

✓ OPENTHEBOOKS OVERSIGHT REPORT

EARMARKS

RETURN OF THE SWAMP CREATURES

*Mapping \$16 Billion in
Congressional Earmarks FY2023*





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Congressional Earmarks FY2023*

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Dedicated to Dr. Tom Coburn
OpenTheBooks Honorary Chairman
Rest In Peace - March 28, 2020

By Adam Andrzejewski
Founder/CEO

Thomas W. Smith
Chairman

*"OpenTheBooks is doing the work I envisioned when the Coburn-Obama bill became law.
Their innovative app and other tools are putting sunlight through a magnifying glass."*

U.S. Senator Tom Coburn, MD
Washington, D.C. | March 11, 2014

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*"I know that restoring transparency is not only the surest way to
achieve results, but also to earn back the trust in government..."*

U.S. Sen. Barack Obama

PROLOGUE

"Restoring earmarks in today's Congress would be like opening a bar tab for a bunch of recovering alcoholics."

U.S. SENATOR TOM COBURN, 2014

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

PORK. PET PROJECTS. LEGAL BRIBERY. FLEECING. SLEAZE. BRIDGE TO NOWHERE. LOGROLLING. SPENDING SMORGASBORD. BACON. CURRENCY OF CORRUPTION IN CONGRESS. FAVOR FACTORY.

Those are just some of the words and phrases used to describe earmarks.

Banned for a decade, earmarks returned on a bi-partisan basis when 158 House Republicans took a secret vote to join Pelosi Democrats. Cheering them on was The Brookings Institution - the largest center-left think tank who published the white paper "The Case For Corruption - Why Washington Needs Honest Graft."

Earmarks allow federal legislators to set aside specific sums of money for local projects in their states or districts. Earmarks help members of Congress "bring home the bacon."

In the 2000s, members were being indicted, convicted, and serving jail sentences for corrupt earmarking. Infamously, Randy "Duke" Cunningham (R-CA), a bona fide Naval fighter pilot ace, was convicted for doling out earmarks and collecting bribes including a yacht, Rolls Royce, and Louis-Philippe commode.

By embracing earmarks, Republicans fumbled the first opportunity to distinguish themselves from big-spending Democrats.

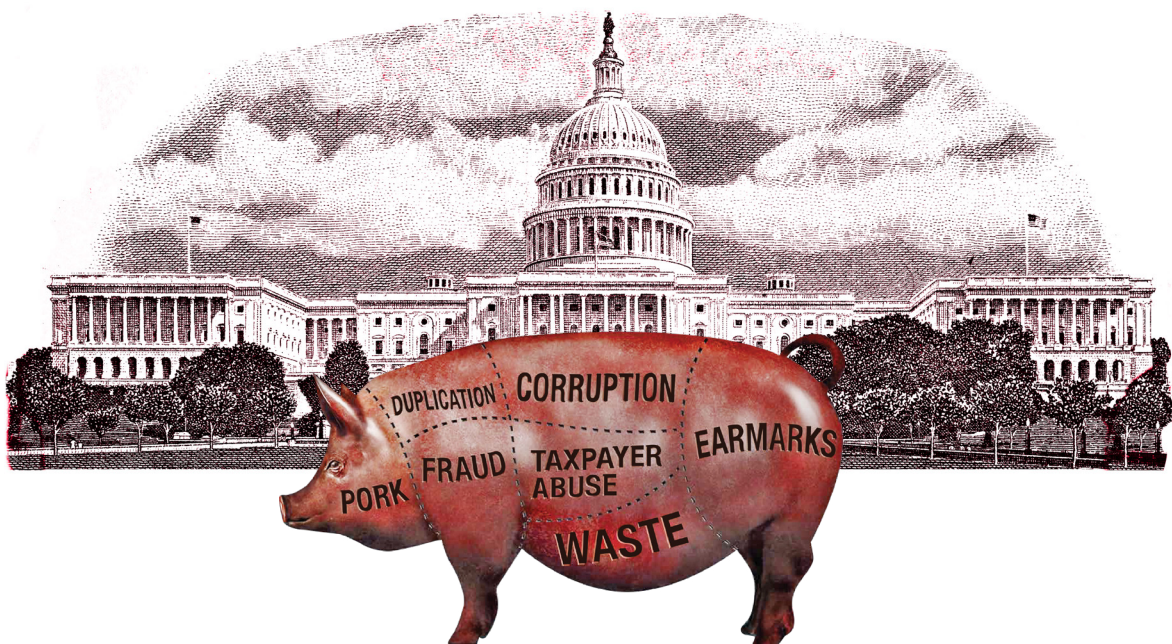
Speaker Kevin McCarthy doesn't request earmarks himself but allowed a secret caucus vote to bring them back.

It's time for a public, on-the-record, up or down vote on earmarks in the United States House of Representatives.

WHO WE ARE

American Transparency (OpenTheBooks.com) is a public charity. We do not accept government money. Our oversight reports present hard data so citizens, media, think tanks, politicians, and watchdogs can "follow the money." Hard facts are non-partisan and enhance the public discourse.

SCOPE & METHODOLOGY



Our OpenTheBooks federal oversight report – *Earmarks, The Return of the Swamp Creatures* – surveyed the disclosed "member directed" Congressionally Funded Community Projects (CFCP) listed in the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023 (H.R. 2617).

This fancy language was used in place of the more traditional description of the expenditures, earmarks.

A database was provided to media and congressional staffers in late December 2022. This database was limited in distribution and produced only hours before the U.S. House of Representatives voted on the \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending bill.

Our auditors reviewed the 7,509 disclosed earmarks amounting to \$16 billion in taxpayer costs.

To the extent that mistakes existed in the official database, we may replicate those errors in this report.

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TOP 10 TAKEAWAYS

1. CONGRESS EARMARKED 7,509 PROJECTS FOR \$16,012,272,565 paid for by taxpayers within the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023 (H.R. 2617) and signed by President Joe Biden on December 29, 2022.

Interactive Map: We [mapped each earmark by state across America on our interactive map](#) - just click a pin (state capitol) and scroll down to see the earmarks in the chart beneath the map.



2. SENATE REPUBLICANS GO HOG WILD FOR EARMARKS

MEMBER OF CONGRESS	EARMARK AMOUNT
SEN. SHELBY (R-AL)	\$656,406,000
SEN. INHOFE (R-OK)	\$510,520,000
SEN. MURKOWSKI (R-AK)	\$489,632,000
SENS. HIRONO, SCHATZ (D-HI)	\$421,560,000
SEN. BLUNT (R-MO)	\$350,056,000
REP. WEBER (R-TX)	\$287,537,000
SEN. GRAHAM (R-SC)	\$262,134,000
SEN. LEAHY (D-VT)	\$212,525,000
SEN. CASSIDY (R-LA)	\$204,735,000
SENS. COLLINS (R-ME), KING (I-ME)	\$200,057,000

Seven of the top ten Members of Congress who earmarked the most were Republicans and the top three earmarked **\$1.656 billion**.

3. IN FACT, CONGRESSIONAL REPUBLICANS out-earmarked their Democratic colleagues **in 21 states** including Texas, Florida, Missouri, Oklahoma, Maine, and South Carolina.

4. OVERALL, DEMOCRATS EARMARKED \$9.1 BILLION, REPUBLICANS \$6.4 BILLION and a bipartisan group of legislators earmarked an additional \$476 million.

