

Rand Paul Proves in One Tweet That Congress Is Broken

Congress passed a \$1.3 trillion “[kitchen sink](#)” spending bill early Friday that increases domestic and defense spending.

The bill passed by a 65-32 vote in the Senate and 256-167 in the House. Republican budget hawks (yes, there are a few) [opposed the bill](#); but enough Democrats joined the majority for the legislation to easily pass. President Trump [signed the bill](#) Friday after threatening to veto the legislation.

Vox offers [a detailed explanation](#) of what’s in the bill. But, contents of the legislation aside, Sen. Rand Paul offered evidence that our representative democracy is not exactly working these days.

On Twitter Paul, the junior Senator from Kentucky, tweeted a picture of himself holding the bill, along with these words:

“Well here it is, all 2,232 budget-busting pages. The House already started votes on it. The Senate is expected to soon. No one has read it. Congress is broken...”

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pic.twitter.com/izvJlUEgUM

– Senator Rand Paul (@RandPaul) [March 22, 2018](#)

As one writer pointed out, House members [were given](#) 1,000 minutes to read a 2,232-page bill. How many do you think even tried?

It's worth pointing out that our system was not intended to work this way.

In *The Federalist Papers: No. 62*, James Madison [said](#) “the blessings of liberty” are hindered by legislation so voluminous nobody knows what is in it. A responsible constitutional democracy, Madison suggested, would pass laws that would be digestible not just to lawmakers, but to *the people*.

“It will be of little avail to the people, that the laws are made by men of their own choice, if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood,” Madison wrote.

A governing system that is not transparent, Madison believed, would benefit a few [at the expense of the many](#).

“... the unreasonable advantage it gives to the sagacious, the enterprising, and the moneyed few over the industrious and uniformed mass of the people. Every new regulation concerning commerce or revenue, or in any way affecting the value of the different species of property, presents a new harvest to those who watch the change, and can trace its consequences; a harvest, reared not by themselves, but by the toils and cares of the great body of their fellow-citizens. This is a state of things in which it may be said with some truth that laws are made for the FEW, not for the MANY.”

It appears we've reached a point where it's not just the people who are left in the dark regarding new legislation. The vast majority of lawmakers themselves are voting on bills they've never had an opportunity to read (and many probably wouldn't understand if given the opportunity).

Is this any way to govern? Does such a system not lend itself to corruption, injustice, and all manner of abuse?

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