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SUBCHAPTER III—LINE ITEM VETO

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§ 681. Disclaimer

Nothing contained in this Act, or in any amendments made by this Act, shall be construed as—
(1) asserting or conceding the constitutional powers or limitations of either the Congress or the President;
(2) ratifying or approving any impoundment heretofore or hereafter executed or approved by the President or any other Federal officer or employee, except insofar as pursuant to statutory authorization then in effect;
(3) affecting in any way the claims or defenses of any party to litigation concerning any impoundment; or
(4) superseding any provision of law which requires the obligation of budget authority or the making of outlays thereunder.


References in Text

This Act, referred to in provision preceding par. (1), means Pub. L. 93–344, July 12, 1974, 88 Stat. 297, as amended, known as the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, which enacted chapters 17, 17A, and 17B, and section 190a–3 of this title and sections 11a, 11c, 11d, 1020a of former Title 31, amended sections 11, 665, 701, 1020, 1151, 1152, 1153, and 1154 of former Title 31, section 105 of Title 1, General Provisions, sections 190b and 190d of this title, repealed sections 571 and 581c–1 of former Title 31 and sections 66 and 81 of this title, and enacted provisions set out as notes under sections 190a–1, 621, 632, and 682 of this title, section 105 of Title 1, and section 1020 of former Title 31. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 621 of this title and Tables.

Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1400 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

Effective Date

Chapter effective July 12, 1974, see section 905(a) of Pub. L. 93–344, formerly set out as a note under section 621 of this title.

Short Title of 1996 Amendment

Pub. L. 104–130, § 1, Apr. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 1200, which provided that Pub. L. 104–130 (enacting former subchapter III (§ 691 et seq.) of this chapter and provisions set out as a note under section 691 of this title and amending provisions set out as notes under section 621 of this title) could be cited as the “Line Item Veto Act”, was omitted pursuant to section 5 of Pub. L. 104–130, set out as an Effective and Termination Dates note under section 691 of this title.

Short Title

For short title of title X of Pub. L. 93–344, which enacted this chapter, as the “Impoundment Control Act of 1974”, see section 1(a) of Pub. L. 93–344, as amended, set out as a note under section 621 of this title.
§ 682. Definitions

For purposes of sections 682 to 688 of this title—

(1) “deferral of budget authority” includes—

(A) withholding or delaying the obligation or expenditure of budget authority (whether by establishing reserves or otherwise) provided for projects or activities; or

(B) any other type of Executive action or inaction which effectively precludes the obligation or expenditure of budget authority, including authority to obligate by contract in advance of appropriations as specifically authorized by law;

(2) “Comptroller General” means the Comptroller General of the United States;

(3) “rescission bill” means a bill or joint resolution which only rescinds, in whole or in part, budget authority proposed to be rescinded in a special message transmitted by the President under section 683 of this title, and upon which the Congress completes action before the end of the first period of 45 calendar days of continuous session of the Congress after the date on which the President’s message is received by the Congress;

(4) “impoundment resolution” means a resolution of the House of Representatives or the Senate which only expresses its disapproval of a proposed deferral of budget authority set forth in a special message transmitted by the President under section 684 of this title; and

(5) continuity of a session of the Congress shall be considered as broken only by an adjournment of the Congress sine die, and the days on which either House is not in session because of an adjournment of more than 3 days to a day certain shall be excluded in the computation of the 45-day period referred to in paragraph (3) of this section and in section 683 of this title, and the 25-day periods referred to in sections 687 and 688 (b)(1) of this title. If a special message is transmitted under section 683 of this title during any Congress and the last session of such Congress adjourns sine die before the expiration of 45 calendar days of continuous session (or a special message is so transmitted after the last session of the Congress adjourns sine die), the message shall be deemed to have been retransmitted on the first day of the succeeding Congress and the 45-day period referred to in paragraph (3) of this section and in section 683 of this title (with respect to such message) shall commence on the day after such first day.


Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1401 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

§ 683. Rescission of budget authority

(a) Transmittal of special message

Whenever the President determines that all or part of any budget authority will not be required to carry out the full objectives or scope of programs for which it is provided or that such budget authority should be rescinded for fiscal policy or other reasons (including the termination of authorized projects or activities for which budget authority has been provided), or whenever all or part of budget authority provided for only one fiscal year is to be reserved from obligation for such fiscal year, the President shall transmit to both Houses of Congress a special message specifying—

(1) the amount of budget authority which he proposes to be rescinded or which is to be so reserved;
(2) any account, department, or establishment of the Government to which such budget authority is available for obligation, and the specific project or governmental functions involved;
(3) the reasons why the budget authority should be rescinded or is to be so reserved;
(4) to the maximum extent practicable, the estimated fiscal, economic, and budgetary effect of the proposed rescission or of the reservation; and
(5) all facts, circumstances, and considerations relating to or bearing upon the proposed rescission or the reservation and the decision to effect the proposed rescission or the reservation, and to the maximum extent practicable, the estimated effect of the proposed rescission or the reservation upon the objects, purposes, and programs for which the budget authority is provided.

(b) Requirement to make available for obligation

Any amount of budget authority proposed to be rescinded or that is to be reserved as set forth in such special message shall be made available for obligation unless, within the prescribed 45-day period, the Congress has completed action on a rescission bill rescinding all or part of the amount proposed to be rescinded or that is to be reserved. Funds made available for obligation under this procedure may not be proposed for rescission again.


Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1402 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

Amendments

1987—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 100–119 inserted at end “Funds made available for obligation under this procedure may not be proposed for rescission again.”

§ 684. Proposed deferrals of budget authority

(a) Transmittal of special message

Whenever the President, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the head of any department or agency of the United States, or any officer or employee of the United States proposes to defer any budget authority provided for a specific purpose or project, the President shall transmit to the House of Representatives and the Senate a special message specifying—

(1) the amount of the budget authority proposed to be deferred;
(2) any account, department, or establishment of the Government to which such budget authority is available for obligation, and the specific projects or governmental functions involved;
(3) the period of time during which the budget authority is proposed to be deferred;
(4) the reasons for the proposed deferral, including any legal authority invoked to justify the proposed deferral;
(5) to the maximum extent practicable, the estimated fiscal, economic, and budgetary effect of the proposed deferral; and
(6) all facts, circumstances, and considerations relating to or bearing upon the proposed deferral and the decision to effect the proposed deferral, including an analysis of such facts, circumstances, and considerations in terms of their application to any legal authority, including specific elements of legal authority, invoked to justify such proposed deferral, and to the maximum extent practicable, the estimated effect of the proposed deferral upon the objects, purposes, and programs for which the budget authority is provided.
A special message may include one or more proposed deferrals of budget authority. A deferral may not be proposed for any period of time extending beyond the end of the fiscal year in which the special message proposing the deferral is transmitted to the House and the Senate.

(b) Consistency with legislative policy

Deferrals shall be permissible only—
   (1) to provide for contingencies;
   (2) to achieve savings made possible by or through changes in requirements or greater efficiency of operations; or
   (3) as specifically provided by law.

No officer or employee of the United States may defer any budget authority for any other purpose.

(c) Exception

The provisions of this section do not apply to any budget authority proposed to be rescinded or that is to be reserved as set forth in a special message required to be transmitted under section 683 of this title.


Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1403 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

Amendments

1987—Pub. L. 100–119 amended section generally, substituting substantially similar provisions in subsecs. (a) and (c) and substituting subsec. (b) for former subsec. (b) which read as follows: “Any amount of budget authority proposed to be deferred, as set forth in a special message transmitted under subsection (a) of this section, shall be made available for obligation if either House of Congress passes an impoundment resolution disapproving such proposed deferral.”

§ 685. Transmission of messages; publication

(a) Delivery to House and Senate

Each special message transmitted under section 683 or 684 of this title shall be transmitted to the House of Representatives and the Senate on the same day, and shall be delivered to the Clerk of the House of Representatives if the House is not in session, and to the Secretary of the Senate if the Senate is not in session. Each special message so transmitted shall be referred to the appropriate committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Each such message shall be printed as a document of each House.

