

# BIPARTISAN BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS REFORM ACT OF 2019

Building on the work of the Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Bipartisan Budget and Appropriations Reform Act of 2019 (S. 63) would reform the congressional budget process to encourage working across the aisle to tackle our nation's fiscal challenges. Introduced by Senators Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Roy Blunt (R-MO), the measure includes the following reforms:

- **Bipartisan Budget Pathway:** Establishes an optional pathway for budgets with broad bipartisan support in the Senate Budget Committee. Under this process, budgets must include a debt-to-GDP target, year-by-year glideslope, and targets for the four main deficit drivers: (1) health care spending; (2) tax expenditures; (3) appropriated spending; and (4) revenue levels. Once passed by both chambers, CBO would report regularly on glideslope compliance.
- **Biennial Budget Resolutions:** Moves to a biennial budget process by requiring budget resolutions to cover at least two years, or a biennium, while maintaining annual appropriations. Specifically, the budget resolution would provide two years of allocations to the Committee on Appropriations, which would then provide topline discretionary spending levels for each fiscal year of a biennium.
- **Annual Reconciliation:** Preserves annual reconciliation under a biennial budget.
- **Revising the President's Role:** Takes the President out of the biennial timeline to allow Congress to begin work on a budget before the President submits a request. Also requires the Executive Branch to submit an Annual Supplemental Budget with prior- and current-year fiscal data, separate from the President's policy proposals, no later than December 1.
- **Congressional Budget Completion Date:** Requires Congress complete action on the budget resolution on or before May 1 of each odd-numbered year.
- **Senate Budget Committee Membership:** Coordinates budget planning by placing the Chairmen and Ranking Members of Appropriations and Finance Committees on the Budget Committee.
- **Fiscal State of the Nation:** Requires the Budget Committees of the House and Senate to hold a biennial, joint hearing with testimony from the Comptroller General of the United States regarding the audited financial states of the Executive Branch.
- **Tax Expenditures:** Includes total combined outlays and revenues for tax expenditures as an optional item in the budget resolution to provide greater transparency in the federal budget.