

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5779

To establish a commission on fiscal responsibility and reform.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

Mr. HUIZENGA (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COLE, Mr. TIMMONS, Mrs. SPARTZ, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. CASE, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. BERA, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. MILLS, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. SCHWEIKERT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish a commission on fiscal responsibility and reform.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fiscal Commission Act
5 of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) CO-CHAIR.—The term “co-chair” means an
2 individual appointed to serve as a co-chair of the
3 Fiscal Commission under section 3(a)(3)(C)(i).

4 (2) FISCAL COMMISSION.—The term “Fiscal
5 Commission” means the commission established
6 under section 3(a).

7 (3) FISCAL COMMISSION BILL.—The term “Fis-
8 cal Commission bill” means a bill consisting solely of
9 legislative language that the Fiscal Commission ap-
10 proves and submits under clauses (i) and (v), respec-
11 tively, of section 3(a)(2)(B).

12 (4) OUTSIDE EXPERT.—The term “outside ex-
13 pert” is an individual who is not an elected official
14 or an officer or employee of the Federal Government
15 or of any State.

16 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF FISCAL COMMISSION.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF FISCAL COMMISSION.—

18 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—No later than 60 days
19 after the date of enactment of this Act, there is es-
20 tablished in Congress a Fiscal Commission.

21 (2) DUTIES.—

22 (A) IMPROVE FISCAL SITUATION.—

23 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Fiscal Com-
24 mission shall identify policies to improve
25 the fiscal situation in the medium term

1 and to achieve a sustainable debt-to-GDP
2 ratio of the long term, and for any rec-
3 ommendations related to Federal programs
4 for which a Federal trust fund exists, to
5 improve solvency for a period of at least 75
6 years.

7 (ii) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out
8 clause (i), the Fiscal Commission shall—

9 (I) propose recommendations de-
10 signed to balance the budget at the
11 earliest reasonable date, including at
12 minimum stabilizing the debt-to-GDP
13 ratio at or below one hundred percent
14 by the end of the 10-year period be-
15 ginning on the date the Fiscal Com-
16 mission is established; and

17 (II) propose recommendations
18 that meaningfully improve the long-
19 term fiscal outlook, including changes
20 to address the growth of direct spend-
21 ing and the gap between the projected
22 revenues and expenditures of the Fed-
23 eral Government.

24 (iii) RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMIT-
25 TEES.—Not later than 60 days after the

1 date described in paragraph (1), each com-
2 mittee of the Senate and the House of
3 Representatives may transmit to the Fiscal
4 Commission any recommendations of the
5 committee relating to changes in law to
6 further the duties described in clause (ii).

7 (B) REPORT, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND
8 LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—

9 (i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding
10 paragraph (4)(D)(ii)(II), not earlier than
11 November 6, 2024, but not later than No-
12 vember 15, 2024, the Fiscal Commission
13 shall meet to consider, and vote on—

14 (I) a report that contains a de-
15 tailed statement of the findings, con-
16 clusions, and recommendations of the
17 Fiscal Commission described in sub-
18 paragraph (A)(i) and the estimate of
19 the Congressional Budget Office re-
20 quired under paragraph (4)(D)(ii);
21 and

22 (II) legislative language to carry
23 out the recommendations of the Fiscal
24 Commission in the report described in
25 subclause (I), which shall include a

1 statement of the economic and budg-
2 etary effects of the recommendations.

3 (ii) APPROVAL OF REPORT AND LEG-
4 ISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—A report and legis-
5 lative language of the Fiscal Commission
6 under clause (i) shall require the approval
7 of a majority of the members of the Fiscal
8 Commission, provided that such majority
9 shall be required to include not less than
10 3 members of the Fiscal Commission ap-
11 pointed by members of the Republican
12 Party and 3 members appointed by mem-
13 bers of the Democratic party.

