

Cato's Pilon: Obama's Spending Freeze 'Insult to Our Intelligence'

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By Dan Weil

The spending freeze that President Barack Obama proposed in his State of the Union address Tuesday is so small as to be meaningless, says Roger Pilon, legal affairs vice president for the Cato Institute. Pilon's criticism, in an opinion column on Politico, echoes the observations of several pundits, politicians, and political observers who are questioning the size and duration of the freeze in light of the nation's ballooning debt.

Roger Pilon, Cato Institute.

For example, South Dakota Sen. John Thune, a potential Republican presidential candidate, told Fox News that Obama's proposals to cut spending are steps in the right direction, but he expressed skepticism about the scope and follow-through

On Politico, Pilon writes: "With uncontrolled deficits well into the future and a debt exceeding \$14 trillion, for Obama to propose saving only \$40 billion per year in discretionary spending over the next five years, while 'investing' in pie-in-the-sky things like high-speed rail, wind farms, environmentally destructive ethanol, and the like is worse than unserious — it's an insult to our intelligence.

"Like Obama, many Republicans too treat military spending, among other things, as sacrosanct, but at least they're proposing more serious budget cuts. The deeper problem, of course, is systemic. Socialism, a large dose of which we have in America today, brings out the very worst in people."