5. THE WHEEL OF EARMARK FORTUNE included:

- \$1M for the Macadamia Nut Health Initiative
- \$2M for the National Great Blacks In Wax Museum
- \$3M to turn Pittsburgh into Hollywood
- Nearly \$4M for seven buses in Wauwatosa
- \$5M to the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds
- \$6M to institutions where their spouses work!



6. \$10 MILLION TO HOST ARCHIVES: Despite new rules prohibiting self-dealing, retiring U.S. Senators earmarked \$10 million for institutions to host their archives. Then, at least three of those top earmarking senators sent tens of millions of dollars more on more earmarks to those same institutions (that are already paid to host their archives).

7. ROADS, BRIDGES, STREETS, AVENUES, AND HIGHWAYS rendered only \$1.6 billion in earmarks - resulting in only \$1 in every \$10 earmark dollars. Furthermore, many of the “infrastructure” projects touted by Republicans were phase II or phase III projects. Phase I was funded locally.

8. LOCAL PROJECTS OF MERIT SHOULD BE FUNDED LOCALLY

With earmarks, federal taxpayers paid for:

- \$1M splash pad in Center Line, MI
- \$2.5M for landscaping the road medians in La Mirada, CA
- \$3.6M for phase II of the Michelle Obama trail in Atlanta, GA
- \$4M to renovate a theatre in Dallas, TX
- \$7M to create a brand new National Korean Museum in Los Angeles, CA

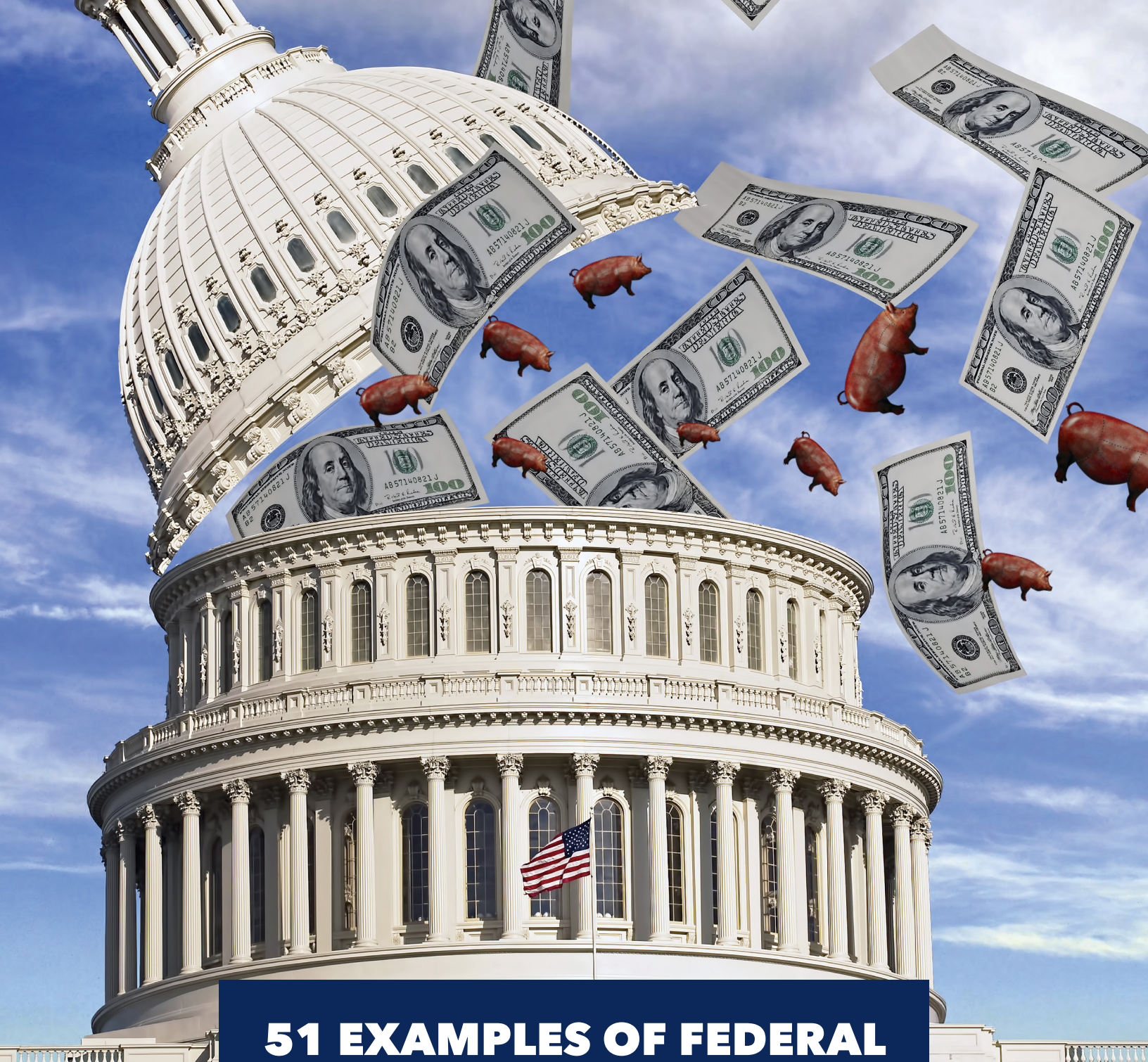
9. RICH INSTITUTIONS FREQUENTLY RECEIVED EARMARKS.

Examples include:

- Ivy League’s Columbia University (\$3 million) | Endowment: \$13.3 billion
- Field Museum of Chicago (\$3.5 million) | Assets: \$600 million | CEO pay: \$1.1 million
- New York Botanical Gardens (\$1 million) | CEO pay: \$1.4 million (latest year available)

10. SECRET VOTE TO BRING BACK EARMARKS

Banned for a decade, House Republicans took a secret vote to join Democrats to bring back earmarks. There were 158 Republicans who embraced “the currency of corruption in Congress” - earmarks as a spending tool.



**51 EXAMPLES OF FEDERAL
TAXPAYER WASTE**

1. UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, ROY BLUNT NEXT GEN PRECISION HEALTH BUILDING: \$61,000,000

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY, ROY BLUNT HALL: \$30,000,000

Sen. Roy Blunt (D)

Location: Columbia, Missouri

The University of Missouri's Board of Curators decided in 2021 to name their newest building after the senator. Then, in 2022, he earmarked them \$61 million!

In his last legislative action before retirement, Sen. Roy Blunt earmarked \$61 million into a building at the University of Missouri – a building that's named after him! And \$30 million into a building at Missouri State (his alma mater) that's also named after him!

From the University of Missouri website, "NextGen Precision Health initiative: for construction and instruments at the Roy Blunt NextGen Precision Health building and to support research in biomolecular, computational and engineering disciplines, and veterinary and human medicine."

The university doesn't need taxpayer help and has a \$2.2 billion endowment.

Missouri State received \$30 million from Blunt's earmarks to renovate the science building which bears his name: Roy Blunt Hall. On December 15, 2022, MSU renamed the building formerly known as Temple Hall. Then, 14 days later, Blunt's earmark (for Roy Blunt Hall) was signed into law.

During 2022, the total haul was \$80 million for the Roy Blunt Hall – the headquarters for the university's College of Natural and Applied Sciences. Blunt championed it all.

2. MACADAMIA NUT HEALTH INTUITIVE: \$1,000,000

Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI)

Location: Hawaii

Congress literally goes nuts!