14 (iii) ADDITIONAL VIEWS.—

15 (I) IN GENERAL.—A member of
16 the Fiscal Commission who gives no-
17 tice of an intention to file supple-
18 mental, minority, or additional views
19 at the time of the final Fiscal Com-
20 mission vote on the approval of the re-
21 port and legislative language of the
22 Fiscal Commission under clause (i)
23 shall be entitled to 3 days to file those
24 views in writing with the staff director
25 of the Fiscal Commission.

(II) INCLUSION IN REPORT.—

Views filed under subclause (I) shall be included in the report of the Fiscal Commission under clause (i) and printed in the same volume, or part thereof, and such inclusion shall be noted on the cover of the report, except that, in the absence of timely notice, the report may be printed and transmitted immediately without such views.

12 (iv) REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE LAN-
13 GUAGE TO BE MADE PUBLIC.—Upon the
14 approval or disapproval of a report and
15 legislative language under clause (i) by the
16 Fiscal Commission, the Fiscal Commission
17 shall promptly, and not more than 24
18 hours after the approval or disapproval or,
19 if timely notice is given under clause (iii),
20 not more than 24 hours after additional
21 views are filed under such clause, make the
22 report, the legislative language, and a
23 record of the vote on the report and legis-
24 lative language available to the public.

(v) SUBMISSION OF REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE.—If a report and legislative language are approved by the Fiscal Commission under clause (i), not later than 3 days after the date on which the report and legislative language are made available to the public under clause (iv), the Fiscal Commission shall submit the report and legislative language to the President, the Vice President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the majority and minority leaders of each House of Congress.

(3) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Fiscal Commission shall be composed of 16 members appointed in accordance with subparagraph (B) and with due consideration to chairs and ranking members of the committees and subcommittees of subject matter jurisdiction, if applicable.

(B) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 14 days after the date described in paragraph (1)—

- (i) the majority leader of the Senate shall appoint 3 individuals from among the

1 Members of the Senate, and 1 outside ex-
2 pert, who shall serve as members of the
3 Fiscal Commission;

4 (ii) the minority leader of the Senate
5 shall appoint 3 individuals from among the
6 Members of the Senate, and 1 outside ex-
7 pert who shall serve as members of the
8 Fiscal Commission;

9 (iii) the Speaker of the House of Rep-
10 resentatives shall appoint 3 individuals
11 from among the Members of the House of
12 Representatives, and 1 outside expert, who
13 shall serve as members of the Fiscal Com-
14 mission; and

15 (iv) the minority leader of the House
16 of Representatives shall appoint 3 individ-
17 uals from among the Members of the
18 House of Representatives, and 1 outside
19 expert, who shall serve as members of the
20 Fiscal Commission.

21 (C) CO-CHAIRS.—

22 (i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 14
23 days after the date described in paragraph
24 (1), with respect to the Fiscal Commis-
25 sion—

20 (D) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The members of the Fiscal Commission shall be appointed for the life of the Fiscal Commission.

(ii) VACANCY.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Any vacancy in the Fiscal Commission shall not affect the powers of the Fiscal Commission, but shall be filled not later than 14 days after the date on which the vacancy occurs, in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

(II) INELIGIBLE MEMBERS.—If a member of the Fiscal Commission who was appointed as a Member of the Senate or the House Representatives ceases to be a Member of the Senate or the House of Representatives, as applicable—

(aa) the member shall no longer be a member of the Fiscal Commission; and

(bb) a vacancy in the Fiscal Commission exists.

(4) ADMINISTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the Fiscal Commission, to enable the Fiscal Commission to exercise the powers, functions, and duties of the Fiscal Commission, there are au-

1 thorized to be disbursed by the Senate the ac-
2 tual and necessary expenses of the Fiscal Com-
3 mission approved by the co-chairs of the Fiscal
4 Commission, subject to the rules and regula-
5 tions of the Senate.

