

I voted Yes on H.R. 3578, the Baseline Reform Act.

This bill would change the way the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates spending projections. Specifically, the bill removes an automatic annual inflation adjustment from CBO's baseline discretionary baseline spending projections. This eliminates the assumption that discretionary spending will increase each year. Instead, the bill requires CBO to project future spending at the level provided for in actual appropriations bills approved by Congress.

It's troubling that the current law requires CBO to assume that discretionary spending will continue chugging along at the rate of inflation every year. This amounts to a budgetary bookkeeping bias toward additional spending every year. Changing the baseline formula, as this bill seeks to do, does not change funding for any federal programs, but simply removes this bias toward ever higher Washington spending in the budget process. I supported this bill because it will restore an element of fiscal responsibility in the budget process moving forward.

H.R. 3578 was approved by a vote of 235 – 177.