This funding support research to combat and control the felted macadamia nut coccid to improve the production of this iconic Hawaiian crop. The macadamia nut is the 87th most lucrative agricultural product in America – ranked right next to "mink pelts." Furthermore, Hawaii is not an ag state – it produces 1/100th of 1-percent of USA ag products.

3. NATIONAL GREAT BLACKS IN WAX MUSEUM: \$2,000,000

Rep. Kweisi Mfume (D)

Location: Baltimore, Maryland

Maryland Rep. Kweisi Mfume audaciously earmarked \$2 million to the National Great Blacks Wax Museum in Baltimore, MD, which is not only located in his district – but also the maker of a – you guessed it – Kweisi Mfume wax figure! Within the halls of the museum, sources say the Mfume figures stands tall among such giants as Thurgood Marshall, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks.

4. UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA & UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT: \$80,000,000

Sen. Richard Shelby (R-AL) & Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)

Location: respective alma maters in Alabama and Vermont

Earmarking "ME" Monuments

Can we pay you to accept our gift? Retiring Senators Richard Shelby (R-Alabama) and Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) shamelessly earmarked \$50 million and \$30 million, respectively, to the schools that will soon house their very own personal Senate archives. In Shelby's case, the University of Alabama will not only be home to the archives—but it's also his alma mater.

5. CARRIE FILM FURNACE: \$3,000,000

Rep. Mike Doyle (D)

Location: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

So, what is the compelling federal interest to turn Pittsburgh into Hollywood?

The Pittsburgh Film Office received \$3 million in federal money to help in the construction of a 60,000-acre film studio after already having received \$2.85 million in redevelopment assistance capital grants. Dawn Keezer, director of the Pittsburgh Film Office, said her goal is to turn the former brawny industrial site into a campus to produce TV shows and movies. "We're going to make this the center for the film industry," said Keezer. Few movies or television shows have ever been filmed in Pittsburgh. Congressman Doyle earmarked this project and then retired after a 27-year career in Congress.

6. THE UNIVERSAL HIP HOP MUSEUM: \$5,000,000

Sen. Kristen Gillibrand (D) & Sen. Chuck Schumer (D)

Location: The Bronx, New York

New York Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kristen Gillibrand teamed up with N.Y. Rep. Jamaal Bowman to memorialize the founding of hip hop in the Bronx - and the genre's 50th anniversary - with \$5 million in taxpayer money for the creation of The Universal Hip Hop Museum. The museum is meant to "celebrate hip hop music's history and influence over American culture."

7. HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT: \$64,000,000

Sen. Brian Schatz (D)

Location: Honolulu, Hawaii

The train to nowhere. Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI) [bragged about securing \\$64 million for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project, a billion-dollar boondoggle](#) that the feds were considering pulling the plug on.

Previously, the finish date was delayed until 2032 and the cost doubled to \$12.5 billion. The federal fundings was frozen in 2015 due to financial, management, and construction problems.

8. MEMORIAL PARK SPLASH PAD: \$919,930

Rep. Andy Levin (D)

Location: Center Line, Michigan (pop. 8,500)

Splash Pad? From the feds? Taxpayers were literally soaked by the retiring congressman. Memorial Park [already had](#) Barbecue Pits, Baseball / Softball Diamond, Basketball Court, Horseshoe Pits, Pavilion, Picnic Tables, Playground, Restrooms, Tennis Court, Volleyball, and Walking / Bike Path. Why did they need a nearly million-dollar taxpayer paid splash pad?

9. METRO NASHVILLE: \$2,700,000

Rep. Jim Cooper (D)

Location: Nashville, Tennessee

Brother, Where Art Thou? I have \$2.7 million taxpayer bucks for you! One Congressional piggy - Rep. Jim Cooper of Tennessee - had the [chutzpah to earmark a total of \\$2.7 million for the city of Nashville](#), where his brother John is the mayor! Cooper, who is retiring at the end of his term, won 10 earmarks, in total, for his district worth \$17.9 million, including \$4 million to the Fisk University John R. Lewis Center for Social Justice and \$2.5 million to the Moves & Grooves Center for Art & Innovation.

10. EARMARKS TO INSTITUTIONS WHERE SPOUSES WORK: **\$6,050,000**

Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), Pete Aguilar (R-CA), Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO), Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA)

Location: Adventist Health St. Helena, University of Redlands, University of Colorado, and George Mason University

Published by [TheMessenger](#):

Rep. Mike Thompson delivered a giant ceremonial check for \$1.8 million to Adventist Health St. Helena in his district. "It's where I was born and it's where I left my tonsils," he boasted. It's also where his wife works as a nurse...

Rep. Pete Aguilar was the sole sponsor of a \$750,000 grant to the University of Redlands, his alma mater. His wife works as a student financial services director there.

Rep. Jason Crow is a serial earmarker when it comes to the medical school at the University of Colorado, where his wife works as a professor.

Sen. Tim Kaine was the prime mover behind two grants totaling \$3.5 million to George Mason University, where his wife was interim president and now serves as a professor there.

11. LIBRARY IN PATTEN, MAINE: **\$4,000,000**

Sen. Susan Collins (R)

Location: Patten, Maine

Book Club!!! A new library in the middle of nowhere. Maine Sen. Susan Collins [earmarked nearly \\$4 million](#) for the construction of a new library in the small town of Patten, Maine (pop. 857) - even though the old library in town had closed from lack of use just a few of years before! She also won a \$2.5 million to build a new police station in Caribou, Maine (pop. 7,400) [even though the force only has about 15 sworn officers.](#)

12. MONDO COVE BEACH STAIRWAY: **\$1,000,000**

Rep. Salud Carbajal

Location: Mondo Cove, California

Not a stairway to heaven; but, to the beach. California congressman Salud Carbajal [earmarked \\$1 million for the design and construction of a metal and concrete stairway](#) at Mondo Cove Beach - located in his district just north of the city of Ventura - that will allow surfers and other beachgoers to find a faster way to the waves.

13. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY: \$3,000,000

Rep. Jerry Nadler (D)

Location: New York, New York

The Ivy League doesn't need taxpayer help. However, Rep. Jerry Nadler had the [gall to secure nearly \\$3 million for Columbia University](#) - the prestigious Ivy League university located in his central Manhattan district. Not only is the university his alma mater—but the school lays claims to a endowment war chest valued at \$13.3 billion!

14. ROCK & ROLL HALL OF FAME: \$1,500,000

Rep. Shontel Brown (D)

Location: Cleveland, Ohio

Cleveland Rep. Shontel Brown [rocked out to the tune of \\$1.5 million](#) for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in his district. The Congressman says the money will help the Hall of Fame to provide programming for kids.

15. HAMMOND AVENUE BASEBALL FIELDS ASTROTURF AND SPORTS LIGHTING RENOVATION: \$500,000

Rep. Brendan Boyle (D)

Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

This Astroturf [infield provided by the federal government](#) sets a terrible precedent - Does no child left behind mean astroturf on their ball fields? What about the soccer fields? Going old school is much cheaper: the [cost for grass and dirt](#) per square foot is \$0.80-\$2.70 compared to \$2.50-\$9.00 for turf.

16. FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY: \$3,500,000

Reps. Danny Davis (D) (\$2 million) & Michael Quigley (D) (\$1.5 million)

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Chicago's Field Museum pays its CEO \$1.1 million. Its assets totaled \$600 million. Why does it need help? Yet, two congressmen claim credit for funding the same air-handling system. Read [Davis](#) and [Quigley](#) press releases. The museum CEO acknowledged the Quigley earmark in a posted statement.