(b) Delivery to Comptroller General

A copy of each special message transmitted under section 683 or 684 of this title, shall be transmitted to the Comptroller General on the same day it is transmitted to the House of Representatives and the Senate. In order to assist the Congress in the exercise of its functions under section 683 or 684 of this title, the Comptroller General shall review each such message and inform the House of Representatives and the Senate as promptly as practicable with respect to—

(1) in the case of a special message transmitted under section 683 of this title, the facts surrounding the proposed rescission or the reservation of budget authority (including the probable effects thereof); and

(2) in the case of a special message transmitted under section 684 of this title,
   (A) the facts surrounding each proposed deferral of budget authority (including the probable effects thereof) and
(B) whether or not (or to what extent), in his judgment, such proposed deferral is in accordance with existing statutory authority.

(c) Transmission of supplementary messages

If any information contained in a special message transmitted under section 683 or 684 of this title is subsequently revised, the President shall transmit to both Houses of Congress and the Comptroller General a supplementary message stating and explaining such revision. Any such supplementary message shall be delivered, referred, and printed as provided in subsection (a) of this section. The Comptroller General shall promptly notify the House of Representatives and the Senate of any changes in the information submitted by him under subsection (b) of this section which may be necessitated by such revision.

(d) Printing in Federal Register

Any special message transmitted under section 683 or 684 of this title, and any supplementary message transmitted under subsection (c) of this section, shall be printed in the first issue of the Federal Register published after such transmittal.

(e) Cumulative reports of proposed rescissions, reservations, and deferrals of budget authority

(1) The President shall submit a report to the House of Representatives and the Senate, not later than the 10th day of each month during a fiscal year, listing all budget authority for that fiscal year with respect to which—

(A) he has transmitted a special message under section 683 of this title with respect to a proposed rescission or a reservation; and

(B) he has transmitted a special message under section 684 of this title proposing a deferral.

Such report shall also contain, with respect to each such proposed rescission or deferral, or each such reservation, the information required to be submitted in the special message with respect thereto under section 683 or 684 of this title.

(2) Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall be printed in the first issue of the Federal Register published after its submission.

(Pub. L. 93–344, title X, § 1014, July 12, 1974, 88 Stat. 335.)

Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1404 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

Ex. Ord. No. 11845. Delegation of Certain Reporting Functions to Director of Office of Management and Budget


By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–344; 88 Stat. 332, (2 U.S.C. 681 et seq.), hereinafter referred to as the Act) [subchapters I and II of this chapter], and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget is hereby designated and empowered to exercise, as of October 1, 1974 without ratification or other action of the President (1) the functions required by sections 1014(b) and 1014(d) of the Act [subsecs. (b) and (d) of this section] of transmitting to the Comptroller General of the United States and to the Office of the Federal Register copies of special messages transmitted pursuant to section 1012 or 1013 (2 U.S.C. 683 and 684) of the Act; and (2) the function conferred upon the President by section 1014(e) of the Act (2 U.S.C. 685 (e)) of submitting to the Congress cumulative reports of proposed rescissions, reservations, and deferrals of budget authority.

§ 686. Reports by Comptroller General

(a) Failure to transmit special message

- 7 -
If the Comptroller General finds that the President, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the head of any department or agency of the United States, or any other officer or employee of the United States—

(1) is to establish a reserve or proposes to defer budget authority with respect to which the President is required to transmit a special message under section 683 or 684 of this title; or

(2) has ordered, permitted, or approved the establishment of such a reserve or a deferral of budget authority;

and that the President has failed to transmit a special message with respect to such reserve or deferral, the Comptroller General shall make a report on such reserve or deferral and any available information concerning it to both Houses of Congress. The provisions of sections 682 to 688 of this title shall apply with respect to such reserve or deferral in the same manner and with the same effect as if such report of the Comptroller General were a special message transmitted by the President under section 683 or 684 of this title, and, for purposes of sections 682 to 688 of this title, such report shall be considered a special message transmitted under section 683 or 684 of this title.

