



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 16, 2014

Voters Finally Learn What's in the CRomnibus Bill Passed by the Senate

The so-called CRomnibus bill (a combination of a Continuing Resolution and an omnibus spending bill covering dozens of federal agencies) [was passed by the Senate late Saturday night](#), 56-40, approving government spending through next September.

Passage, although delayed slightly by complaints from Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) that it funded President Obama's illegal immigration executive order without debate, was guaranteed when 24 Republicans, including every GOP leader, voted for it. This allowed some Democrats the opportunity to vote against it as a sop to constituents or to build their resumes in contemplated runs for the White House in 2016. They included newly inducted Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.), along with Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Amy Klobucher (D-Minn.), and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.).

Others who Republicans bailed out with their "yea" votes included naysayers Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), as well as Senate Republican John McCain (R-Ariz.), who just announced his try for a sixth term in 2016 and didn't want a "yea" vote for this monstrosity sully his resume.

So determined was the GOP leadership to get the bill to the floor, vote for it, and head home for the weekend, that it turned down Cruz's point-of-order objection that the bill funded Obama's illegal executive order on immigration, 74-22. After that it was smooth sailing, with support from the GOP leadership, including Senators Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and John Cornyn (R-Texas).

Provisions in the 1,700-page bill included rewards and payoffs to special interests, such as the slight push-back to the Dodd-Frank Act that would have required banks to separate their speculative activities from their regular banking services. It would have removed taxpayer protections in case their trading in derivatives, allegedly used to help reduce their customers' risks, went south.

The bill raises the cap on the amount wealthy donors can give to political parties, limiting them to \$1.55 million. It prevents the District of Columbia from implementing a local ordinance allowing the recreational use of marijuana. It pushes out for one year the government's determination that the sage grouse is an endangered species, in an effort to protect various oil-drilling interests.

School lunch requirements were softened a little, with local districts now being allowed a little more freedom in deciding what to feed their charges. The bill also permits pension plan trustees operating





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without government guarantees to “adjust” benefits, saving underfunded pension plans the need to go to court to accomplish the task.

Funding to fight ISIS in the amount of \$64 billion was provided to the Pentagon for its overseas “contingency operations,” which include, at the moment, the fight against Islamic forces in Iraq and Syria.

Funding for the Ebola scare is in the bill as well, to the tune of \$5.4 billion.

There was little left unfunded. The bill contains more federal money to fund its creeping takeover of local police forces, calling them “community policing programs.” There is, however, no funding for body cameras nor is there any money for state-proposed high-speed rail projects, and funding for Obama’s “Race to the Top” school program was eliminated, along with a planned gift of support to the International Monetary Fund.

About the only other bright spot in the bleak landscape of more government spending on programs never dreamed of by the Founders was the funding for the Department of Homeland Security. It is funded only until February when Senator Cruz expressed hopes that the new congress, made up of more Republicans, might quash funding for Obama’s immigration order.

The only issue not covered in the spending bill is the long-term impact such out-of-control spending will have on the country over the next decade. According to David Stockman, President Reagan’s director of Office of Management and Budget and now a regular commentator at Stockman’s Contra Corner, passage of the CRomnibus bill wasn’t a victory of bipartisanship, as some in the media called it, but instead a sell-out to special interests and a capitulation by Republicans. As Stockman noted:

Notwithstanding all the palaver about the shrinking deficit, here we are deep into the 6th year of so-called recovery and the national debt is still being jacked-up....

Washington’s utter nonchalance about this dangerous condition is owing to the tyranny of the Fed’s free money-fueled Wall Street casino.

At the present rate of spending as projected by the Congressional Budget Office, the national debt is expected to rise by between \$8 trillion and \$15 trillion in just 10 years. This far outpaces the projected growth in the economy, as noted by Stockman:

US nominal GDP is not likely to exceed \$24 trillion 10 years from now, whereas the public debt could easily exceed \$33 trillion under current “kick-the-can” policies.

Even Stockman fails to include any mention of the real deficits when unfunded — and uncounted — promises of the welfare state are taken into account. The real numbers exceed, according to Boston University Professor Laurence Kotlikoff, \$200 trillion, far in excess of anyone’s prediction that the United States will be able to pay it off.

Oblivious to the obvious, the GOP — the party of smaller government and financial prudence — continues to support and defend the indefensible and the unconstitutional growth of government through spending bills such as the CRomnibus passed late Saturday night.

Image of one hundred thousand dollar bill: [National Numismatic Collection](#), [National Museum of American History](#)

A graduate of an Ivy League school and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics.



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