17. HIGH RIDGE YMCA FOR RENOVATIONS: **\$3,750,000**

Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D)
Location: Chicago, Illinois

Congress is sending \$3.75 million paid by taxpayers WITHOUT a long-term plan for the facility. The YMCA closed during covid. Since September 2022, the building has been a shelter for illegal entrants bused from Texas. The money funds roof repairs, heating and air conditioning replacement, a new sprinkler system, and other necessary upgrades.

18. DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS PHASE I: **\$2,100,000**

Rep. Darin LaHood (R)
Location: Downs, Illinois

Visit Illinois. Visit Downs, Illinois?

In rural Illinois, Darin LaHood (R-IL) earmarked \$2.1 million for streetscaping in the city of Downs (pop. 1100). "This project is being undertaken to create an inviting, attractive and modernized look that showcases our small-town charm while retaining our history and attracting traffic to the retail and eating establishment within the Village. Thru this project, we will fulfill the commitment to the business owners, residents and visitors to provide the best experience possible while creating an inviting experience for visitors and drive-by commuters."

19. LEFFINGWELL ROAD LANDSCAPING THE MEDIAN: **\$2,500,000**

Rep. Linda Sanchez (D)
Location: La Mirada, California

California water restrictions killed the previous landscaping, so now, the local congresswoman earmarked \$2.5 million from federal taxpayers for a newly landscaped median - to "improve traffic safety, enhance the aesthetics of the streetscape, and provide ecological and environmental benefits." California has kooky restrictions. The trees died. Now, you pay.

20. BROADWAY ARMORY NATATORIUM SWIMMING POOL: **\$2,000,000**

Rep. Janice Schakowsky (D)
Location: Chicago, Illinois

The Chicago Park District operates 67 pools. Congress now says, it needs one more! Oh, and don't forget. It's 26 miles of unrestricted access to some of the most beautiful beaches, trails, and lake front in the world! But Congress knows better – when spending your money.

21. MODERNIZATION OF RECREATIONAL FISHING CATCH DATA AND SUPPORT HUMANE CATCH AND RELEASE EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC: \$750,000

Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D)
Location: Winter Park, Florida

“They” want to regulate you – as you fish recreationally. The first step is to collect the data on what you catch. It’s [a pilot program](#) that will modernize recreational fishing catch data and support efforts to educate recreational boat captains and anglers about humane catch *and release methods to reduce fish mortality*. They start in Florida, [because recreational fishing there generates an estimated \\$14 billion in annual expenditures](#), compared to just \$15 million for all other South Atlantic states combined.

22. MICHELLE OBAMA TRAIL–PATH TRAIL PROJECT: \$3,600,000

Rep. Hank Johnson (D)
Location: Atlanta, Georgia

It used to be funded locally. Now you pay.

\$3.6 million of federal money [will fund the extension](#) of the Michelle Obama trail. Prior funding for this project came from local sources, like Dekalb County. Originally, the trail was constructed in 2018 spanning 3.8 miles connecting Georgia State University to Gresham Park. In 2021, it was extended another 2.2 miles. This new use of taxpayer money will go towards a 4.5 mile extension to connect Waldrop Road all the way to Martin Luther King Jr. High School.

23. AMERICAN LGBTQ+ MUSEUM: \$3,000,000

Rep. Jerry Nadler (D)
Location: New York City, New York

30,000 sixth-grade students will be bused in for programming!

The New York Historical Society is [building a new wing dedicated to the history](#) of the LGBTQ+ community. The top floor of the new wing will include the American LGBTQ+ Museum – telling the story of the fight for mainstreaming and acceptance. The new wing will be available for 30,000 sixth-grade students around the city.

24. HOWELL DEPOT LOT RECONSTRUCTION: \$750,000

Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D)

Location: Howell, Michigan

It's a vacant lot. At The Depot Lot, the federal government now plans to spend \$7,200 per parking lot space, \$3,200 more per space than industry standards – even in pricey Los Angeles – show. [Review online parking lot cost calculators, in expensive Los Angeles, California.](#)

25. HURLD PARK CONSTRUCTION: \$2,900,000

Rep. Katherine Clark (D)

Location: Woburn, Massachusetts

Parks and walking trails for all.

“City officials, including Ward 3 Alderman Jeff Dillon, [have been working extensively to come up with plans to replace the former Elementary School with a park and walking trails](#) with this being the largest amount of funding to date.” And why are federal taxpayers paying for this? Ouch.

26. OZARK EMPIRE FAIRGROUNDS: \$5,000,000

Sen. Roy Blunt (R)

Location: Springfield, Missouri

Remember your nice little county fair? Now, they're funding out of DC for millions of dollars!

The County Fair's new arena [carries an estimated price tag of \\$12 million to \\$15 million.](#) It's 93,000 square feet, with a 20,000-square-foot education center and capacity for 6,800 seats. The multiplex arena won't just host the 86th edition of the Ozark Empire Fair. Major events including trade shows, athletic competitions, will now come in. The fair board skirted a state law barring earmarks to take another \$5 million from the Missouri state legislature. Republican US. Senator Roy Blunt is now retired from Congress - leaving the next generation to pay for this oinker.

27. NEW BUSES IN WAUWATOSA: \$3,850,000

Rep. Gwen Moore (D)

Location: Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Each eco-friendly bus costs taxpayers \$550,000!

Looking to [obligate federal taxpayers](#) for new local buses to service Milwaukee County, Representative Moore earmarked \$3.85 million for just seven. Local communities normally pay for local services. Now - federal taxpayers get taken for a ride!

28. WOOD LAKE NATURE CENTER BUILDING PROJECT: \$3,000,000

Rep. Ilhan Omar (D)

Location: City of Richfield, Minnesota

It could have been even worse.

Congresswoman Ilhan Omar [requested \\$5 million for the project](#), yet Congress awarded \$3 million. The Wood Lake Nature Center already has 100,000 people visiting each year and the funding would expand the facility. From Omar's press release: the current facility "is over 50 years old, in a state of disrepair, and the demand for visitors has outgrown the space - dozens of visit requests from schools are denied every year due to space constraints."

"The goal of this project is to ensure that families in Richfield, which are majority people of color, and others throughout Minnesota's Fifth can access the services and education offered at Wood Lake Nature Center."

29. NORTHSIDE YOUTH GREENHOUSE: \$750,000

Rep. Ilhan Omar (D)

Location: Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Northside Youth Greenhouse [is used as a youth-led community gathering and growing space](#). The youth will [explore social enterprise and connect to the food system](#) from seed to plate. The kids will develop relationships with local schools, businesses, organizations, and residents while building skills.

30. ORVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY: \$500,000

Rep. Terri Sewell (D)

Location: Orville, Alabama

A book desert in Alabama gets relief.

Mayor Lumpkin [had been trying to get a library](#) in Orville since 2019, since the town is 15 miles away from the nearest one. "We live in such a rural area the internet is so slow," Lumpkin said. "With a library, students and other citizens won't have to travel all the way to Selma. They will be within five miles of the library where they can get internet or use a computer."

31. DORRIS RANCH ORCHARD REPLACEMENT: \$232,000

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D)

Location: Springfield, Oregon

Planting trees on a ranch.

