

118th CONGRESS
1st Session

A BILL

To prohibit omnibus legislation, require single-subject bills, eliminate hidden riders, ban deceptive bill titles, and ensure transparency in federal lawmaking.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Single Subject and Transparency in Legislation Act.”

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) Findings.—Congress finds that—

(1) Omnibus “mega-bills” and unrelated riders undermine transparency and accountability, forcing Members to cast all-or-nothing votes on unrelated subjects;

(2) The single-subject rule is a proven safeguard in many state constitutions and international systems;

(3) Hidden provisions and log-rolling erode public trust and enable pork-barrel spending;

(4) Deceptive or promotional bill titles mislead the public and courts, which sometimes rely on titles in statutory interpretation;

(5) Citizens deserve clear, focused legislation that can be read, debated, and voted on issue by issue.

(b) Purpose.—The purpose of this Act is to—

(1) require that each Act of Congress embrace only one subject;

(2) prohibit unrelated riders and hidden provisions;

(3) mandate transparency in bill drafting and publication;

(4) prohibit deceptive or misleading bill titles;

(5) empower citizens and courts to enforce compliance.

SEC. 3. SINGLE-SUBJECT REQUIREMENT.

(a) Each Act of Congress shall embrace only one subject, which shall be clearly expressed in its title.

(b) Any provision not germane to the subject expressed in the title shall be void and of no effect.

SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON OMNIBUS LEGISLATION.

(a) No bill may contain multiple unrelated subjects or appropriations.

(b) Appropriations bills shall be limited to funding measures for agencies or programs within a single subject area.

SEC. 5. GERMANENESS TEST.

(a) A provision is germane if it directly relates to the subject expressed in the title and is necessary to carry out the purpose of the Act.

(b) The Parliamentarian of each chamber shall certify germaneness before floor consideration.

(c) Any certification shall be published on the public legislative dashboard.

SEC. 6. TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS.

(a) Each section of a bill shall cite the statutory authority it amends or creates.

(b) No bill may be considered unless the full text has been publicly available for at least 72 hours.

(c) Bills may not include the phrase “and for other purposes” in their titles.

SEC. 7. PROHIBITION ON DECEPTIVE OR MISLEADING TITLES.

(a) Accuracy Required.—The short title and official title of any bill shall accurately and neutrally describe the primary subject matter of the Act.

(b) Prohibited Phrasing.—Titles may not—

- (1) contain claims or implications about outcomes not directly mandated by the bill;
- (2) use promotional, partisan, or pejorative language;
- (3) employ acronyms or slogans designed primarily for political messaging.

(c) Certification.—The Parliamentarian of each chamber shall certify that the title complies with this section before floor consideration.

(d) Enforcement.—

(1) Any citizen of the United States shall have standing to challenge a bill title as deceptive or misleading.

(2) If a court finds a violation, the title shall be struck and replaced with a neutral descriptive title by the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate.

(3) Sponsors of bills with deceptive titles shall be subject to censure under House or Senate rules.

SEC. 8. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) Judicial Review.—Any citizen of the United States shall have standing to challenge a provision enacted in violation of this Act.

(b) Remedies.—Courts may strike down non-germane provisions without invalidating the remainder of the Act.

(c) Attorney’s Fees.—Prevailing citizens shall recover attorney’s fees and costs.

(d) Congressional Penalties.—If a bill is found to contain non-germane provisions—

- (1) the sponsoring Member shall be subject to censure under House or Senate rules;
- (2) committee budgets of the chamber that reported the bill shall be reduced by 5 percent for the following fiscal year.

SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall apply to all legislation introduced in the 119th Congress and thereafter.

Footnotes / References

1. GovFacts Explainer (2025) — overview of omnibus vs. single-subject bills.
2. *Wikipedia: Single-Subject Rule* — survey of U.S. state and international applications.
3. Legislative Evaluation Assembly of Minnesota (LEA) — case study of omnibus abuse and hidden riders.
4. Florida Constitution, Art. III § 6 — single-subject requirement.
5. California Constitution, Art. IV § 9 — single-subject requirement.
6. Colorado Constitution, Art. V § 21 — single-subject requirement.
7. Philippines Constitution, Art. VI § 26(1) — single-subject rule.
8. Switzerland Federal Constitution — “unity of subject matter” principle.

9. House Rule XXI, Clause 7 — existing but weak prohibition on legislation in appropriations bills.
10. GAO Reports — repeated findings on opacity in legislative riders and appropriations.
11. Yale Law & Policy Review — *SCOTUS Short Title Turmoil: Time for a Congressional Bill Naming Authority* (2013).
12. *The Conversation* — “In Congress, the name of a bill may have nothing to do with what’s in it” (2022).