



CommonSense

with Paul Jacob

« [The Clipping and Culling Crisis](#)

Don't Spend that Penny

Cato Institute's Chris Edwards [succinctly explains](#) that not only does Rep. Boehner's budget plan fail to cut spending \$1 trillion over the next ten years — as advertised — but it “doesn't actually cut spending at all.”

Zilch. Spending goes [up](#).

“Why doesn't the House leadership propose real cuts?” asks Edwards. He means identify specific line items that can be cut back — now, as in today or this week — rather than setting optimistic and unenforceable spending caps on future congresses. This especially goes for “caps” that don't actually cap spending, but allow it to grow by, say, \$7–8 trillion over the next decade.

Boehner's plan allows debt to continue to pile up at historically huge levels. But he's not alone. Obama has no plan. Reid's plan? Calling it “smoke and mirrors” gives smoke and mirrors a bad name.

[The Penny Plan](#), introduced by Florida Rep. Connie Mack and endorsed by [Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul](#), has some merit. It would cut the budget by one percent for six years and then cap federal government spending at 18 percent of GDP.

Yes, cutting federal spending by only one penny on each dollar (one percent) for six years, rather than increasing spending by upwards of 7 percent a year under the Congressional Budget Office's baseline budget, would balance the budget in eight years.

But to restore balance and end the debt crisis, a penny cut has to actually be a cut.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.