

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 20, 2012

The Honorable Jeffrey Zients
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 Seventeenth Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Acting Director Zients:

We write regarding the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) report, which was issued on September 14, 2012 pursuant to the Sequestration Transparency Act (STA) of 2012 (P.L. 112-115). The STA, a bill we introduced in the Senate, specifically required the President to submit to Congress a report at the program, project, and activity (PPA) level detailing how the looming sequester for fiscal year 2013 will be applied. We were disappointed to receive a report that did not provide the level of detail required under the law.

The OMB report notes that “because of the STA’s reporting deadline of just 30 days, the large number of PPAs across all agencies and budget accounts, and inconsistencies in the way PPAs are defined, additional time is necessary to identify, review, and resolve issues associated with providing information at this level of detail.” However, the report fails to acknowledge that the sequestration has been a highly possible scenario since November of 2011, when the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction failed to agree upon savings required by the Budget Control Act. In fact, senators have been seeking additional information from OMB on the sequester since February of this year, and it was the refusal to provide such information that prompted the need for the legislation.

With sequestration scheduled to take effect in just over three months, it is critical that this information be made public. Since the report stated that OMB needs more time to prepare this information at the level required by the STA, we expect that you will be providing additional information to us. We respectfully ask that you inform us when Congress and the American people might expect this information. We look forward to your providing a commitment as to when you will provide the additional data that is required by STA.

Sincerely,



John Thune
United States Senate



Jeff Sessions
United States Senate