

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 857

To hold the salaries of Members of a House of Congress in escrow if the House of Congress does not pass regular appropriation bills on a timely basis during a Congress, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 29, 2019

Mr. WITTMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To hold the salaries of Members of a House of Congress in escrow if the House of Congress does not pass regular appropriation bills on a timely basis during a Congress, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Inaction Has Con-
5 sequences Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. HOLDING SALARIES OF MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN**
2 **ESCROW UPON FAILURE TO PASS REGULAR**
3 **APPROPRIATION BILLS.**

4 (a) **HOLDING SALARIES IN ESCROW.**—If by the first
5 day of a fiscal year (beginning with fiscal year 2020), a
6 House of Congress has not passed each of the regular ap-
7 propriation bills for such fiscal year, during the period de-
8 scribed in subsection (b) the payroll administrator of that
9 House of Congress shall deposit in an escrow account all
10 payments otherwise required to be made during such pe-
11 riod for the compensation of Members of Congress who
12 serve in that House of Congress, and shall release such
13 payments to such Members only upon the expiration of
14 such period.

15 (b) **PERIOD DESCRIBED.**—With respect to a House
16 of Congress and a fiscal year, the period described in this
17 paragraph is the period which begins on the first day of
18 the fiscal year and ends on the earlier of—

19 (1) the first day by which the House of Con-
20 gress has passed each of the regular appropriation
21 bills for such fiscal year; or

22 (2) the last day of the Congress during which
23 that fiscal year begins.

24 (c) **REGULAR APPROPRIATION BILL DEFINED.**—The
25 term “regular appropriation bill” means any annual ap-
26 propriation bill which, with respect to the Congress in-

1 volved, is under the jurisdiction of a single subcommittee
2 of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
3 resentatives (pursuant to the Rules of the House of Rep-
4 resentatives for that Congress) and a single subcommittee
5 of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate (pursu-
6 ant to the Standing Rules of the Senate).

7 **SEC. 3. ADMINISTRATION OF ESCROW.**

8 (a) **WITHHOLDING AND REMITTANCE OF AMOUNTS**
9 **FROM PAYMENTS HELD IN ESCROW.**—The payroll admin-
10 istrator shall provide for the same withholding and remit-
11 tance with respect to a payment deposited in an escrow
12 account under section 2 that would apply to the payment
13 if the payment were not subject to such section.

14 (b) **ROLE OF SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.**—The
15 Secretary of the Treasury shall provide the payroll admin-
16 istrators of the Houses of Congress with such assistance
17 as may be necessary to enable the payroll administrators
18 to carry out this Act.

19 **SEC. 4. RELEASE OF AMOUNTS AT END OF A CONGRESS.**

20 In order to ensure that this Act is carried out in a
21 manner consistent with the twenty-seventh article of
22 amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the
23 payroll administrator of a House of Congress shall release
24 for payments to Members of that House of Congress any
25 amounts remaining in any escrow account under section

1 2 on the last day of the Congress during which the
2 amounts were deposited in such account.

3 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act—

5 (1) the term “Member” includes a Delegate or
6 Resident Commissioner to the Congress; and

7 (2) the “payroll administrator” of a House of
8 Congress means—

9 (A) in the case of the House of Represent-
10 atives, the Chief Administrative Officer of the
11 House of Representatives, or an employee of
12 the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
13 who is designated by the Chief Administrative
14 Officer to carry out this Act; and

15 (B) in the case of the Senate, the Sec-
16 retary of the Senate, or an employee of the Of-
17 fice of the Secretary of the Senate who is des-
18 ignated by the Secretary to carry out this Act.

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