The trees need to be more resistant to fungal infection. So, federal taxpayers [are on the hook for \\$232,000](#). It will play out over the next 20 to 25 years and replace 6,000 trees in 12 of the 13 orchards at Dorris Ranch. Until this point, [the orchard was replacing 1,200 trees](#) starting in 2016. Now, federal taxpayers pick up the tab.

32. SOUTHERN PLAINS RANGE RESEARCH STATION GREENHOUSE: \$525,000

Rep. Frank Lucas (R)

Location: Woodward, Oklahoma

The existing greenhouse was built in 1993, and another greenhouse wing was built in 2004. The project is [set to update the climate control systems and shading system](#). It would also repair the lift station pump at the headhouse. The structure is meant to be a critical help in continuing plant breeding research.

33. NORWALK YMCA COMMUNITY CENTER: \$2,000,000

Rep. James Himes (D)

Location: Norwalk, Connecticut

Funding gone nowhere.

This all seems very wrong: Norwalk's 98 Main Street [project "needed" federal money](#). The YMCA had plans to renovate the address. But the plans changed. The feds sent the earmark to the wrong entity. Now, the YMCA is seeking a way to transfer your dollars to the actual 98 Main Street project - through the city.

34. CHICAGO PUERTO RICAN CULTURAL CENTER: \$3,000,000

Rep. Jesus (Chuy) Garcia (D)

Location: Chicago, Illinois

"Our housing initiative tackles the historical issue of displacement of colonized people." -PRCC [website](#). Rep. Garcia - who has run and lost for Chicago mayor more than once - [earmarked \\$3 million](#). It's all a part of a larger plan to create a state designated "Puerto Rico Town" in Chicago's Northwest side.

35. OVERTON PARK/MEMPHIS ZOO PARKING SOLUTION INITIATIVE: \$3,000,000

Rep. Steve Cohen (D)

Location: Overton Park, Tennessee

The project [eliminates the parking on Overton Park Greenwood](#). It restores 17 acres of parkland that has been behind chain-link fences, it swaps land between the zoo and park, and ends overflow zoo parking in the park. Wow. \$3 million - your money.

36. RENOVATION OF ARENA PLAYERS INC.: \$4,000,000

Sens. Ben Cardin, Chris Van Hollen (D)

Location: Seton Hill, Maryland

The federal government is [giving the Arena Players \\$4 million to rehab and modernize its building in Seton Hill](#). The renovation updates the “deteriorating” building and comprehensive upgrades to the main performance space and complete re-envisioning of the second and third floors. This is the most money the organization has ever received. When announced, we couldn’t [locate the organization on the Maryland Secretary of State’s website as a properly registered charity](#).

37. FOREST THEATRE RESTORATION AND EXPANSION: \$4,000,000

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D)

Location: Dallas, Texas

Let’s go to the theatre; while the state police patrol the streets!

The plan is to revive the historic venue as [an entertainment and learning space](#) that could become ready by December of 2024. The theatre is said to be equipped with a concert hall, rooftop deck, and a creative lab with a black box theatre. It is also said to be getting a recording studio and a sensory immersion room. However, the Dallas Police Department is so out-gunned on the streets that the Texas Rangers were recently called in to help restore a civil society.

38. SANDY SPRING MUSEUM FOLKLIFE HUB EXPANSION: \$500,000

Rep. Jamie Raskin (D)

Location: Sandy Spring, Maryland

A subsidy for folk artists. If you subsidize it, you’ll get more of it. Is there really a folk artist shortage in Maryland? This earmark funds \$500,000 to Sandy Springs Museum [for the expansion of Folklife Hub serving county folk artists](#) who are immigrants, people of color, and members of underserved communities. The most frequent demand by folk artists in the area is for more space at the museum. Now, you’re paying for it.

39. MOUNT AYR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION: \$750,000

Rep. Cindy Axne (D)

Mount Ayr, Iowa (population 1,600)

Small town receives a revitalized town square [with refurbished buildings and cobblestone streets](#). There’s not much in Mount Ayr. However, from local newspapers, we learned that in the early days of the town, the square functioned as the public park and community meeting spot. In the 1960’s, the park was moved west of town and a public pool was added. The congresswoman retired after sticking taxpayers with this oinker.

40. NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDENS: \$1,000,000

Rep. Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez

Location: New York, New York

In the latest year [available](#), the Botanical Gardens added \$93 million to their net worth and paid their CEO \$1.4 million - including income from related activities. Why are they getting \$1 million in taxpayer money?

A new, highly efficient net zero building would provide a large general work area, smaller work areas for specific trades, a multi-purpose room to be used as a meeting room, lunchroom with kitchenette, a workforce training room, locker rooms / bathrooms with showers, offices, a conference room, copy room, and vehicle storage / vehicle repair shop.

41. MILL BRANCH PARK EXPANSION: \$880,000

Rep. Steve Womack (R)

Location: Goshen, Arkansas (population 2,100)

Stargazers get a subsidy.

The funding will go to [additional land acquisition](#) for the City of Goshen's Mill Branch Expansion Project. It will be funding the purchase of more than 74 acres of land. The expansion includes a wildlife observation platform, stargazing platform, hard surface paths, as well as a disc golf course and basketball courts. The city spent about \$400,000 of their own money on the park.

42. RATON FILM STUDIO AND EDUCATION CENTER: \$3,000,000

Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez (D)

Location: Raton, New Mexico

Trying to [bring the film industry to Northern New Mexico](#). "The funding would be used to [rehabilitate Kearny Elementary School into a film production and workforce development facility](#). The facility will provide training in all areas and trades associated with film production in partnership with Santa Fe Community College and El Raton Media Works. Funding is sought for facility renovation and studio-related equipment."

43. INDIGENOUS FARM HUB: \$960,000

Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez (D)

Location: Raton, New Mexico

Preserving traditional indigenous agricultural practices.

The earmark specifically purchases and installs a metal barn, walk-in refrigerator, food packaging station, washing machines, and a delivery truck. "This program develops core farming and ranching production and business skills, and preserves traditional Indigenous agricultural practices, known to be ecologically and environmentally sound, sustainable, and regenerative to damaged lands," [wrote](#) Leger Fernandez.

44: CARIBOU POND AND PARK RECLAMATION PROJECT: \$4,459,000**Sen. Susan Collins (R)****Location: Aroostook County, Maine**

That's an expensive pond. Funding restores the pond to enhance recreational, fishing, and birding opportunities for local families and visitors. Collins [thinks](#) that the pond can also be used as a classroom when the pond is thriving with aquatic life and nature. "Due to the size and nature of the project, the citizens of Caribou needed a partner, and we are very grateful to Senator Susan Collins for answering that call and assisting the Caribou Parks & Recreation Foundation restore the Caribou Mill Pond, dam and fishway," said Caribou City Manager, Penny Thompson.

45. SIDEWALK UPGRADES: \$2,000,000**Rep. Cheri Bustos (D)****Location: Peoria, Illinois**

If it plays in Peoria...

Sidewalks used to be a locally funded project. In this case, federal taxpayers pay \$2 million and the [city chips in \\$150,000](#) towards the improvements. Just wondering if "♥ Rep. Cheri Bustos" will be stamped into the concrete - after all, it's Illinois!

46. MAINE IRISH HERITAGE CENTER: \$3,000,000**Rep. Chellie Pingree (D) & Sens. Susan Collins (R) & Angus King (I)****Location: Portland, Maine**

It's the luck of the Irish!

