

**Amendment 500 – Requires all legislation to be reviewed before it is considered by the Senate to determine whether new duplicative and overlapping programs are being created.**

This amendment would require committee reports accompanying every bill to provide:

- (1) an analysis by the Congressional Research Service to determine if the bill creates any new federal program, office, or initiative that would duplicate or overlap any existing federal program, office, or initiative with similar mission, purpose, goals, or activities along with a listing of all of the overlapping or duplicative federal program or programs, office or offices, or initiative or initiatives; and
- (2) an explanation provided by the committee as to why the creation of each new program, office, or initiative is necessary if a similar program or programs, office or offices, or initiative or initiatives already exist.

Congress creates hundreds of new programs every year, adding to the thousands that already exist. Every time Congress makes a new program that duplicates an existing program, taxpayers must pay for both programs. It also highlights Congress' failure to conduct oversight. If Congress is unaware of existing programs that are not meeting a need, that would indicate those programs are not being held accountable to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

In March, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report examining 34 missions of the federal government identifying hundreds of duplicative and overlapping programs costing approximately \$217 billion a year. GAO stated "reducing or eliminating duplication, overlap, or fragmentation could potentially save billions of taxpayer dollars annually and help agencies provide more efficient and effective services."

GAO found there are 47 separate job training programs, 88 economic development programs, 82 teacher quality programs, and 56 financial literacy programs.

Despite GAO's findings, Congress has been slow to address this problem.

As a candidate for president in 2008, Barack Obama pledged to “eliminate wasteful redundancy.” Obama stated “too often, federal departments take on functions or services that are already being done or could be done elsewhere within the federal government more effectively. The result is unnecessary redundancy.”

This amendment will ensure Congress and the President are fully aware of other existing programs with similar goals before new similar programs are created.

It will also ensure taxpayers are provided an explanation from Congress as to why another new program that duplicates one or more existing programs may be needed.

This transparency will ensure greater accountability in the legislative process and reduce the creation of unnecessary redundancy, duplication, overlap, and waste.

Because this amendment will amend Senate Rules, it must receive support of two-thirds of the Senate to pass.