



Barbara Boxer

U.S. Senator, California (D)

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Congressional Scorecard 114-1: 50%

Based on the Principles of the U.S. Constitution

✓ Constitutional	✗ Unconstitutional	— Did not Vote	Vote
1. Trade Promotion Authority: Renews the on-again-off-again "fast track authority" that Congress has often awarded to the president over the past several decades. Constitutional: No · Cast: No · H.R. 1314 · 05/22/2015			✓
2. Raising the Spending Cap and Suspending the National Debt Limit: Temporarily suspends the national debt limit and puts a ceiling on how much money the federal government is allowed to borrow. Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · H.R. 1314 · 10/30/2015			✗
3. TSA: Authorize funding for additional Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · S.Amdt. 3482 to S.Amdt. 3464 to H.R. 636 · 04/07/2016			✗
4. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: Prohibits the use of funds to carry out the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule and notice of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Constitutional: No · Cast: None · S.Amdt. 3897 to S.Amdt. 3896 to H.R. 2577 · 05/19/2016			—
5. GMO Labeling: Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a national mandatory disclosure standard for genetically modified organism (GMO) food. Constitutional: No · Cast: None · S. 764 Amdt. No. 4935 · 07/07/2016			—
6. Continuing Appropriations: Provides funding for federal government operations at the fiscal year 2016 level through 4/28/2017 at an annualized rate of \$1.07 trillion. Estimated Cost per household: -\$8,504.00/year. Constitutional: No · Cast: No · H.R. 2028 · 12/09/2016			✓



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\$297,522

U.S. National Debt Per Household as of September 3,
2026

Why do these votes matter?

1. Trade Promotion Authority

The TPA section of H.R. 1314 would renew the on-again-off-again "fast track authority" that Congress has often awarded to the president over the past several decades. The essential features of TPA are: (1) Congress unconstitutionally delegates authority "to regulate commerce with foreign nations" to the Executive Branch; and (2) Congress dramatically increases the probability of approval of trade agreements by restricting itself to an up-or-down vote with no amendments or filibusters allowed.

TPA would facilitate the subordination of the national independence of the United States to regional trading blocs, a power that is not granted to any branch of government in the Constitution.

2. Raising the Spending Cap and Suspending the National Debt Limit

This suspends the national debt limit until March 15, 2017, at which time the ceiling on how much money the federal government is allowed to borrow would be re-established at the size of the federal debt at that time.

The federal government should live within its means, suspending the debt limit is even worse than raising it, and most of the spending responsible for the ballooning national debt is unconstitutional.

3. TSA

Senator Heinrich (D-N.M.) introduced an amendment that would authorize funding for additional Transportation Security Administration (TSA) teams for fiscal 2016 and 2017. Heinrich's amendment would also expand the definition of law-enforcement terrorism-prevention activities to include mass shooting preparedness exercises.

The TSA is a classic example of federal overreach and should be abolished, not given additional funding. Regarding the expansion of terrorism-prevention activities to include mass-shooting preparedness exercises, this is another transparent attempt to federalize law enforcement and expand the police state.

4. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) introduced an amendment that would prohibit the use of funds to carry out the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule and notice of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

There is no authorization in the Constitution for Congress to establish and fund the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the first place, let alone fund the radical AFFH rule that imposes unconstitutional federal controls on local zoning and planning authorities.

5. GMO Labeling

Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a national mandatory disclosure standard for genetically modified organism (GMO) food within two years of the bill's enactment. This bill as amended "prohibits states or political subdivisions of states from establishing or continuing requirements for labeling or disclosure of bioengineered or genetically engineered food that are not identical to the mandatory disclosure standard established by this bill." Companies could choose to provide GMO disclosure through a symbol or by electronic bar codes that could be scanned by smart phones.

The power to pass legislation regarding agriculture in general and the labeling of agricultural products in particular was not granted to Congress by the Constitution. Therefore, this amended version of S. 764 usurps the power of the states to pass laws regarding GMO labeling of food products.

6. Continuing Appropriations

Perpetuates Congress' growing habit of avoiding hard decisions about the level of federal spending by kicking the can down the road into the middle of the new fiscal year, with a continuing resolution that would provide funding for federal government operations at the fiscal year 2016 level through April 28, 2017 at an annualized discretionary rate of \$1.07 trillion.

With this Continuing Appropriations bill Congress is failing to address its fiscally and constitutionally irresponsible budgeting and appropriating process that is currently yielding annual federal deficits measured in the hundreds of billions of dollars that contribute directly to the dramatic growth of our \$20 trillion national debt.