(b) Incorrect classification of special message

If the President has transmitted a special message to both Houses of Congress in accordance with section 683 or 684 of this title, and the Comptroller General believes that the President so transmitted the special message in accordance with one of those sections when the special message should have been transmitted in accordance with the other of those sections, the Comptroller General shall make a report to both Houses of the Congress setting forth his reasons.


Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1405 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

Reaffirmation


§ 687. Suits by Comptroller General

If, under this chapter, budget authority is required to be made available for obligation and such budget authority is not made available for obligation, the Comptroller General is hereby expressly empowered, through attorneys of his own selection, to bring a civil action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia to require such budget authority to be made available for obligation, and such court is hereby expressly empowered to enter in such civil action, against any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States, any decree, judgment, or order which may be necessary or appropriate to make such budget authority available for obligation. No civil action shall be brought by the Comptroller General under this section until the expiration of 25 calendar days of continuous session of the Congress following the date on which an explanatory statement by the Comptroller General of the circumstances giving rise to the action contemplated has been filed with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate.

Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1406 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.

Amendments

1987—Pub. L. 100–119 substituted “If, under this chapter” for “If, under section 683 (b) or 684 (b) of this title”.

1984—Pub. L. 98–620 struck out provision requiring that the courts give precedence to civil actions brought under this section, and to appeals and writs from decisions in such actions, over all other civil actions, appeals, and writs.

Effective Date of 1984 Amendment

Amendment by Pub. L. 98–620 not applicable to cases pending on Nov. 8, 1984, see section 403 of Pub. L. 98–620, set out as an Effective Date note under section 1657 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

Reaffirmation

For provision reaffirming this section, see section 206(c) of Pub. L. 100–119, set out as a note under section 686 of this title.

§ 688. Procedure in House of Representatives and Senate

(a) Referral

Any rescission bill introduced with respect to a special message or impoundment resolution introduced with respect to a proposed deferral of budget authority shall be referred to the appropriate committee of the House of Representatives or the Senate, as the case may be.

(b) Discharge of committee

(1) If the committee to which a rescission bill or impoundment resolution has been referred has not reported it at the end of 25 calendar days of continuous session of the Congress after its introduction, it is in order to move either to discharge the committee from further consideration of the bill or resolution or to discharge the committee from further consideration of any other rescission bill with respect to the same special message or impoundment resolution with respect to the same proposed deferral, as the case may be, which has been referred to the committee.

(2) A motion to discharge may be made only by an individual favoring the bill or resolution, may be made only if supported by one-fifth of the Members of the House involved (a quorum being present), and is highly privileged in the House and privileged in the Senate (except that it may not be made after the committee has reported a bill or resolution with respect to the same special message or the same proposed deferral, as the case may be); and debate thereon shall be limited to not more than 1 hour, the time to be divided in the House equally between those favoring and those opposing the bill or resolution, and to be divided in the Senate equally between, and controlled by, the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees. An amendment to the motion is not in order, and it is not in order to move to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to.

(c) Floor consideration in House

(1) When the committee of the House of Representatives has reported, or has been discharged from further consideration of, a rescission bill or impoundment resolution, it shall at any time thereafter be in order (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of the bill or resolution. The motion shall be highly privileged and not debatable. An amendment to the motion shall not be in order, nor shall it be in order to move to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to.

(2) Debate on a rescission bill or impoundment resolution shall be limited to not more than 2 hours, which shall be divided equally between those favoring and those opposing the bill or resolution. A motion further to limit debate shall not be debatable. In the case of an impoundment resolution,
no amendment to, or motion to recommit, the resolution shall be in order. It shall not be in order to move to reconsider the vote by which a rescission bill or impoundment resolution is agreed to or disagreed to.

(3) Motions to postpone, made with respect to the consideration of a rescission bill or impoundment resolution, and motions to proceed to the consideration of other business, shall be decided without debate.

(4) All appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to the application of the Rules of the House of Representatives to the procedure relating to any rescission bill or impoundment resolution shall be decided without debate.

