

Budget Bill Aims To Show Congress' Mettle

BY ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A chastened Congress is putting aside the crisis-driven budget battles of the past three years, embracing a \$1.1 trillion spending bill that restores or smooths the sharpest edges of the automatic cuts imposed as a result of its own dysfunction.

The huge election-year legislation preserves the downward trajectory on government spending demanded by Republicans. Yet the bipartisan measure steaming through Congress also preserves President Barack Obama's health care overhaul and stricter regulation of financial markets — and deflects the most significant attempts by Republicans to rewrite environmental rules and force other changes.

Lawmakers hope the compromise will show disgruntled voters before next fall's midterm election that Washington — especially its unpopular Congress — can perform its most basic function of responsibly funding the government. The bravado that prompted tea party Republicans to force a government shutdown in hopes of derailing "Obamacare" is long gone, replaced by an election-year desire to focus attention on the administration's troubled roll-out of the health care law instead of lurching from crisis to crisis.

"The average American looking at this, it looks pretty

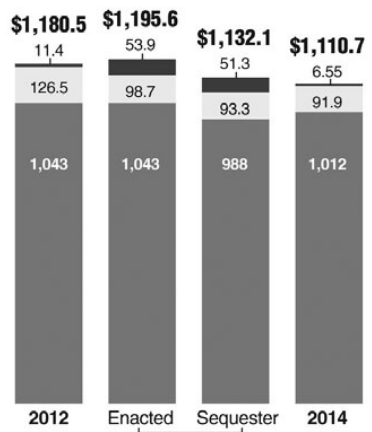
A bill both parties can live with

Congressional appropriators unveiled a \$1.1 trillion spending bill negotiated by both parties that would fund the government until Sept. 30. The House and Senate are to vote on the bill this week.

Compared to past years

Spending for fiscal years, in billions

Afghanistan Disaster, emergency
All other spending (except Social Security, Medicare, other entitlements)



Source: House Appropriations Committee, AP

Highlights

• Military pensions

Reverses cost-of-living adjustment cut for disabled retirees and survivors

• Agency funding

Restores \$45 billion in "sequester" cuts

• Military

\$487.4 billion for DOD core budget

• Health care, financial services laws

Funding to implement, but not at requested levels

• More for Head Start

education program; Western firefighters; veterans' medical care

dysfunctional for the last couple of years," said Rep. Tom Cole, R-Okla. "We need to rack up some achievements here — not just for Republicans but for incumbents in general and for the institution."

There could still be bumps in the road. Congress needs to raise the government's borrowing cap by the end of February or early March, and it's unclear how big of a battle that will be.

As for the compromise spending bill, the massive measure funds the operations

of virtually every federal agency, making cuts and additions reflecting the trade-offs of divided government. While delivering relief from painful budget cuts and caps known as sequestration, it still imposes a 3 percent cut on agency budgets relative to those approved last year before automatic reductions lopped about \$60 billion from them.

The measure doesn't contain in-your-face victories for either side.

The primary achievement

is that there is an agreement in the first place. Last year's collapse of the budget process was followed by a 16-day government shutdown and another brush with a disastrous default on U.S. debt. After the shutdown and debt crisis last fall, House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Senate Budget Committee Chairman Patty Murray, D-Wash., struck an agreement to avoid a repeat of the 5 percent cut applied to domestic agencies last year and to prevent the Pentagon from absorbing about \$20 billion in new cuts.

At the White House, President Barack Obama expressed support for the compromise and urged Congress to "pass that funding measure as quickly as possible so that all these agencies have some certainty around their budgets."

The measure contains dozens of hard-fought agreements between Democrats and Republicans as it fleshes out the details of the budget deal that Congress passed last month. That pact gave relatively modest but much-sought relief to the Pentagon and to domestic agencies after the deep budget cuts of last year.

Republicans were denied the ability to handcuff agencies responsible for implementing Obamacare and new Wall Street regulations, but they succeeded in curbing those budgets. Democrats won a big funding increase for Head Start early childhood education but were denied other money they wanted.

Appeals Court Sets Aside Internet Neutrality Rules

BY PETE YOST
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a decision that could reshape consumers' access to entertainment, news and other online content, a federal appeals court Tuesday set aside Federal Communications Commission rules designed to ensure that transmission of all Internet content be treated equally.

The anti-discrimination and anti-blocking rules have barred broadband providers from prioritizing some types of Internet traffic over others.

A three-judge panel said that the FCC has the authority to regulate broadband providers' treatment of Internet traffic. However, the judges concluded that the FCC failed to establish that its regulations don't overreach.

"Even though the commission has general authority to regulate in this arena, it may not impose requirements"

that violate statutory mandates, wrote appeals judge David Tatel. The judges said the FCC's rule in effect treated all Internet service providers as common carriers — transporters of people or goods for the general public on regular routes at set rates. Examples of common carriers include airlines, railroads, trucking companies and utilities.

