

Solving America's spending problem

We should cut funding to wasteful departments

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Congress needs to get serious about the U.S. government's spending problem. The budget deficit is a whopping \$1.65 trillion while the national debt totals around \$14.3 trillion (excluding entitlements). Congress needs to realize that they must make drastic cuts to avoid a government shutdown and restore fiscal sanity. Indeed there are numerous cuts that can be made in several federal departments. The Cato institute has outlined cuts for various departments that have gotten extremely fat over the years.

The Department of Energy was created under Jimmy Carter. Instead of successfully finding a viable alternative fuel, the department has found it necessary to impose hefty regulations on businesses and subsidize misguided energy plans. The mission of the Department of Energy has largely failed and it should be targeted for cuts. An approximate \$18 billion can be safely cut from subsidies to ethanol, failed research, and consolidating activities to other departments. With a large amount of the Department of Energy either cut or transferred to another department, we could effectively get rid of an entire agency.

The Department of Defense spent \$721 billion in this fiscal year and could definitely use some drastic cuts. President Eisenhower warned about the emerging military industrial complex and unfortunately his worst fears have come true. Nevertheless, there is still time to cut. Over the next 10 years, reducing the nuclear arsenal, reducing the size of the army, building fewer vehicles that just sit around, eliminating expensive programs like the V-22 Osprey, and reforming the infrastructure and administration could save \$150 billion annually with a total of \$1.2 trillion after 10 years. All these cuts could be made without sacrificing security and staying on the forefront of military research.

The Department of Agriculture could be completely abolished from the books and save taxpayers \$30 billion annually over the next 10 years. This Department deals with destructive subsidies that distort the price of foodstuffs and forces other countries to engage in trade wars with the U.S. Luckily, the U.S. could do without this wasteful bureau and save \$131 billion of taxpayer funds.

The Department of Transportation is filled with waste, boondoggles and mismanagement. The total amount that could be cut from this department is a total \$84 billion. With the elimination of high-speed rail, which never gets used thanks to the privatization of the TSA, the Department of Transportation should be reformed and restructured.

There are so many other U.S. Federal Departments that could be downsized or completely cut and still a substantial amount of money without touching entitlements. However, entitlements are not to be overlooked, but quick cuts could be made while understanding that soon the Department of Health and Human Services and Social Security will overtake the entire budget. In fact, those two services take up almost 50 percent of the budget and if drastic cuts and reforms are not made, these pay as you go programs will bankrupt America and

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our future. The \$61 billion that the GOP has proposed in cuts is less than 1.6 percent of the entire budget, substantially less than 'draconian'.

It's time to understand the true role of government and face the facts that government cannot provide everything and shouldn't. It is absolutely necessary to stop this road to serfdom and reclaim the America that took pride in its enduring freedom, prosperous capitalism and limited government. It's time to take America back from the empty promises of big government.

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