Jeff Duncan: End "Generational Theft"

By Jeff Duncan • on April 5, 2011   Comment   Email   Print   ShareThis

By Jeff Duncan || Throughout our nation's proud history, the United States has proven its ability to overcome any obstacle with a combination of American ingenuity and perseverance. However, decades of neglect from out-of-touch Washington politicians from both parties is beginning to take its toll on the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave."

According to the Congressional Budget Office, in 2011 the United States will pay over $207 billion in interest alone on our $14.2 trillion national debt. To put this in perspective, our country's interest payments on the debt will exceed the total cost of Medicare by 2018. By 2060 the Cato Institute projects that our country will have to devote 100% of U.S. tax revenue on interest payments alone.

For decades both Republicans and Democrats helped fuel our addiction to government spending, but the American people expect this Congress to finally cut up the credit cards and get spending under control.

A few months ago, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives passed a spending resolution to fund government for the rest of this fiscal year. The House was constitutionally required to draft this continuing spending resolution because the previous Democrat controlled Congress failed to pass a single appropriations spending bill last year."

The amount ultimately cut in the House version of the bill was lower than I had hoped for. The spending bill cut $61 billion dollars from this year's budget, a $100 billion dollar decrease from President Obama's proposal but only a modest 1.7% overall reduction to federal spending. During the debate on the spending resolution, I voted to cut billions of additional dollars. While many of those amendments failed, I cast those votes because Congress should be doing what we're supposed to do, not what's easy to do.

While I believe the GOP's first plan didn't go far enough in addressing our country's spending addiction, at least they have a plan and at least it cuts something. Further, Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan deserves praise for releasing a serious budget proposal that makes more substantial cuts that right-size our federal government for the long term.

For those keeping score at home, the Republican controlled House of Representatives has passed a proposal that curtails some spending and funds the government through the rest of this fiscal year, and proposed a budget that balances over time and eventually pays off our national debt, while the Democrat controlled Senate has produced absolutely nothing. As a result, when the latest spending resolution expires at midnight on April 8th, Senate Democrats will cause a partial government shutdown.

Democrats have used words like "draconian" and "irresponsible" to describe Republican spending proposals. If cutting a modest 1.7% of overall government spending is "irresponsible" then what do we call the debt that we're passing on to our children and grandchildren?

If Democrats can't swallow a meager $61 billion dollar cut to government spending then they're asking for a fight and deserve one. Congress needs to accept the same financial realities that families and businesses are facing across the country and look for practical ways to lower costs. As a small business owner, when times were tough I had to set priorities and cut back. Our government can't spend its way out of recession and it can't borrow its way out of debt. Some of these cuts won't be easy, but we're all going to have to row this boat together if we're going to get our country headed in the right direction.

I believe that our nation has delayed this spending battle long enough, and I'm ready to fight to put an end to generational theft and protect the financial security of our nation.

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*AUTHOR'S NOTE: Jeff Duncan represents South Carolina's third congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives. Visit his website by **clicking here**.*