But the court said the commission itself already had classified broadband providers as exempt from treatment as common carriers, which set up a legal contradiction. The FCC failed to establish that its regulations do not impose common carrier obligations on the Internet companies, the judges ruled in a setback for the Obama administration's goal of Internet openness.

The decision empowers leading Internet providers to decide which Internet services — such as Netflix

movies, YouTube videos, news stories and more — they would allow to be transmitted to consumers over their networks.

In some cases, Internet providers such as Verizon, AT&T and cable companies can demand that Google, for example, pay them to ensure that YouTube videos are accessible to all their consumers, or Google could pay extra to ensure that YouTube videos are delivered faster.

The court said it was aware of concerns expressed by supporters of the FCC policy about what might happen if the rules were overturned.

"For example, a broadband provider like Comcast might limit its end-user subscribers' ability to access the New York Times website if it wanted to spike traffic to its own news website, or it might degrade the quality of the connection to a search website like Bing if a competitor like Google paid for prioritized access," the court said.

Verizon, which filed the case against the FCC, said the decision "will not change consumers' ability to access and use the Internet as they do now."

It said the decision "will allow more room for innovation, and consumers will have more choices to determine for themselves how they access and experience the Internet. Verizon has been and remains committed to the open Internet."

Advocacy groups such as Public Knowledge called the ruling a disappointing loss for Internet users because the court found that the open Internet rules were built on a flawed legal foundation. FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler said the commission will now consider its options, including an appeal, to ensure that networks on which the Internet depends provide a free and open platform.

Clashes Kill 11 Amidst Voting In Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — A referendum on a new constitution laid bare the sharp divisions in Egypt six months after the military removed the elected Islamist president. Pro-army voters lined up Tuesday outside polling stations, singing patriotic songs, kissing images of Egypt's top officer and sharing their upbeat hopes for their troubled nation.

Despite heavy security, 11 people were killed in sporadic violence, with protesters burning tires and pelting police with rocks and firebombs to create just enough danger to keep many voters at home.

The two-day balloting will likely pave the way for a possible presidential run by the nation's top general after he ousted Islamist President Mohammed Morsi last July, setting off a fierce crackdown on Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood.

It's also a key milestone in a military-backed political roadmap toward new elections for a president and a parliament after the coup, which has left Egypt sharply divided between Brotherhood supporters in one camp, and the military, security forces in the other, as well as a large segment of a population exacerbated by three years of turmoil.

Amid a climate of fear and paranoia, authorities, the mostly pro-military media and a significant segment of the population are showing little or no tolerance for dissent. Campaigning for a "no" vote risked arrest by the police and Egyptians who have publicized their opposition to the charter, even just parts of it, are quickly labeled as traitors.

Boy, 12, Opens Fire At N.M. School

ROSWELL, N.M. (AP) — A 12-year-old New Mexico boy drew a shotgun from a band-instrument case and shot and wounded two classmates at his middle school Tuesday morning before a teacher talked him into dropping the weapon and he was taken into custody, officials and witnesses said.

Gov. Susana Martinez says a boy was critically injured and a girl was in serious condition following the shooting at Berrendo Middle School in Roswell.

The students were in the gym, where she said they typically hang out before classes start during cold and inclement weather. The 12-year-old pulled a shotgun and opened fire there at about 8 a.m.

But he was "quickly stopped by one staff member who walked right up to him and asked him to set down the firearm, which he did," Martinez said.

Officials at University Medical Center in Lubbock, Texas, say an 11-year-old boy was flown there in critical condition and a 13-year-old girl was en route in serious condition. Information from nurses treating the boy indicates he was the shooter's target, hospital spokesman Eric Finley said. There was some confusion about the boy's age, but Finley said his parents told the hospital he is 11.

Judge Strikes Okla. Gay Marriage Ban

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — A federal judge struck down Oklahoma's gay marriage ban Tuesday, but headed off any rush to the altar by setting aside his order while state and local officials complete an appeal.

It was the second time in a month that a federal judge has set aside a deeply conservative state's limits on same-sex marriage, after Utah's ban was reversed in December.

U.S. District Judge Terence Kern described Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage as "an arbitrary, irrational exclusion of just one class of Oklahoma citizens from a governmental benefit."

The ruling drew criticism from the governor, attorney general and other elected officials in this state known as the buckle of the Bible Belt. A state lawmaker who once said gay people posed a greater threat to the nation than terrorism blasted rulings from "activist judges."

Kern said the ban is a clear violation of the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause because it precludes same-sex couples from receiving an Oklahoma marriage license. In his 68-page ruling, Kern frequently referenced U.S. Supreme Court decisions issued last summer on gay marriage. He also took a shot at Oklahoma's high divorce rate, noting that "excluding same-sex couples from marriage has done little to keep Oklahoma families together thus far."

Kid Scoop

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

“Like” Kid Scoop on Facebook!

© 2014 by Vicki Whiting, Editor: Jeff Schmitt, Graphics: Vol. 30, No. 5

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Power of Words

The words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. helped to change the world. His words still inspire people today. He was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. His father was the minister of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, as was his father before him. Because Martin and his father had the same name, the family called him M.L.

