



## **Members of Congress must prioritize nation's long-term fiscal health over personal priorities**

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Beyond the global pandemic and campaign season, the wheels of government have kept spinning — and spending.

Here is just one example of a potential federal government program that is (pun intended) flying under the radar: a potential big purchase for the Marines of CH-53K King Stallion helicopters.

Here's the concern: The helicopters are extremely expensive — \$31 billion for 200 helicopters, as reported in 2017. The cost has gone up since then. Even more concerning is that The Project on Government Oversight has issued a report that chronicled that “the Navy’s fleet of CH-53 helicopters has a terrible safety record.”

To be sure, if the U.S. military truly needs more helicopters to have a properly functioning force to keep our nation safe, then helicopters they should have. But is it wise to spend \$31 billion on an aircraft program without knowing for certain that we are not risking the lives of Marines?

This is merely one program that needs to be paused and given thoughtful oversight. There are unquestionably hundreds of others, yet there seems to be no appetite by either party to talk about reforms to spending programs.

The reality is that America is facing down a debt crisis and it is time for Congress to be proactive to prevent a complete meltdown of the economy. As the Cato Institute recently reported, “The problem today is federal government debt, which is growing by almost \$1 trillion a year.” Meanwhile, the Manhattan Institute suggests that with a debt this year expected to be \$4 trillion, there is a likelihood that the U.S. will average \$2 trillion in debt annually for the remainder of the decade.

These are unique and difficult times with the federal government trying to combat the health and economic destruction imposed by the coronavirus.

Lane Koch, a Republican political strategist in Washington, D.C., said that Congress needs more than ever to exercise fiscal restraint.

“The problem is, there is no more money to spend and neither party wants to find cuts to other programs to pay for these new programs. They do not seem to care about unprecedented levels of federal government spending. Winning an election when the economy is in turmoil is difficult to say the least,” she wrote.

Any unnecessary programs need to be put on hold.

As President Herbert Hoover once said, “Being a politician is a poor profession. Being a public servant is a noble one.” True governance means prioritizing the future economic stability of America even if it means risking personal political gain for the betterment of the nation.