

Capital Outlook

Nothing Christian about the Trump budget

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The Trump 2018 Budget proposal for the federal government tells us everything we need to know about President Donald Trump; and it's not good. It represents a \$3.6 trillion cut in governmental programs, mainly for the poor, elderly, disabled, children and middle income families. Those at the top reap all the benefits. If we are not careful, we will start thinking that up is down and day is night listening to media logic that because Trump has been able to do so many terrible things and maintain support from his base, it must be okay. There is very little that is normal and acceptable about the behavior of this President.

His new budget proposal is a good example. It cuts the heart out of every program for the poor and middle income Americans while stuffing the pockets of the rich with cash. The man has no conscience, and cares less that his budget will cut food to poor families and children, eliminate medical care for the elderly in nursing homes, cut basic funding for the disabled, and roll back Obama era reforms to make student loans and college more affordable. Here are some of the specific budget recommendations that make it clear there is nothing compassionate about Trump's America. His cuts would include...

1. \$880 billion from Medicaid, with the program cut almost in half (47 percent) within 10 years;
2. \$191 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Food Stamps, over 10 years;
3. \$40.4 billion from Earned Income Tax Credits that funds the safety net for the poor;
4. \$21.6 billion from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Welfare) that represents a 13 percent cut to an already poorly funded program;
5. 13.2 percent cut from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) subsidized housing.
6. Major cuts to important federal agencies like EPA (31.4 percent), State Department (29.1 percent), Agriculture (20.5 percent), Labor (19.8 percent), Health and Human Services (16 percent), Commerce (15.8 percent), Transportation (12.7 percent), and Interior (10.9 percent). These cuts will cripple many of the programs, as intended based on rhetoric from Trump and his surrogates during the campaign.

However, he gives a 25.4 percent increase to Defense, a department already funded at \$834 billion, and a 6.8 percent increase for Homeland Security that includes \$2.6 billion for the U.S./ Mexico border wall. Yet, he shows no concern about literally taking food out of children's mouths by cutting food stamps, subsidies for school breakfast and lunch programs, summer food services, and even Meals on Wheels for the frail, elderly and disabled. Millions of poor children and seniors depend on these programs for the only nutritious meals they get each day.

And maybe Trump's new HUD Secretary, Dr. Ben Carson's ridiculous claim that poverty is just a figment of poor peoples' imagination, was his attempt to justify his boss's inhumanity toward the nation's poor. Carson should have stuck to neurosurgery. The Trump administration's blindness to the plight of others is further illustrated in the fact that he saw no need to cut massive corporate welfare subsidies that benefit big business interests that are fully capable of paying their cost to do business here and abroad from their own profits. The following are just a few examples from the CATO Institute in a 2017 article by Chris Edwards on TownHall.com.

_ 85 percent of tax dollars for Farm Subsidies go to support the largest and wealthiest farm businesses in the country.

_ Sugar Program subsidies benefit wealthy sugar producers while allowing them to increase costs to consumers at over \$3 billion more a year.

_ The Universal Service Fund gives subsidies to phone companies and other providers while allowing those companies to increase taxes on consumer phone bills.

_ Export-Import Bank subsidies help wealthy foreign companies finance trade deals, while hurting U.S. companies.

_ The Overseas Private Investment Corporation subsidizes the expansion by U.S. companies like Papa John's Pizza and Enron to foreign countries.

These are just a few from the long list of corporate welfare examples cited by Edwards in his article; indicating that if these subsidies are cut, American tax payers would save \$50 billion a year. The savings would be \$500 billion over the 10 year window in Trump's budget proposal.

In March 2017, 69 million poor families, children, pregnant women, adults with children, seniors, and disabled Americans were covered under Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or President Obama's ACA Basic Health Program. If Trump's budget passes, 23 million of those Americans will lose their health coverage. His utter disregard for the needs of the poor and average Americans is proof Trump needs to get off twitter and spend more time reading the Bible. He might be surprised at what it has to say about the rich; particularly the rich who worship their money and position above all else.

Necessity requires that we have sane, smart, compassionate people making decisions on our behalf in Washington before Trump destroys everything that is good and just about our country.