6 (B) EXPENSES.—With respect to the Fis-
7 cal Commission, in carrying out the functions of
8 the Fiscal Commission, the Fiscal Commission
9 is authorized to incur expenses in the same
10 manner and under the same conditions as the
11 Joint Economic Committee is authorized under
12 section 11(d) of the Employment Act of 1946
13 (15 U.S.C. 1024(d)).

14 (C) QUORUM.—With respect to the Fiscal
15 Commission, 9 members of the Fiscal Commis-
16 sion shall constitute a quorum for purposes of
17 voting, meeting, and holding hearings.

18 (D) VOTING.—

19 (i) PROXY VOTING.—No proxy voting
20 shall be allowed on behalf of any member
21 of the Fiscal Commission.

22 (ii) CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
23 ESTIMATES.—

24 (I) IN GENERAL.—The Director
25 of the Congressional Budget Office

1 shall, with respect to the legislative
2 language of the Fiscal Commission
3 under paragraph (2)(B)(i)(II), provide
4 to the Fiscal Commission—

5 (aa) estimates of the legisla-
6 tive language in accordance with
7 sections 308(a) and 201(f) of the
8 Congressional Budget Act of
9 1974 (2 U.S.C. 639(a) and
10 601(f)); and

11 (bb) information on the
12 budgetary effect of the legislative
13 language on the long-term fiscal
14 outlook.

15 (II) LIMITATION.—The Fiscal
16 Commission may not vote on any
17 version of the report, recommenda-
18 tions, or legislative language of the
19 Fiscal Commission under paragraph
20 (2)(B)(i) unless the estimates and in-
21 formation described in subclause (I)
22 of this clause are made available for
23 consideration by all members of the
24 Fiscal Commission not later than 48
25 hours before that vote, as certified by

3 (E) MEETINGS.—

14 (F) HEARINGS.—

(II) WRITTEN STATEMENT.—A witness appearing before the Fiscal Commission shall file a written statement of the proposed testimony of the witness not later than 2 days before the date of the appearance of the witness, unless the co-chairs of the Fiscal Commission—

19 (aa) determine that there is
20 good cause for the witness to not
21 file the written statement; and
22 (bb) waive the requirement
23 that the witness file the written
24 statement.

(H) OUTSIDE EXPERT.—Any outside expert appointed to the Fiscal Commission—

21 (b) STAFF OF FISCAL COMMISSION.—

1 the guidelines, rules, and requirements relating to
2 employees of the Senate.

3 (2) ETHICAL STANDARDS.—

4 (A) SENATE.—Members appointed by
5 Members of the Senate who serve on the Fiscal
6 Commission and staff of the Fiscal Commission
7 shall adhere to the ethics rules of the Senate.

8 (B) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—Mem-
9 bers appointed by Members of the House of
10 Representatives who serve on the Fiscal Com-
11 mission shall be governed by the ethics rules
12 and requirements of the House of Representa-
13 tives.

14 (c) TERMINATION.—The Fiscal Commission shall ter-
15 minate on the date that is 30 days after the date the Fis-
16 cal Commission submits the report under subsection
17 (a)(2)(B)(v).

18 **SEC. 4. EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION OF FISCAL COM-
19 SION BILLS.**

20 (a) QUALIFYING LEGISLATION.—Only a Fiscal Com-
21 mission bill shall be entitled to expedited consideration
22 under this section.

23 (b) CONSIDERATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENT-
24 ATIVES.—

1 (1) INTRODUCTION.—If the Fiscal Commission
2 approves and submits legislative language under
3 clauses (i) and (v), respectively, of section
4 3(a)(2)(B), the Fiscal Commission bill consisting
5 solely of that legislative language shall be introduced
6 in the House of Representatives (by request)—

7 (A) by the majority leader of the House of
8 Representatives, or by a Member of the House
9 of Representatives designated by the majority
10 leader of the House of Representatives, on the
11 third legislative day after the date the Fiscal
12 Commission approves and submits such legisla-
13 tive language; or

14 (B) if the Fiscal Commission bill is not in-
15 troduced under subparagraph (A), by any Mem-
16 ber of the House of Representatives on any leg-
17 islative day beginning on the legislative day
18 after the legislative day described in subpara-
19 graph (A).