The earmark funds the plan to fully restore the building envelope. This will make it possible to seal the building from the weather, preventing further deterioration of the exterior and protecting restoration of the interior. When announced, the non-profit wasn't even properly registered with the Maine Attorney General's office as a public charity!

47. MOSQUE FOUNDATION COMMUNITY CENTER: \$1,500,000**Rep. Marie Newman (D)****Location: Bridgeview, Illinois**

The Mosque Foundation Community Center's [vision](#) is to ... teach the practice of Islam and the concept of faith through actions by example, to teach the love of Islam, the Quran, and the Arabic language through programs & competitions," etc. The earmark expands their building.

Critics [have documented investigations by](#) federal and state law enforcement over the last two decades for its links to alleged terrorism or extremist individuals and organizations.

48. KOREAN AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM: \$7,000,000**Rep. Jimmy Gomez (D)****Location: Los Angeles, California**

Another new museum. The Campaign to Build the Korean American National Museum will receive \$7,000,000 to create first museum in the nation dedicated to honoring over 100 years of Korean American history and culture. How many of these identity museums are federal taxpayers going to fund?

49. UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA: \$9,500,000**Sen. Jim Inhofe (R)****Location: Norman, Oklahoma**

The institution has a \$1.64 billion endowment. Why do they need taxpayer help?

The retiring U.S. Senator James Inhofe earmarked the state's flagship nearly \$10 million on his way out the door. Inhofe also earmarked \$2.7 million to Oklahoma State University, in Stillwater - the institution that will house his senate archive!

50. ITALIAN AMERICAN MUSEUM: \$1,680,000**Rep. Gerald Nadler (D)****Location: New York, New York**

Our Story: From Columbus to Cuomo!

This project quadruples the size of the museum. Funds the permanent exhibition of the Italian American experience. Seriously? With major societal problems in New York City, this is how \$1.7 million of your tax money is spent?

Did anyone tell Nadler about the "our story" promoted by the museum on the homepage of its website? People of goodwill can debate Columbus, but Cuomo?

51. CITY OF SIMI VALLEY SENIOR CENTER - PATIO COVER: \$1,000,000**Rep. Julia Brownley (D)****Location: City of Simi Valley, California**

It's a million-dollar cover for a patio! Allows resident activities on the patio without fear of inclement weather. "We really like to get people together." The senior center conducts programming in areas like pottery, arts and crafts, fitness classes, video games and bowling.

EARMARKS BY KEY WORD

30 EXAMPLES

TRAILS: loop, rail, beach, waterfront, etc. - 91 earmarks, \$175,600,030 cost

PEDESTRIAN: walkways, improvements, paths, etc. - 60 earmarks, \$126,654,028 cost

MUSEUM: national, historical, trolley, hip hop, etc.- 52 earmarks, \$68,078,580 cost

BRIDGES: 86 earmarks, \$222.1 million cost

ROADS: 246 earmarks, \$564,241,491 cost

HIGHWAYS: 37 earmarks, \$147,422,500 cost

STEETS: 176 earmarks, \$421,171,877 cost

AVENUES: 85 earmarks, \$196,129,027 cost

YMCA: 46 earmarks, \$61,892,902 cost

CHILDCARE: 21 earmarks, \$28,037,718 cost

LIBRARY: 57 earmarks, \$74,494,157 cost

ZOO: 7 earmarks, \$44,520,000 cost

POLICE: 54 earmarks, \$38,544,082 cost

FIRE: 77 earmarks, \$100,096,097 cost

SHELTER: Senior, Domestic Violence, Animal, etc. - 55 earmarks, \$101,917,325 cost

STREETSCAPE: 11 earmarks, \$25,653,000 cost

WATER: 608 earmarks, \$1,404,768,192 cost

SEWER: 145 earmarks, \$309,920,097 cost

TRANSPORTATION: 48 earmarks, \$93,646,974 cost

ARMY: 278 earmarks, \$2,271,659,890 cost

AIR FORCE: 39 earmarks, \$550,840,000 cost

SPACE FORCE: 1 earmark, \$97,000,000 cost

HOUSING: 211 earmarks, \$340,187,401 cost

HOMELESS: housing, youth services, case mgmt., veterans, job skills - 51 earmarks, \$80,471,891 cost

