

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2026

The Honorable Russell Vought, Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Vought,

The American people are confronting a cost-of-living crisis and a weakening job market, both made worse by the Administration's policies. At the same time, Republicans' budget reconciliation bill last summer — and their refusal to extend the enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) tax credits — will strip health coverage from 15 million Americans, all to finance tax breaks that overwhelmingly benefit the ultra-wealthy. Doubling down on this approach and once again weaponizing the reconciliation process will only worsen the nation's cost-of-living crisis. As members of the House Budget Committee, we demand that you explain the Administration's extreme agenda, which jeopardizes the economic security of the American people and shows open disregard for Congress's constitutional power of the purse.

Despite the President's recent and false claims that he has brought prices down, families are still seeing essential costs skyrocket — including a nearly 16 percent increase in beef prices, a 20 percent jump in coffee prices, and an almost 5 percent rise in electricity costs since the start of this Administration. Meanwhile, the labor market continues to weaken, with three-month average job growth now at negative 22,000 jobs per month, and less than 600,000 jobs created in 2025, when over 2 million jobs were created in 2024.

To make matters worse, Republicans have refused to extend the enhanced ACA tax credits. When open enrollment ends on January 15, millions of Americans will face higher costs, fewer benefits, or no health coverage at all.

In addition to failing to provide solutions to the cost-of-living crisis, at your behest, OMB has disregarded Congress's power of the purse. As outlined in our December 1, 2025, request to you, you are the first Director in the 50-year history of the House Budget Committee to refuse to testify annually before the Committee.

Chairman Arrington has committed to scheduling your testimony upon the release of the President's Budget and has publicly stated that you would appear early this year. However, the Administration's announcement that the State of the Union will be held on February 24 — an event that traditionally precedes the release of the President's Budget — makes clear that the budget will not be submitted by the statutory deadline of February 2, 2026. Given this delay, the House Budget Committee cannot wait weeks or months for basic oversight. The Committee must hear from you now.

In light of your continued evasion of oversight and refusal to appear before the Committee, we demand that you provide written responses to the questions below no later than February 13, 2026.

1. Republicans' reconciliation bill and refusal to extend the enhanced ACA tax credits rips health coverage away from 15 million Americans to pay for tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit the ultra-rich. Expiration of the ACA tax credits more than doubled Americans' out-of-pocket premium costs, and some families have even seen their premium costs triple or quadruple.
  - What is the Administration's health care plan to prevent millions of Americans from facing enormous increases in their health insurance premium costs?
  - Does the Administration support extending enhanced ACA tax credits to prevent skyrocketing premium costs for millions of Americans?
  - Does the Administration have any proposals to prevent 15 million Americans from losing their health care coverage?
  - Provide a list of the Administration's health care proposals to improve Americans' health care coverage and bring down their out-of-pocket costs.
2. As mentioned above, American families are facing increasing prices with no end in sight. Food and energy prices continue to rise, putting a strain on household budgets. Housing, education, and health care take up huge portions of the average family's spending, making it harder to achieve the American dream. The Administration's tariff policy is only making this worse. In fact, as a result of your tariff policy, the effective tariff rate is now the highest since 1935 and the average household will lose \$1,700 in the short run as a result of increased prices. Clothing prices are projected to increase by 20 percent, and the tariffs will cost families an average of an additional \$6,500 when purchasing a new car.
  - Given all this, what are the Administration's plans to address the cost-of-living crisis?
  - Has the Administration measured what the average price increase is from these tariffs, and is the Administration incorporating those price increases into its economic projections?
  - Why does the Administration need a \$12 billion bailout for farmers to combat the tariffs' harms?
3. The non-partisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) has already found that the Administration violated the Impoundment Control Act eight times.
  - Provide a list of each appropriation for which the Administration will not commit to fully spending the appropriated amount. For 2026 appropriations, indicate whether the Administration will commit to fully spending all appropriations that become law. If not, list each appropriation that the Administration will not commit to fully spending. For not yet enacted appropriations, list if the Administration will not commit to fully spending the appropriation if it is at levels consistent with (i) fiscal year 2025 levels; (ii) levels reported by the House Appropriations Committee or passed by the full House; and/or (iii) levels reported by the Senate Appropriations Committee.
  - For appropriations whose period of availability expired in 2025; (i) provide a list of each appropriation where OMB did not fully apportion money and the amount of money OMB did not apportion; and (ii) provide a list of each appropriation where at least 99 percent of the appropriation was not obligated and the amount of money not obligated.
  - Provide all legal memoranda, opinions, or analyses prepared by or for OMB, the Department of Justice, or any other executive branch entity regarding the supposed legal authority to impound funds.

