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Posted on Mon, Jun. 07, 2010 10:15 PM

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Letter | Entitlement programs aren't to blame for the national debt

The Cato Institute and many conservative politicians are trying to blame the deficits and the national debt on so-called entitlements, trust funds such as Social Security and Medicare — insurance programs Americans have paid into for a couple of generations expecting they would be available when they retire.

In fact, all of the national debt accumulated since fiscal year 1981 (\$12 trillion) can be attributed to cost overruns for national security; expenditures for past, present and future war; servicing of the national debt, itself; plus the cost of the current economic meltdown. Federal budgets for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 indicate that 64 percent to 70 percent of the interest payments supposedly going into the trust funds (totaling \$392 billion to \$455 billion) are not being counted against the deficit; they are being spent for war and bailouts.

These interest payments are, however, increasing the national debt. Citizens ought to be outraged.

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Leawood

Send comments to gback@kcstar.com.

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