

The Balanced Budget Coalition

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Al Qaeda, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and China are threats the United States, but they are not the true threats to this country's greatness. America's greatness is the collective efforts of its individuals. America's advantage has not been that its citizens were better educated or a better gene pool of people, our greatness has been derived through our freedom. Through our freedom we were given great opportunities and when people are free and able to reap the rewards of their own labors they can accomplish great things. However, make no mistake about it; these freedoms are being eroded away. The enemy is within.

The enemy is our federal government. The enemy is the politicians in Washington. The enemy is entitlement spending that is insolvent yet cannot be touched politically. The forefathers of our country understood the dangers of a central government and structured a constitution to protect us from this danger. While this protection has greatly slowed the advancing power of the federal government, it is finally being trampled to the ground. Open your eyes; this is not difficult to see.

Worse yet, as this power grab grows exponentially, and the more that is grabbed, the easier it is to take more. Unfortunately, as strong as our economy may be, it is already deteriorating. The US has lost its competitive edge, and now the monster that it feeds has become too large. Regulation and taxes have already drained many productive sectors of our economy. However, the spending and power grab continues, regardless of the massive debt.

This must stop, and while the damage is already severe, and recovery and repair will be painful, delaying will only make matters worse. Politicians have been able to wedge the population. Social programs, environmental issues, abortion, defense, and entitlement programs are all policies on which the country is divided. Division is fine; all people are not going to agree, however, we have to find some baseline agreement. Otherwise we stay divided, and the politicians will continue to rob us blind.

Republicans give tax cuts, Democrats spend like drunken sailors, and neither of them touches the two elephants in the closet Medicare and Social Security. We need to hold them accountable. The constitution was created to prevent unchecked federal power, however, when those in power ignore it, it is only the electorate that can stop them. We must, us, you, me and everyone who reads this, discard with the wedge issues, save them for a better day, and address this political tyranny.

How is this possible? Regardless of party or political persuasion, we must join a coalition that forces a balanced budget amendment. This one issue is our best weapon in defense. It has been used with great success at the state level, obviously it has not been

implemented in California, and we are witnessing the evidence of what will happen with unchecked political power.

Why a balanced budget? Politicians have proven incapable of anything but pandering to their own base that got them elected. We need to break this chain, and this will never be done while politicians are able to keep writing blank checks. If a business were run like our government it would be out of business in a month. If you ran your household like this government your house would be foreclosed and you would be filing for bankruptcy. While we will not ever all agree on where our resources should be allocated, we have to realize that we have only a scarce number of resources.

An honest debate can only occur if a policy's benefit is weighed against its cost. People will disagree with the value of each policy. However, if there is no cost associated (other than more debt passed on to another generation), and no sacrifice has to be made to implement certain spending; then policy will always go forward even if its benefits are meager.

What are the arguments against a Balanced Budget? Mostly these arguments will be made by politicians (and most likely Paul Krugman). Opponents will argue a Balanced Budget Amendment could stop your Social Security checks in times of recession. Argue back, fiscal responsibility isn't meant to be easy, however, it is required. Opponents will argue that the federal government will not be able to help stimulate the economy out of recessions with constrained revenues in times of recessions. Argue back, Keynesian theories of stimulus have been proven to be flawed time and again; point to 2009 as another example. Regardless, the argument against a balanced budget boils down to this: there are times of crises when the federal government needs to spend more than it makes in revenue. If a loophole is created for times of crisis, and politicians are able to decide what is considered a crisis, it is quite likely we would spend the next century in crisis. No loopholes, balance the budget. Businesses do this, individuals do this, and the federal government must also do this.

Can a Balanced Budget Amendment be accomplished? The time is right. Republicans spent eight years ringing up record deficits spurring Democratic anger on spending. This current congress has quadrupled the deficit in one year spurring anger on spending from the Republican electorate, the independent electorate, and probably even some of the democratic electorate. We are in new territory with the size of our debt compared to the size of our economy. And bear in mind, in 1996 the House passed a Balance Budget Amendment, and the senate nearly did in both 1996 and 1997, falling only 1 vote shy in 1997. This is not a radical idea. It is used successfully in many states. Constitutional amendments do not require a signature by the President. This could be done by next November if enough people come aboard; however, it is more likely with the next congress, especially if the voters send a message.

What does it take to join the coalition? It takes only one thing, a promise. No sign holding is required; you don't have to walk the streets in protest, you don't have to shout and yell, you don't even have to tell anyone other than your representatives. Although

word of mouth would be helpful for this coalition to spread to enough people to truly make a difference. The balanced budget coalition requires that all other political issues are put aside until a balanced budget amendment is put in place. That means, voting against every single incumbent politician until this amendment is passed, regardless of any other issue. It doesn't matter if their political opponent is Bill Maher, Rush Limbaugh, or Mickey Mouse. All incumbents need to lose their seats until this amendment is passed.

Join this coalition, for yourself, your family, and your future standard of living. Some sacrifice needs to be made sooner rather than later, and it will only be made if the electorate stands together.