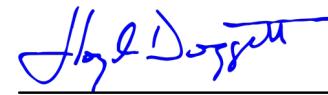
- Provide all guidance, instructions, or directives issued by OMB to federal agencies regarding impounding funds.
4. Despite GAO previously finding that OMB violated the Antideficiency Act when it obligated funds during the fiscal year 2019 lapse in appropriations, OMB conducted ongoing, regular functions of government during the recent lapse in appropriations, which included approving a regulation preventing public servants whose work does not align with President Trump's partisan political agenda from accessing student loan forgiveness.
- Provide a list of each OMB office/division where employees worked during the recent lapse in appropriations, including (i) how many employees worked during the shutdown; (ii) whether any of the employees were paid; and (iii) if paid, the source of funding and if not paid, an explanation of the exemption/exception that permitted the OMB to incur such obligation.
  - Identify any obligations or expenditures made by a department or agency affected in whole or in part during the recent lapse in appropriations. Include (i) the amount so obligated or expended; (ii) the account affected; (iii) an explanation of the exception that permitted the department or agency to incur such obligation or expenditure; and (iv) an explanation of any change in the application of any exception from any previous lapse in appropriations.
5. Despite the Administration's own shutdown plan saying that Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits could be paid through its contingency fund, the Administration sought to weaponize hunger by illegally withholding SNAP benefits during the recent lapse in appropriations.
- Provide an explanation of why the Administration changed its view on the availability of the contingency fund to pay SNAP benefits.
  - Provide all legal memoranda, opinions, or analyses prepared by or for OMB, the Department of Justice, the Department of Agriculture, or any other executive branch entity regarding the legal authority to pay SNAP benefits during a lapse in appropriations.
  - Provide all communications between OMB, Department of Agriculture, the White House, the Department of Justice, and any federal agency regarding (i) funding for SNAP benefits during a lapse in appropriations or (ii) the Department of Agriculture's shutdown plan.
6. Without any appropriations allowing the expenditure, during the recent lapse in appropriations, OMB and agency officials obligated funds to issue a reduction-in-force (RIF) to about 4,000 employees. Even though the Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026 (P.L. 119-37) prohibited the implementation of any RIFs until January 30, 2026, OMB illegally disregarded the law by further implementing RIFs for State Department employees.
- Why has OMB not responded to House Democrats' letters to you on October 21, 2025, about the RIFs? All information demanded in those letters continues to be demanded, and you should include that information in response to this letter.
  - What actions has the Administration taken to comply with Section 120 of P.L. 119-37 and/or Judge Illston's December 17, 2025, order?

If you have any questions about this, please contact House Budget Committee Democratic staff. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Brendan F. Boyle  
Ranking Member  
House Budget Committee



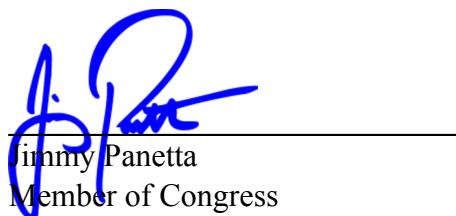
Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



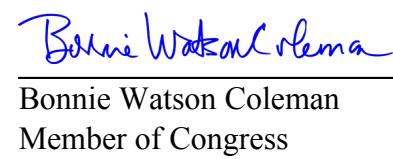
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



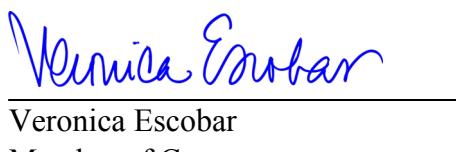
Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



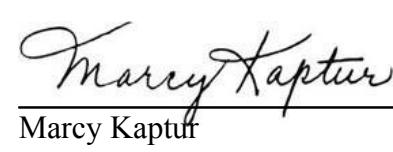
Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



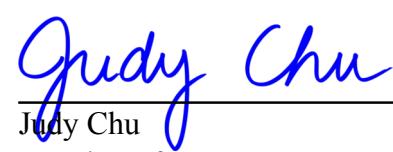
Becca Balint  
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Marcy Kaptur  
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Pramila Jayapal  
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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress

cc: Chairman Jodey C. Arrington  
House Budget Committee