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United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

December 19, 2024

Leader Schumer,

Yesterday, a massive 1500-page continuing resolution was unveiled, containing hundreds of billions of dollars in additional spending with tons of other wasteful pet projects and policies that the American people are fed up with. These backroom, government-by-crisis funding deals epitomize everything wrong with our legislative process. They signal a profound disregard for transparency, accountability, and responsible governance.

One issue I have tirelessly fought to defend is Americans' right to free speech. While the behemoth package put forward included a number of objectionable measures, buried deep within the bill was continued funding for the Global Engagement Center (GEC). Originally established to combat foreign propaganda, the GEC has since mutated into a massive censorship machine designed to suppress narratives that question establishment thinking. What's worse is the willingness of federal governments and social media platforms to partner with GEC in these unconstitutional censorship efforts. This unchecked power risks creating a government-endorsed "truth" that is immune to public scrutiny, stifling healthy democratic debate. The First Amendment is the bedrock of our society, and the federal government should never be funding institutions like the GEC, which seek to undermine such a core constitutional principle. Under no circumstances should taxpayer dollars be funding the GEC, we owe that to the American people.

The decision to circumvent regular order and push through a giant "Christmas-tree" spending bill erodes public trust in government and fuels growing cynicism about the integrity of our political institutions. This is not just an insult to the legislative process, but an affront to every American who expects their government to act with integrity, deliberation, and respect for the rule of law. Moreover, the rushed nature of such massive bills enables poor policies, like this one, to slip into the text – policies that have no place in responsible legislation.

As we deliberate a path forward, I demand that reauthorization of the Global Engagement Center be excluded from any subsequent piece of legislation for the remainder of the 118th Congress. The American people deserve to know their First Amendment rights are being protected. I will strongly oppose any end-of-year bill that includes reauthorization or funding for the GEC and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Sincerely,



Eric S. Schmitt
United States Senator