PARK: 217 earmarks, \$365,827,229 cost

COLLEGE: 304 earmarks, \$421,187,055 cost

UNIVERSITY: 405 earmarks, \$855,861,062 cost

SIDEWALKS: 17 earmarks, \$22,994,227 cost

BASEBALL FIELDS INCLUDING ASTROTURF: 3 earmarks, \$2 million cost

NATATORIUM (SWIMMING POOL): 3 earmarks, \$9,000,000 cost

EARMARKS BY STATE

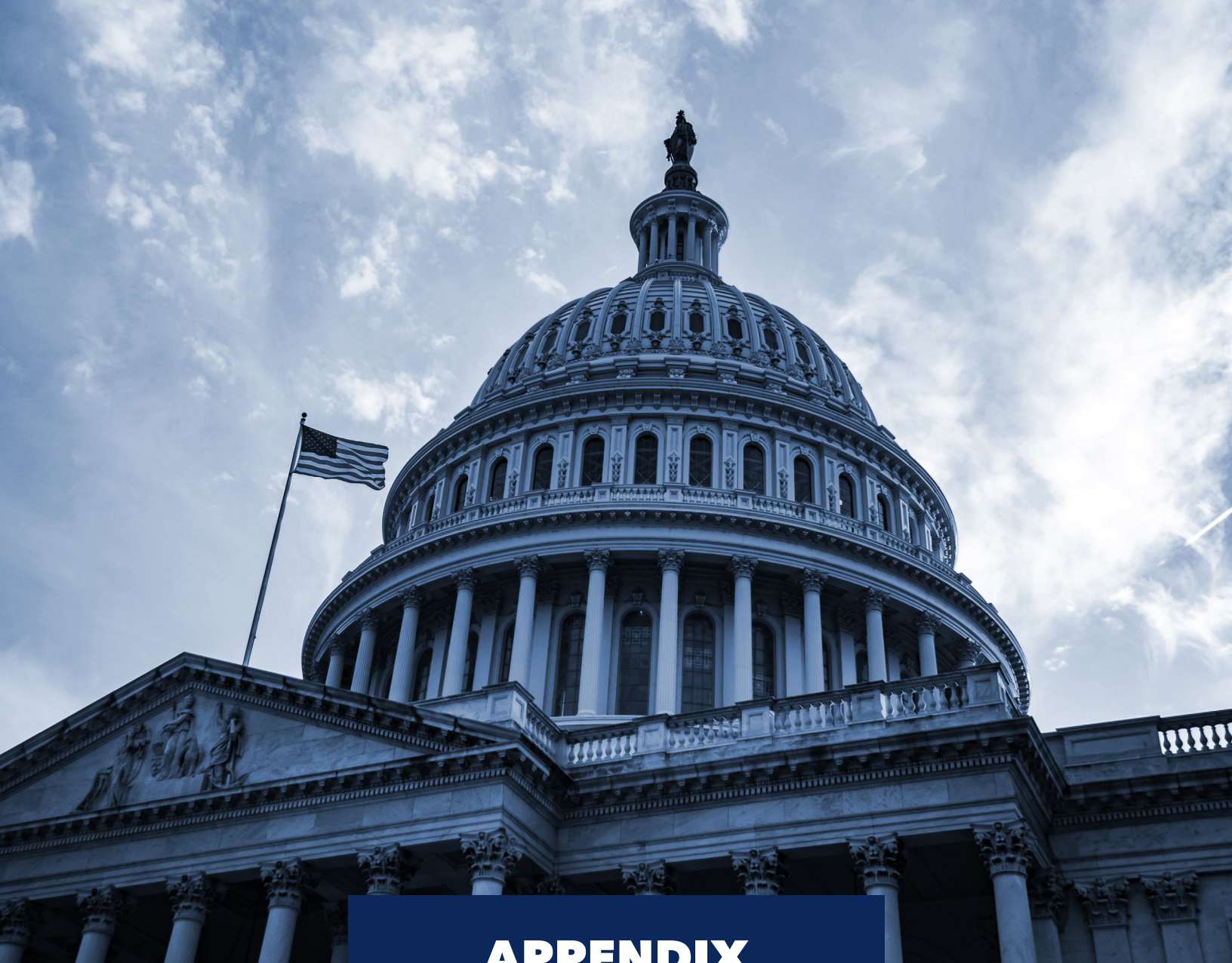
FY2023 BREAKDOWN

STATE	DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS	BOTH	TOTAL
AK		\$489,632,000*		\$489,632,000
AL	\$42,820,760	\$726,322,200*		\$769,142,960
AR		\$179,214,000*		\$179,214,000
AZ	\$247,417,688			\$247,417,688
CA	\$1,328,355,028	\$164,744,867	\$7,220,000	\$1,500,319,895
CO	\$178,550,846			\$178,550,846
CT	\$239,936,183			\$239,936,183
DC	\$21,615,022			\$21,615,022
DE	\$111,499,285			\$111,499,285
FL	\$251,425,588	\$445,178,010*		\$696,603,598
GA	\$284,852,803	\$45,645,000		\$330,497,803
GU	\$1,400,000			\$1,400,000
HI	\$588,245,446			\$588,245,446
IA	\$23,770,522	\$52,196,825*		\$75,967,347
ID		\$37,103,750*		\$37,103,750
IL	\$394,728,319	\$66,869,593	\$49,300,000	\$510,897,912
IN	\$40,622,690			\$40,622,690
KS	\$28,276,733	\$199,218,000*		\$227,494,733
KY	\$18,386,500	\$90,996,500*		\$109,383,000
LA	\$35,007,000	\$404,659,000*		\$439,666,000
MA	\$262,848,534			\$262,848,534
MARIANA ISLANDS	\$26,838,182			\$26,838,182
MD	\$287,845,609			\$287,845,609
ME	\$81,101,985	\$99,728,000*	\$202,557,000	\$383,386,985
MI	\$265,880,083	\$86,949,800		\$352,829,883
MI, KS	\$4,000,000			\$4,000,000

STATE	DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS	BOTH	TOTAL
MN	\$192,846,771	\$49,360,978	\$12,000,000	\$254,207,749
MO	\$53,612,457	\$447,154,139*		\$500,766,596
MS	\$16,789,100	\$309,424,424*		\$326,213,524
NC	\$130,318,119	\$128,195,942		\$258,514,061
NE		\$27,887,500*		\$27,887,500
NH	\$118,350,116			\$118,350,116
NJ	\$341,310,002	\$70,566,418		\$411,876,420
NM	\$233,733,550			\$233,733,550
NV	\$173,691,196	\$32,249,435		\$205,940,631
NY	\$507,716,329	\$169,051,893	\$6,650,000	\$683,418,222
OH	\$158,357,683	\$177,250,432*	\$4,500,000	\$340,108,115
OK		\$595,574,281*		\$595,574,281
OR	\$275,149,863			\$275,149,863
PA	\$249,350,557	\$119,831,514		\$369,182,071
PR		\$19,483,000		\$19,483,000
RI	\$216,619,519			\$216,619,519
SC	\$49,549,519	\$262,134,000*		\$311,683,519
SD		\$63,175,000*		\$63,175,000
TN	\$41,737,332	\$56,995,800*		\$98,733,132
TX	\$304,991,815	\$490,388,772*	\$2,350,000	\$797,730,587
UT		\$85,271,640*		\$85,271,640
VA	\$305,655,853	\$11,875,200		\$317,531,053
VI	\$30,099,362			\$30,099,362
VIRGIN ISLANDS	\$200,000			\$200,000
VT	\$266,258,236			\$266,258,236
WA	\$433,004,490	\$74,893,625		\$507,898,115
WI	\$226,265,844		\$49,300,000	\$275,565,844
WV	\$44,416,000	\$117,231,508*	\$142,163,000	\$303,810,508
WY		\$5,031,000		\$5,031,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$9,135,448,519	\$6,401,484,046	\$476,040,000	\$16,012,972,565

*Asterisk denotes states where Republicans out-earmarked Democrats.
 Source: Congressional disclosures. Learn more at [OpenTheBooks.com](https://OpentheBooks.com).

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APPENDIX

**LOCAL PROJECTS OF MERIT WERE
PREVIOUSLY FUNDED LOCALLY.**

**NOW, THESE "INFRASTRUCTURE"
PROJECTS RECEIVE EARMARKS.**

TEN EXAMPLES

1. PHASE 2 NAPLES RED BAY TIDE SEPTIC TANK MITIGATION: \$5,000,000

Rep. Byron Donalds (R)

Location: Naples, Florida

The city received a \$1.2 million appropriation from the state legislature in 2019 for Phase One of the project in addition to other grant money from other organizations such as the South Florida Water Management District. Phase 2 of the project received \$5 million from the federal government. Naples, Florida has an average home price of \$600,00. They can pay their own way!

2. BEYER PARK PHASE II CONSTRUCTION: \$3,000,000

Rep. Juan Vargas (D)

Location: San Diego, California

The city received \$8.5 million in California Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program grant funding for the construction of Beyer Park in San Ysidro. Now, Congress earmarks \$3 million for phase 2 of the project... when it's clear that this can be locally funded.

3. LITTLE LEHIGH REDEVELOPMENT PHASE 2: \$2,000,000

Sen. Bob Casey (D)

Location: Allentown, Pennsylvania

"Financing for the \$27 million first phase came from a variety of sources including LIHTC equity, City of Allentown HOME and HOME-ARP funds, Lehigh County Affordable Housing Trust Funds, Allentown Housing Authority, PHARE Housing Trust, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, Hudson Housing Capital and Stander Bank." In Phase 2, the redevelopment is being funded by the federal government, they're giving \$2.75 million for 4 Allentown projects but this specific one is being given \$2 million. It's clear that this could have been done through the state given they received \$27 million for the previous phase.

4. WADSWORTH BOULEVARD PHASE 2: \$4,000,000

Rep. Ed Perlmutter (D)

Location: Wheat Ridge, Colorado

The Wadsworth Boulevard expansion started in 2015 when a planning and environmental study investigating improvement opportunities. This resulted in a \$30 million grant from the Denver Regional Council of Governments to commence the improvements.

Unfortunately, Congress is helping fund phase two.

5. MISSION BOULEVARD PAVEMENT REHABILITATION PHASE 3: \$2,300,000

Rep. Mark Takano (D)

Location: Jurupa Valley, California

Before earmarking, previous phases of this project were funded by local, state, and corporate monies. For example, "Phase 2 of the Mission Boulevard Corridor Improvement Project involved the improvement of Mission Boulevard from Industrial Parkway to the south City limit, near Blanche Street." It was funded by LATIP, ACTC, PG&E Rule 20A/B, Comcast, and a Private Developer Contribution. Construction of this Phase of the Mission Boulevard Corridor Improvement Project commenced in FY18 and was completed in September 2020. The numbers from each source for revenue was: "LATIP - \$3,036,000, ACTC - \$225,000, PG&E Rule 20A/B- \$50,000, Comcast - \$104,000, and Private Developer Contribution - \$240,000."

