Constitution. Congress has clearly strayed far from the Constitution, and this is clearly seen in the fiscal state of the nation. The national debt has surpassed [\\$32 trillion](#) and continues to quickly expand with [\\$6 billion](#) being borrowed every day. Meanwhile, the deficit for 2023 is approaching [\\$1.7 trillion](#), and the Congressional Budget Office has projected that [another \\$22 trillion](#) will be added by 2033. Credit-rating agencies are taking note, with Fitch Ratings [downgrading](#) the United States two weeks ago.

To prevent a coming fiscal meltdown, Congress must return to constitutional adherence. The American people have a role in this: to hold their U.S. representatives and senators accountable to their oath "to support this Constitution."

To urge your U.S. representative and senators to cut all unconstitutional federal spending, visit The John Birch Society's legislative alert [here](#).



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