



A1P: POWER OF THE PURSE

Congress *Has* the Power of the Purse: We Just Need to Use It

- Congress's power over the federal budget is exclusive and absolute. But for years, Congress has surrendered more and more of that responsibility to the Executive Branch.
- We have put approximately two-thirds of the federal budget on autopilot, and even made some agencies "self-funding." Furthermore, when Congress does pass spending legislation, it is often via massive spending bills that are negotiated by only a handful of Senators and Representatives, all while leaving the majority of members with little opportunity to weigh in beyond voting for or against the bill.
- This dysfunctional process discourages accountability and reform, and only perpetuates Washington's broken fiscal status quo.
- Even though we have let our powers atrophy, the Constitution gives Congress the power and responsibility to conduct oversight, end wasteful or abusive spending and implement real reforms.

A1P Will Offer Solutions to Reclaim Congress's Power of the Purse

- A1P will offer reforms to modernize Congress's budget process for a post-earmark world, including reforms to the reconciliation and appropriations processes.
- A1P will propose reforms to end "self-funding" agencies and put all federal spending back into the official budget.
- A1P will incentivize Congress to make fiscal policy in the light of day, subject to public scrutiny and accountability, not behind closed doors and at the 11th hour.
- Restoring Congress's fiscal authority will re-balance power between the Legislative and Executive Branches, and also between the American people and their government.

A1P's Reforms Will End Congress's Legislating by 'Cliffs'

- Congress has routinely avoided the hard work of budgeting, oversight, and reform. Instead, Congress often waits until right before manufactured deadline crises – "cliffs" – to take up major spending and debt legislation.
- "Cliff" bills are usually written in secret, and voted on at the 11th hour without any real debate or amendment. This insulates politicians and bureaucrats from accountability, but cuts the public out of the process altogether.
- A1P will propose reforms that will eliminate the risk of government shutdowns and debt default. We will incentivize Congress to *do* its job rather than avoid it.

*"When Congress is back in charge of federal spending,
the American people will quickly be back in charge of the federal government."*

