

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Leads effort to curb wasteful government spending

Posted on Friday, Mar 19, 2021

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Reps. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) and Jackie Speier (D-CA) yesterday reintroduced the bipartisan Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act, legislation that would increase transparency and accountability in large-scale government projects. The bill, which was introduced in the Senate by Senators Joni Ernst (R-IA) and Gary Peters (D-MI), requires an annual report to taxpayers listing every government-funded project that is \$1 billion or more over budget, or that is five or more years behind schedule.

The bill passed unanimously out of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee on Wednesday.

“In Congress, we can’t be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars if we treat the mismanagement of multibillion-dollar government projects like business as usual,” said Rep. Gallagher. “Requiring the federal government to report on projects that are over budget or behind schedule is the least we can do to increase transparency, provide accountability, and ensure these boondoggles don’t become bottomless money pits.”

“The federal government gets away with spending billions of dollars on projects that are billions of dollars over budget and years behind schedule. And the worst part? Taxpayers don’t even know because the cost and timeline of these projects are hidden,” said Sen. Ernst. “For any bottomless boondoggle funded by the federal government, taxpayers deserve to know how and where their money is being spent (or wasted). This bill is commonsense, and it’s got the support of many of my Democratic colleagues. So let’s pass it, get it signed into law and bring overdue accountability and transparency to the process and identify problems before they become a bottomless pit of taxpayer dollars.”

“People in Michigan and across the country deserve to know that their hard-earned tax dollars are being used effectively, especially as more communities rely on federal projects and programs to provide critical resources during this pandemic,” said Sen. Peters. “I will continue my efforts to pass this commonsense bill into law so we can strengthen accountability and save taxpayer dollars.”

The Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act requires the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to submit to Congress an annual report listing every government-funded project that is \$1 billion or more over budget or five years or more behind schedule. For each project, the report would provide:

- a brief description, including the purpose, location, the year in which it was begun, the Federal share of the total cost, and the contractors and grant recipients;
 - an explanation of any change to the original scope of the project, including adding to or narrowing of the initial requirements;
 - the original expected and current expected completion date;
 - the original and current cost estimate;
 - an explanation for a delay in completion or increase in the original cost estimate;
- and,
- the amount of and rationale for any award, incentive fee, or other type of bonus awarded for the project.