

FREEDOMINDEX.US

CONGRESSIONAL SCORECARD

BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION



View the Freedom Toolbox

Scan to learn more about the Freedom Index, view legislative alerts, and deepen your understanding of the U.S. Constitution and America's founding principles. Visit <https://freedomindex.us/tools/>

\$297,522

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



Steve Israel

U.S. Representative, NY 3rd (D)

Website: <http://israel.house.gov>

freedomindex.us/1189/



Congressional Scorecard 114-1: 17%

✓ Constitutional ✗ Unconstitutional — Did not Vote Vote

1. Amtrack Reauthorization: Authorizes \$7.2 billion for Amtrak funding over the next four years.

Estimated Cost per household: **-\$58.00/year.**

Constitutional: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · H R 749 · 03/04/2015



2. Trade Promotion Authority: The House held separate roll call votes on the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) sections of H.R. 1314.

Constitutional: **No** · Cast: **No** · H R 1314 · 06/12/2015



3. Environmental Executive Orders: Prohibits the use of funds for President Obama's executive orders that require the Defense Department to meet "green" energy mandates.

Constitutional: **Yes** · Cast: **No** · H R 4909 · 05/18/2016



4. Warrantless Surveillance: Bars the use of funds in the bill from being used to conduct warrantless searches of Americans' digital communications that have crossed the U.S. border.

Constitutional: **Yes** · Cast: **No** · H R 5293 · 06/16/2016



5. Aid to Syria: Prohibits the use of funds in the bill for the Syria Train and Equip Program.

Constitutional: **Yes** · Cast: **No** · H R 5293 · 06/16/2016



6. Continuing Appropriations: Provides funding for federal government operations at the fiscal year 2016 level through April 28, 2017 at an annualized "discretionary" rate of \$1.07 trillion.

Estimated Cost per household: **-\$8,504.00/year.**

Constitutional: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · H R 2028 · 12/08/2016



Why do these votes matter?

1. Amtrak Reauthorization

This would authorize \$7.2 billion for Amtrak funding over the next four years, through 2019. Representative Tom McClintock (R-Calif.), who opposed the reauthorization of federal funds to Amtrak, noted: "We will shell out \$45 every time a passenger steps aboard an Amtrak train. That is \$45 per passenger per trip and directly billed to taxpayers, up from \$32 from six years ago. Despite endless promises, things aren't getting better."

Spending billions of tax dollars for Amtrak transportation is unconstitutional, and the spending has no chance of boosting the prospects of Amtrak to make it self-sufficient.

2. Trade Promotion Authority

The TPA portion of the bill 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 its constitutional authority "to regulate commerce with foreign nations" to the Executive Branch; and (2) Congress dramatically increases the probability of approval of foreign trade agreements by restricting itself to voting up or down by simple majority on the agreements, as negotiated and submitted by the president, with no ability to amend the agreements and with no possibility of filibusters in the Senate.

TPA would facilitate the subordination of the national independence of the United States to regional trading blocs.

3. Environmental Executive Orders

Representative John Fleming (R-La.) introduced an amendment that would prohibit the use of funds for President Obama's executive orders that require the Defense Department to meet "green" energy mandates and incorporate climate-change reviews in operations, acquisitions, and planning.

Obama's "green" and climate-change mandates for the military harm the U.S. military's readiness to defend the United States.

4. Warrantless Surveillance

Representative Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) introduced an amendment to bar the use of funds in the bill from being used to conduct warrantless searches of Americans' digital communications that have crossed the U.S. border.

Massie's amendment seeks to uphold the Constitution and its protection of privacy rights.

5. Aid to Syria

Representative Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii) introduced an amendment to prohibit the use of funds in the bill for the Syria Train and Equip Program. Through this program, the U.S. government has armed so-called moderate jihadists who are not fighting for freedom but for an Islamic State under Sharia law, not just in Syria but beyond — the same goal as ISIS.

U.S. foreign aid is unconstitutional, and arming so-called moderate jihadists to fight Assad is both counterproductive and tantamount to going to war in Syria.

6. Continuing Appropriations

This bill 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.