20 (2) REFERRAL AND REPORTING.—Any com-
21 mittee of the House of Representatives to which a
22 Fiscal Commission bill is referred shall report the
23 Fiscal Commission bill to the House of Representa-
24 tives without amendment not later than 5 legislative
25 days after the date on which the Fiscal Commission

bill was so referred. If any committee of the House of Representatives to which a Fiscal Commission bill is referred fails to report the Fiscal Commission bill within that period, that committee shall be automatically discharged from consideration of the Fiscal Commission bill, and the Fiscal Commission bill shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

(3) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—After the last committee authorized to consider a Fiscal Commission bill reports it to the House of Representatives or has been discharged from its consideration, it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the Fiscal Commission bill in the House of Representatives. Such a motion shall not be in order after the House of Representatives has disposed of a motion to proceed with respect to the Fiscal Commission bill. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion.

1 tion except 2 hours of debate equally divided and
2 controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

3 (5) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—The vote on passage
4 of the Fiscal Commission bill shall occur pursuant to
5 the constraints under clause 8 of rule XX of the
6 Rules of the House of Representatives.

7 (c) EXPEDITED PROCEDURE IN THE SENATE.—

8 (1) INTRODUCTION IN THE SENATE.—If the
9 Fiscal Commission approves and submits legislative
10 language under clauses (i) and (v), respectively, of
11 section 3(a)(2)(B), a Fiscal Commission bill con-
12 sisting solely of that legislative language may be in-
13 troduced in the Senate (by request)—

14 (A) by the majority leader of the Senate,
15 or by a Member of the Senate designated by the
16 majority leader of the Senate, on the next day
17 on which the Senate is in session; or

18 (B) if the Fiscal Commission bill is not in-
19 troduced under subparagraph (A), by any Mem-
20 ber of the Senate on any day on which the Sen-
21 ate is in session beginning on the day after the
22 day described in subparagraph (A).

23 (2) COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION.—A Fiscal
24 Commission bill introduced in the Senate under
25 paragraph (1) shall be jointly referred to the com-

1 mittee or committees of jurisdiction, which commit-
2 tees shall report the Fiscal Commission bill without
3 any revision and with a favorable recommendation,
4 an unfavorable recommendation, or without rec-
5 ommendation, not later than 5 session days after the
6 date on which the Fiscal Commission bill was so re-
7 ferred. If any committee to which a Fiscal Commis-
8 sion bill is referred fails to report the Fiscal Com-
9 mission bill within that period, that committee shall
10 be automatically discharged from consideration of
11 the Fiscal Commission bill, and the Fiscal Commis-
12 sion bill shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

13 (3) PROCEEDING.—Notwithstanding rule XXII
14 of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order,
15 not later than 2 days of session after the date on
16 which a Fiscal Commission bill is reported or dis-
17 charged from all committees to which the Fiscal
18 Commission bill was referred, for the majority leader
19 of the Senate or the designee of the majority leader
20 to move to proceed to the consideration of the Fiscal
21 Commission bill. It shall also be in order for any
22 Member of the Senate to move to proceed to the
23 consideration of the Fiscal Commission bill at any
24 time after the conclusion of such 2-day period. A
25 motion to proceed is in order even though a previous

1 motion to the same effect has been disagreed to. All
2 points of order against the motion to proceed to the
3 Fiscal Commission bill are waived. The motion to
4 proceed is not debatable. The motion is not subject
5 to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the
6 vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed
7 to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to
8 the consideration of the Fiscal Commission bill is
9 agreed to, the Fiscal Commission bill shall remain
10 the unfinished business until disposed of. All points
11 of order against a Fiscal Commission bill and
12 against consideration of the Fiscal Commission bill
13 are waived.