(5) Except to the extent specifically provided in the preceding provisions of this subsection, consideration of any rescission bill or impoundment resolution and amendments thereto (or any conference report thereon) shall be governed by the Rules of the House of Representatives applicable to other bills and resolutions, amendments, and conference reports in similar circumstances.

(d) Floor consideration in Senate

(1) Debate in the Senate on any rescission bill or impoundment resolution, and all amendments thereto (in the case of a rescission bill) and debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours. The time shall be equally divided between, and controlled by, the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees.

(2) Debate in the Senate on any amendment to a rescission bill shall be limited to 2 hours, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the bill. Debate on any amendment to an amendment, to such a bill, and debate on any debatable motion or appeal in connection with such a bill or an impoundment resolution shall be limited to 1 hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the bill or resolution, except that in the event the manager of the bill or resolution is in favor of any such amendment, motion, or appeal, the time in opposition thereto, shall be controlled by the minority leader or his designee. No amendment that is not germane to the provisions of a rescission bill shall be received. Such leaders, or either of them, may, from the time under their control on the passage of a rescission bill or impoundment resolution, allot additional time to any Senator during the consideration of any amendment, debatable motion, or appeal.

(3) A motion to further limit debate is not debatable. In the case of a rescission bill, a motion to recommit (except a motion to recommit with instructions to report back within a specified number of days, not to exceed 3, not counting any day on which the Senate is not in session) is not in order. Debate on any such motion to recommit shall be limited to one hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the concurrent resolution. In the case of an impoundment resolution, no amendment or motion to recommit is in order.

(4) The conference report on any rescission bill shall be in order in the Senate at any time after the third day (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) following the day on which such a conference report is reported and is available to Members of the Senate. A motion to proceed to the consideration of the conference report may be made even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to.

(5) During the consideration in the Senate of the conference report on any rescission bill, debate shall be limited to 2 hours to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the majority leader and minority leader or their designees. Debate on any debatable motion or appeal related to the conference report shall be limited to 30 minutes, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the conference report.

(6) Should the conference report be defeated, debate on any request for a new conference and the appointment of conferees shall be limited to one hour, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the manager of the conference report and the minority leader or his designee, and should any motion be made to instruct the conferees before the conferees are named, debate on such
motion shall be limited to 30 minutes, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the conference report. Debate on any amendment to any such instructions shall be limited to 20 minutes, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the mover and the manager of the conference report. In all cases when the manager of the conference report is in favor of any motion, appeal, or amendment, the time in opposition shall be under the control of the minority leader or his designee.

(7) In any case in which there are amendments in disagreement, time on each amendment shall be limited to 30 minutes, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the manager of the conference report and the minority leader or his designee. No amendment that is not germane to the provisions of such amendments shall be received.


Codification

Section was formerly classified to section 1407 of Title 31 prior to the general revision and enactment of Title 31, Money and Finance, by Pub. L. 97–258, § 1, Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 877.
SUBCHAPTER III—LINE ITEM VETO

Constitutionality of Line Item Veto

For decision holding line item veto unconstitutional, see Clinton v. City of New York, 524 U.S. 417, 118 S.Ct. 2091, 141 L.Ed. 2d 393 (1998).

§§ 691 to 692. Omitted

Codification

Sections were omitted pursuant to section 5 of Pub. L. 104–130, set out as an Effective and Termination Dates note below.


Section 691b, Pub. L. 93–344, title X, § 1023, as added Pub. L. 104–130, § 2(a), Apr. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 1202, provided that cancellations were to be effective unless disapproved.


Effective and Termination Dates

Pub. L. 104–130, § 5, Apr. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 1212, provided that: “This Act [enacting this subchapter and provisions set out as a note under section 681 of this title and amending provisions set out as notes under section 621 of this title] and the amendments made by it shall take effect and apply to measures enacted on the earlier of—

“(1) the day after the enactment into law, pursuant to Article I, section 7, of the Constitution of the United States, of an Act entitled ‘An Act to provide for a seven-year plan for deficit reduction and achieve a balanced Federal budget.’; or

“(2) January 1, 1997;

and shall have no force or effect on or after January 1, 2005.”