



## Budget Busting Politicians Need to Reverse Course

Lane Koch

August 17, 2020

There was a meme that was forwarded around social media toward the beginning of the of stay-at-home orders.

The purpose was to communicate that we are not just attempting to work from home, but attempting to manage our careers during a global pandemic.

I am a working mom of two young children who need hours of my assistance with distance learning. I am also a full-time political professional. I have spent my career helping candidates attempt to cut through the noise of day-to-day life so that they can reach voters with their message.

It takes professionals like me to find the best ways to reach voters. It is called political science for a reason.

It is challenging under normal circumstances. Americans lead busy lives running homes, businesses, raising children, caring for aging parents, all of which can very reasonably be considered full-time jobs individually. Then add in an unprecedented global pandemic.

Simply staying up to date on the reported news is challenging. To make matters more difficult, only a small part of what goes on in Washington is covered in our 24-hour news cycle. It is not that Americans do not care about elections, or the goings-on of Washington, there are just only so many hours in the day. Like all parents of little ones know, if they are quiet, you should be worried.

Well, we have a problem, and it isn't a Sharpie to your new loveseat.

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

Here is just one example of a potential program that is (pun intended) flying under the radar: a potential big purchase for the Marines of CH-53K King Stallion helicopters. [Popular Mechanics](#) reported on April 18, 2017, that the CH-53K King Stallion helicopter, “is phenomenally expensive, at \$31 billion for 200 helicopters.”

The report indicated that cost has risen by 6.9 percent in the year before April 2017. The cost of each helicopter is “\$138.5 million, up from \$131.2 million one year ago.” Even more concerning, [The Project on Government Oversight](#) issued a report that chronicled that “the Navy’s fleet of H-53 helicopters has a terrible safety record.”

If my household budget needed cuts, the first thing would not be my alarm system.

If the military truly needs more helicopters to have a properly functioning military to keep our nation safe, then helicopters they should have. But we should not spend \$31 billion on a program with overpriced aircraft 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. America is facing down a debt crisis and it is time for Congress to be pro-active to prevent a complete meltdown of the economy.

Chris Edwards of the Cato Institute wrote in *The Hill* on July 14, “The problem today is federal government debt, which is growing by almost \$1 trillion a year. Under its alternative scenario, CBO projects that debt held by the public will double as a share of gross domestic product from 78% today to 157% by 2040.”

Brian Riedl of the Manhattan Institute argues that with a debt this year expected to be \$4 trillion, there is a likelihood that we 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.

We need Congress now more than ever, as they continue to navigate a bipartisan negotiation for a relief package, to shop and spend like Americans do: thoughtfully. Like a couple shopping for a new car to bring their first baby home from the hospital, not like a college student throwing his last fraternity party with dad’s credit card before graduation.

The new Democratic House proposal costs about \$3 trillion and the Senate Republican package costs about \$1 trillion. 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.

So, Republicans are willing to spend in hopes to buy their way into a second term. And the Democrats are willing to spend because they can play the historical blame game, anything that happens while the other party is in power not their fault.

Any unnecessary programs need to be put on hold. We need governance, not politicians masquerading as legislatures. 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.