Unfortunately, Congress is helping fund current phases.

6. CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG—EAST MAIN STREETSCAPES PHASE II: \$1,500,000

Rep. Joyce Beatty (D)

Location: Reynoldsburg, Ohio

In April 2021, the city and state funded phase one of this streetscaping: "City Council last month awarded a \$3.61 million contract to Complete General Construction for streetscape improvements along Main Street between Davidson Drive and Jackson Street, the project's first phase. Reynoldsburg will use about \$1.5 million in grants it received in January 2020 from the OPWC (Ohio Public Works Commission) to help pay for the first phase. The city also will use two loans: a \$500,000, zero-interest loan from the OPWC and about \$400,000 in loans received in 2019 from the Franklin County Infrastructure Bank, a revolving-loan fund that provides below-market-rate loans to municipalities for economic-development projects."

Unfortunately, Congress funded phase two through an earmark.

7. VILLAGE OF KIRYAS JOEL FOR PHASE II WATER TREATMENT FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS: \$1,500,000

Sen. Chuck Schumer (D)

Location: Kiryas Joel, New York

In 2021, phase one of this project was funded by the village and state: The cost projection was \$94 million. Since the village already spent \$36.8 million in the previous 2 years, they are borrowing \$57.2 million from the state Environmental Facilities Corp. Unfortunately, Congress helped fund phase two though an earmark.

8. CITRUS GROVE ROAD PHASE II FINAL DESIGN: \$1,000,000

Rep. Daniel Webster (R)

Location: Minneola, Florida

In October 2019, phase one of the project had a ribbon cutting and the new highway cost \$6.6 million - [primarily funded](#) by the Florida Department of Transportation and County transportation impact fees, as well as \$1 million from the City of Minneola in donations.

Unfortunately, phase two is funded in part by Congress through an earmark.

9. TERMINAL EXPANSION, PHASE II – GATES EXPANSION SOUTHWEST FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (RSW): \$7,000,000

Rep. Byron Donalds (R)

Location: Fort Meyers, Florida

In October 2021, phase one of the terminal expansion kicked off [with local and state funding](#): “The RSW airport terminal expansion project is being funded by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs), airport revenue bonds, and construction grants from LCPA.” Lee County Port Authority is developing the project with an estimated investment of \$331 million. FDOT provided \$77.9M of funding, while LCPA granted \$224.9M.

Unfortunately, phase two is funded in part by Congress through an earmark.

10. CITY OF JACKSON FOR SAVANNA WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT PHASE 1B IMPROVEMENTS: \$4,800,000

Reps. Cindy Hyde-Smith, Roger Wicker (R)

Location: Jackson, Mississippi

The city funded previous phases of this project through state programs. For example, the City of Jackson Savanna Wastewater Treatment Plant (Savanna WWTP) enlarged and upgraded their system to meet new permit limits and provide reliable peak wet weather flow capacity. It was a phased approach planned to match the funding capability of the city and up to \$30 million from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) program administered by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). “Any contracts awarded under this invitation are expected to be funded in whole or in part by anticipated funds from the Water Pollution Control Revolving Loan Fund (WPCRLF) loan program from the State of Mississippi.”

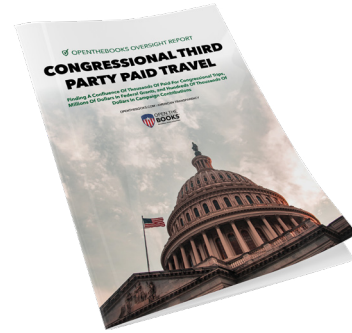
PREVIOUS OVERSIGHT



**IMPROPER
PAYMENTS**



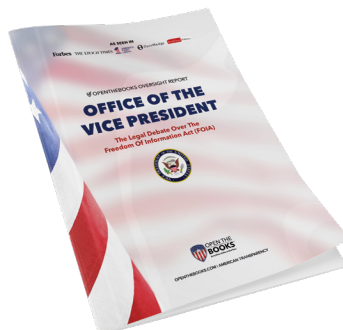
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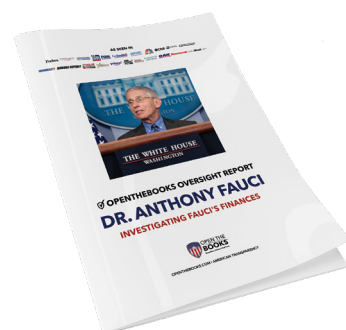
**CONGRESSIONAL
THIRD PARTY PAID
TRAVEL**



**WHITE HOUSE
PAYROLL**



**OFFICE OF THE
VICE PRESIDENT**
*The Legal Debate Over The
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DR. ANTHONY FAUCI
Investigating Fauci's Finances

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IN 2020...

The President's Budget To Congress FY2021 included a first-ever chapter, "Stopping Wasteful and Unnecessary Spending," which was inspired by our oversight report, *Where's The Pork? A Study of \$600 Billion In Federal Grants*. Included in the President's Budget was our report, *Use-It-Or-Lose-It - How The Federal Government Spent \$97 Billion In September 2018*. The President committed to stopping this wasteful phenomenon. Also, the budget cited our report on the National Endowment of the Arts as the principle reason to eliminate the agency. (Media coverage included USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, and FOX News.)

IN 2019...

Our Top 82 U.S. Non-Profit Hospitals: Quantifying Government Payments & Financial Assets report launched on *FOX News' Tucker Carlson Tonight* and *USA TODAY*. This report backstopped President Trump's two executive orders on healthcare price transparency by showing that wealthy charitable non-profit healthcare providers and their CEO's were making big profits. Colorado Governor Jared Polis (D) also cited this data in his state of the state address while arguing for price reforms.

IN 2018...

Open The Books' Mapping The Swamp, A Study Of The Administrative State Media report launched on *FOX News' The Ingraham Angle* and directly led to Representative Judy Hice's (R-GA) legislation on pension and bonus transparency (H.R. 2612). Furthermore, we briefed the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management & Budget regarding our policy ideas to drain the swamp.

IN 2017...

The Tax Cuts And Jobs Act 2017, passed into law and included a claw-back tax on Ivy League-style, excessive university endowments. The *Boston Globe* cited our Ivy League, Inc. oversight report as a catalyst for the legislative provision. Coverage included *The Wall Street Journal* and eight segments on *Fox News*.

IN 2016...

We exposed the \$20 million luxury-art procurement program at the Department of Veterans Affairs, which forced a public apology from the V.A. Secretary and the adoption of new rules to stop the abuse. Coverage included *Good Morning America* and *ABC World News Tonight*.

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR TEAM

Adam Andrzejewski
Chief Executive Officer
& Founder

Craig Mijares
Chief Operating
Officer

Courtenay Lyons
Development
Director

Christopher Neefus
Communications
Director

Sejzelle Erastus-Obilo,
Creative Services Director,
designed this report.

Tamara Colbert
Public Relations
Specialist

Rachel O'Brien
Deputy Public Policy
Editor

Amber Todoroff
Deputy Public Policy
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Milan Erastus-Obilo
Video
Editor



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