

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

January 5, 1976

TO: Executive Staff
FROM: Alice M. Rivlin *Alice*
SUBJECT: Public Policy Issues

As we begin the first full year with the new Congressional budget procedures in place, I want to emphasize once again that CBO must be, and must be perceived to be, an objective, non-partisan, professional organization in the service of the Congress. You have all acted in that spirit thus far, and I ask that you consciously continue to do so.

Our work and our publications must always be balanced, thorough and free of any partisan tinge. Our task is to provide information which will help the whole Congress in reaching its decisions. It will not be a help---indeed, it will be a harm---if we appear to take sides, for then the trustworthiness of the information we provide will be in doubt.

We are not to be advocates. As private citizens, we are entitled to our own views on the issues of the day, but as members of CBO, we are not to make recommendations or to characterize, even by implication, particular policy positions as good or bad, wise or unwise.

It follows that in our outside activities, as well as directly in our CBO work, we must not be, or seem to be, special pleaders on issues which may come before the Congress. During our time with CBO, each of us must refrain from service elsewhere, for example, on a study commission, if that service were to imply CBO sharing in the shaping of policy recommendations to the Congress.

Please see that this memorandum is read by every employee in your division and in the future, by any new employee joining CBO.