

Cato Institute takes on Obama in new advertising campaign

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In a full page advertisement placed in the Wall Street Journal and other newspapers, the Cato Institute calls on President Obama to make good on his promise to eliminate unneeded government programs.

"We will go through our federal budget - page by page, line by line - eliminating those programs we don't need." - President-elect Barack Obama, November 2008." This is the opening line of a full page advertisement the Cato Institute placed in the Wall Street Journal and elsewhere this past week. The Cato message is an open call for the Obama administration to make good on its promise to cut unnecessary programs from the government roster.



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The Senate's side of the Capitol Building in DC.

"It's been two years since you made that pledge, Mr. President. Since then, you've signed into law an \$800 billion 'stimulus' package and a massive new health care entitlement - adding trillions of dollars in unfunded liabilities to our grandchildren's tab," the copy begins.

President Obama is facing stiff Republican resistance in the wake of a devastating mid-term election that ushered in a staggering wave of Republicans in the House and that pared back the Democratic majority in the Senate. The president now enters an environment where his many ambitions and policies will likely succumb to the Republican knife.

[Cato Institute](#), a conservative think tank, has issued a directive at a new information site, [DownsizingGovernment.org](#). It is this site that Cato Institute is calling out in the print advertisement. [DownsizingGovernment.org](#) promises to be a "department-by-department guide to cutting the federal government's budget."

"The American people made it clear on election day this month that they want a smaller, less expensive government," the advertisement continues. "But because of the deficits your administration has piled up, our national debt will be larger than the entire U.S. economy by 2012. Isn't it past time we started eliminating those programs we don't need?"

The Cato Institute has also made it apparent that it will hold Republicans to the same accountability that it is demanding of the president. On the Cato Institute web site, there is a reminder that [Republicans may also be experiencing budget cowardice](#) - citing a *National Review* piece from November 17.

The advertisement puts eight major government programs in focus, coloring the issues around an ever expansive federal government - Farm Subsidies, Military Overreach, Transportation Programs, Housing Subsidies, Energy Subsidies, Government-run Health Care, Drug War, Social Security. It is a stark review of the budgetary challenges facing the federal government and of the Obama administration's inertia in that regard.

"With the Constitution as our guide," the advertisement concludes. "We've identified scores of agencies to eliminate and programs to zero out, putting America on the path toward fiscal sanity."