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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

December 11, 2018

The Honorable Theodore Lipscomb, Sr.
Chair
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Courthouse, Room 201
901 North 9th Street,
Milwaukee WI 53233

Dear Chairman Lipscomb,

Thank you for sharing with me the recent resolution approved by the Milwaukee County Board (resolution 18-736). I appreciate hearing from you and agree about the need for the federal government to prioritize spending for domestic needs in the federal budget.

I support a strong defense and providing our men and women in uniform with the resources they need to do their job. But I also understand that when we talk about our nation's security, it is more than simply increasing the size of the defense budget. It was former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates who put it bluntly when he said, "If the Department of Defense (DOD) can't figure out a way to defend the United States on a budget of more than half a trillion dollars a year, then our problems are much bigger than anything that can be cured by a few more ships and planes."

We must subject the Defense budget to the same amount of scrutiny that every other federal Department is going through at this time, including attacking unnecessary and wasteful spending. And I certainly have opposed the budget proposals by this President to increase defense spending by cutting funding for domestic priorities.

A nation's budget must reflect its priorities and that includes increase support for domestic education, housing, healthcare, and transportation programs that also help keep our nation strong. Those priorities have been reflected in the budget alternatives put forward by the Congressional Progressive Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus over the years that I have supported since coming to Congress.

This year, I voted against the final FY 2019 Defense Appropriations bill (which was tied to the FY 2019 Labor-Health and Human Services and Education funding bill) partly because of my concerns about the allocation of resources between the two bills. The Defense portion would see a \$20 billion increase in FY 2019 while the other three critical agencies combined, would see a \$1 billion increase. In fact, when the House considered its FY 2019 Defense bill earlier in the

year, I co-authored an amendment with Rep. Ro Khanna that would have reduced funding for the DOD by \$5 billion with the hope of redirecting those funds to domestic priorities. The amendment would have excluded military personal and defense health funding from seeing any reduction. That amendment did not succeed but it points to the need, that more and more Members are recognizing, to rebalance our budget priorities to better address all our nation's needs.

As the House considers the annual budget resolution and spending bills in the 116th Congress, I expect that you will see budget resolutions being advanced out of the House that attempts to provide for our military while ensuring that critical domestic programs are not neglected and are adequately supported. And certainly greater efforts, outside the appropriations process, will be made to address domestic priorities that have been long neglected, such as a strong infrastructure package that invests federal funds to address transportation, water, clean energy and other infrastructure needs in the new Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gwen Moore", written in a cursive style.

Gwen Moore
MEMBER OF CONGRESS