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March 23. 2015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I urge you to oppose the budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) proposed by Chairman Tom Price. This budget plan would impose considerable hardships on Americans who can least afford it in order to slash taxes for the wealthy and corporations, and to boost Pentagon spending.

We've seen this budget plan for five years running now. It's based on the Ryan budget, but the cuts are once again too deep to sustain essential programs serving working families and poor and vulnerable Americans with $5.5 trillion over 10 years hacked from the budget and with 69% of the cuts from low-income programs. It once again sets woefully inadequate spending levels for critical public services and slashes over three-quarters of a trillion dollars from post-sequester, non-defense discretionary spending (NDD) in order to increase defense spending by a whopping $613 billion. NDD programs are already being compromised by austere budget caps, but these additional cuts would incapacitate state and local governments, leading to massive cuts in vital public services and enormous job losses that would threaten our fragile economic recovery. The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) projects that the House proposal would result in the loss of 1.3 million jobs next year and 2.9 million jobs the following year.

Safety-net programs that millions of children, seniors and the disabled rely on are once again a target. The Price budget would end Medicare as we know it and turn the guarantee of health benefits for seniors into a voucher, doubling out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries. It would gut Medicaid, impose inflexible funding caps through block grants to states, and shift enormous and unsustainable costs to the elderly, disabled and states. It would also repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), increasing the number of Americans without health insurance and eliminating important protections now enjoyed for the first time by millions of Americans.

Instead of increasing revenues to reinvest in much needed programs to spur job and economic growth, the Price budget proposes tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit corporations and the wealthy. The budget also relies on the gimmicks of dynamic scoring and sham accounting.

The Price budget would hurt families, kill job growth and send the economy back into a tailspin. We need solutions like those proposed in the Democratic, Progressive Caucus, and Congressional Black Caucus alternative budgets which support the middle class by creating jobs and protecting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other vital services. I strongly urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 27 and support these progressive alternatives.

Sincerely,

Scott Frey
Director of Federal Government Affairs

SF:BL:rf

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