14 (4) NO AMENDMENTS.—An amendment to a
15 Fiscal Commission bill, or a motion to postpone, or
16 a motion to proceed to the consideration of other
17 business, or a motion to recommit the Fiscal Com-
18 mission bill, is not in order.

19 (5) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCEDURE.—
20 Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating to
21 the application of the rules of the Senate, as the
22 case may be, to the procedure relating to a Fiscal
23 Commission bill shall be decided without debate.

1 (d) AMENDMENT.—A Fiscal Commission bill shall
2 not be subject to amendment in either the Senate or the
3 House of Representatives.

4 (e) CONSIDERATION BY THE OTHER HOUSE.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—If, before passing a Fiscal
6 Commission bill, a House receives from the other
7 House a Fiscal Commission bill consisting of legisla-
8 tive language approved by the same Fiscal Commis-
9 sion as the Fiscal Commission bill in the receiving
10 House—

11 (A) the Fiscal Commission bill of the other
12 House shall not be referred to a committee; and

13 (B) the procedure in the receiving House
14 shall be the same as if no Fiscal Commission
15 bill had been received from the other House
16 until the vote on passage, when the Fiscal Com-
17 mission bill received from the other House shall
18 supplant the Fiscal Commission bill of the re-
19 ceiving House.

20 (2) REVENUE MEASURES.—This subsection
21 shall not apply to the House of Representatives if a
22 Fiscal Commission bill received from the Senate is
23 a revenue measure.

24 (f) RULES TO COORDINATE ACTION WITH OTHER
25 HOUSE.—

1 (1) TREATMENT OF FISCAL COMMISSION BILL
2 OF OTHER HOUSE.—If a Fiscal Commission bill is
3 not introduced in the Senate or the Senate fails to
4 consider a Fiscal Commission bill under this section,
5 the Fiscal Commission bill of the House of Rep-
6 resentatives consisting of legislative language ap-
7 proved by the same Fiscal Commission as the Fiscal
8 Commission bill in the Senate shall be entitled to ex-
9 pedited floor procedures under this section.

10 (2) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEASURES IN
11 THE SENATE.—If, following passage of a Fiscal
12 Commission bill in the Senate, the Senate then re-
13 ceives from the House of Representatives a Fiscal
14 Commission bill approved by the same Fiscal Com-
15 mission and consisting of the same legislative lan-
16 guage as the Senate-passed Fiscal Commission bill,
17 the House-passed Fiscal Commission bill shall not
18 be debatable. The vote on passage of the Fiscal
19 Commission bill in the Senate shall be considered to
20 be the vote on passage of the Fiscal Commission bill
21 received from the House of Representatives.

22 (3) VETOES.—If the President vetoes a Fiscal
23 Commission bill, consideration of a veto message in
24 the Senate under this paragraph shall be 10 hours
25 equally divided between the majority and minority

1 leaders of the Senate or the designees of the major-
2 ity and minority leaders of the Senate.

3 **SEC. 5. FUNDING.**

4 Funding for the Fiscal Commission shall be derived
5 in equal portions from—

6 (1) the contingent fund of the Senate from the
7 appropriations account “Miscellaneous Items”, sub-
8 ject to the rules and regulations of the Senate; and

9 (2) the applicable accounts of the House of
10 Representatives.

11 **SEC. 6. RULEMAKING.**

12 The provisions of this Act are enacted by Congress—

13 (1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of
14 the Senate and the House of Representatives, re-
15 spectively, and, as such, the provisions—

16 (A) shall be considered as part of the rules
17 of each House, respectively, or of that House to
18 which they specifically apply; and

19 (B) shall supersede other rules only to the
20 extent that they are inconsistent therewith; and

21 (2) with full recognition of the constitutional
22 right of either House to change such rules (so far
23 as relating to such House) at any time, in the same

1 manner, and to the same extent as in the case of
2 any other rule of such House.