Caring

When M.L. was young, he played with all the children who lived in his Atlanta neighborhood.

Use the code to find out what M.L.'s mother told him.

But when they reached school age, the white children went to a school for white children only, and M.L. was sent to a school for black children. After the first day of school, M.L. and his white friends were never allowed to play together again.

Compassion

M.L. was very sad when his friends would no longer play with him. He asked his mother why they couldn't.

She talked about why the family didn't ride streetcars, why there was a WHITES ONLY sign on the elevator at City Hall, why there were restaurants that refused to serve black people, and theaters that allowed blacks to sit only in the balcony. She said that it was simply because some white people didn't understand that we all deserve equal treatment.

Integrity

As M.L. grew up, he saw more and more examples of segregation. He also saw his father and others speak out against hatred and segregation. These people taught M.L. about the power of words. He learned that words could heal or hurt.

"When the history books are written, someone will say there lived black people who had the courage to stand up for their rights."

— Dr. Martin Luther King

Use Your Marbles

Martin and his friends have been collecting marbles. They counted to see how many marbles in all. Use the clue to see if you can figure out how many marbles.

Clue: When counted by 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, or 6s, there is always one marble left over. When counted by 7s, there are no marbles left over. The answer is between 299 and 310.

Discipline

8 + 7 = the driver forced him to give up his seat to a white person.

3 + 5 = Once he gave a speech in another town about the rights of black people. He

9 + 11 = with a Ph.D. in Theology, M.L. would now be addressed as Dr. King.

2 + 4 = As M.L. started school, he discovered he could dazzle people with his words.

9 + 8 = With hard work and study, M.L. eventually graduated from Boston University

5 + 6 = won a prize for his speech attacking segregation laws. On the bus ride home,

The sentences in the above story are out of order. Find the correct order by doing the math problem next to each line. Then put the line in order from the smallest sum to the largest.

Standards Link: Character Education: Students identify character traits in others.

Courage

For more than 20 years, Martin Luther King spoke out against _____ and segregation. During these years, he was arrested, had his _____ bombed, and was accused of being "un-American."

In 1963, Dr. King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in Washington, D.C. "I have a dream that one day in Alabama little black boys and black girls will _____ hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and _____."

In 1964, the _____ Rights Act was passed, granting equal rights to black Americans and Dr. King received the Nobel Peace _____.

Sadly, just four _____ later, Dr. King was shot and killed in Memphis, Tenn. But his words live on.

Double Double Word Search

MARTIN CIVIL BOSTON EBENEZER MARBLES ALABAMA LUTHER KING DREAM SPEECH WHITE IMPACT BOYS PLAY HEAL

Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Stem and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Quiz a Friend!

Quiz: a friend or family member with the following statements. If they don't know the answers, you can use today's Kid Scoop to be the teacher! All the answers can be found on today's Kid Scoop page.

- Where was Martin Luther King born?
- From which college did Dr. King receive his Ph.D.?
- In 1964 Dr. King was awarded an important prize. What was it called?
- In what year was the Civil Rights Act passed?
- What was the name of the famous speech Dr. King gave in Washington D.C.?
- Give at least one example, recounted in today's Kid Scoop page, of Martin Luther King's courage.
- In what year was Dr. King shot and killed?
- Words were one tool Dr. Martin Luther King used to bring about social change.

ANSWERS
1. Atlanta, GA
2. Boston University
3. Nobel Peace Prize
4. 1964
5. "I Have a Dream"
6. Continuing to speak for civil rights even after being arrested
7. 1968
8. True

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Demonstrate comprehension by identifying answers in text.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

www.kidscoop.com

Just Like Martin

Look through today's newspaper for examples of people acting in a way that reminds you of Martin Luther King. Select one person and write a paragraph explaining how that person is somewhat like Martin Luther King.

Standards Link: Writing Applications: Write descriptions that use details to present unified impressions of people.

Write On!

Leadership

What are the qualities of a good leader? Who do you know that is a good leader?

Quiz a Friend!

Quiz: a friend or family member with the following statements. If they don't know the answers, you can use today's Kid Scoop to be the teacher! All the answers can be found on today's Kid Scoop page.

- Where was Martin Luther King born?
- From which college did Dr. King receive his Ph.D.?
- In 1964 Dr. King was awarded an important prize. What was it called?
- In what year was the Civil Rights Act passed?
- What was the name of the famous speech Dr. King gave in Washington D.C.?
- Give at least one example, recounted in today's Kid Scoop page, of Martin Luther King's courage.
- In what year was Dr. King shot and killed?
- Words were one tool Dr. Martin Luther King used to bring about social change.

ANSWERS
1. Atlanta, GA
2. Boston University
3. Nobel Peace Prize
4. 1964
5. "I Have a Dream"
6. Continuing to speak for civil rights even after being arrested
7. 1968
8. True

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Demonstrate comprehension by identifying answers in text.