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**FAILURE TO REFORM BUDGET PROCESS IS MISSED OPPORTUNITY
FOR HISTORIC BIPARTISAN CHANGE**

Washington, DC – The Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform’s failure today to reach consensus is a missed opportunity to improve the way lawmakers manage the nations’ finances and exercise their constitutional “power of the purse.” The Committee had a November 30 deadline to approve legislation to reform the broken budget process.

“The Joint Select Committee could have shown their congressional colleagues and constituents that working across the aisle can lead to improved policy and outcomes,” said Matt Owens of the Association of American Universities and B3P stakeholder. “Given Congress is once again late in making budget decisions and is now racing to avoid a partial government shutdown, we are disappointed that the Committee could not agree on important budget process reforms despite many months of collaborative effort. We hope their work provides a useful platform for the next Congress to make meaningful improvements.”

Stakeholders of the Convergence Building a Better Budget Process (B3P) testified before the committee in May to provide the members with their consensus proposals from their [report](#), which would increase budget predictability, provide Members of Congress and Senators with better information, and allow for broader participation in the budget process.

Specifically, the report proposed a better budget process that includes:

- 1. A Budget Action Plan**—negotiated by the President and Congress at the beginning of a new Congress and enacted into law—to synchronize the budget cycle with the electoral cycle and to change expectations for the process. The plan would make certain key fiscal decisions – setting discretionary funding levels and adjusting the debt limit, for example – for a two-year period.
- 2. A Fiscal State of the Nation Report**, published every four years at a key point in the national election cycle, to make the federal budget more accessible to the American public and elevate the discourse about the country’s finances.
- 3. A review of the performance of portfolios of federal programs** that involve long-term or inter-generational commitments (e.g., retirement security, health coverage, education or national security). This review conducted by Congress, through the Government Accountability Office, would reinforce the importance of the long-term effects of budget decisions.
- 4. Strengthening the Budget Committees** by revising the membership rules and assigning responsibility to create new expectations for the budget process so that Congress and the public can expect more timely action on budget decisions.

5. Investment in agencies that support the congressional budget process, including the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT), so these institutions can continue to provide high-quality and independent information the nation relies on in making budgetary choices.

The Joint Select Committee was created earlier this year to reform the budget and appropriations process. Without an agreement among its members, the work of the committee stalls. It is unlikely the next Congress will prioritize this important issue, leaving a flawed process in place for an uncertain amount of time.

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