

Key Points Against Irresponsible Budget Plans

- The House spending proposal, H.R. 1, to finish out the last seven months of this fiscal year makes cuts that are extreme and irresponsible, slashing or eliminating many services that are needed by vulnerable and low-income people, including young children, youth, older people, the jobless and uninsured. They reflect the largest cuts, on an annualized basis, in non-defense discretionary funding in history.
- With millions of families still hurt by unemployment and reduced income, the House cuts would make things far worse by slashing job training and education, emergency food and shelter, and home heating assistance.
- The Senate should stand firm against the harm that would be inflicted by the House proposal, and insist on continuing services for those most in need.
- The President has said he would veto spending cuts that go too far. The House bill clearly does go too far; the President should be unwavering and clear that he will veto a final FY 2011 spending bill that looks like the House plan.
- Some of the people who will be hurt by the House cuts:
 - 218,000 young children will not be able to receive Head Start services;
 - 11 million patients will lose health care they would have received at Community Health Centers over the next year, with 3.2 million losing care in the next few months, because of a \$1 billion cut (slashing funding nearly in half). Almost immediately 127 health center sites would have to close and 7,434 jobs would be lost;
 - 20 million low-income people, including 5 million children, 2.3 million seniors, and 1.7 million people with disabilities, will have access to anti-poverty services disrupted because federal funding for community action agencies will be virtually halted in the last seven months of the year;
 - 9.4 million low-income college students who receive Pell Grants will lose some or all of this college aid as a result of the House reduction in the maximum Pell Grant amount from \$5,550 to \$4,705 per year;
 - More than 8 million adults and youth would lose access to job training and other employment services. Job training under the Workforce Investment Act would essentially be shut down until July 2012;
 - Cuts in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program will mean 81,000 people, mostly low-income elders, will no longer receive the food baskets. The program now serves 467,000 low-income people in 32 states, the District of Columbia, and two Native American reservations. Elderly poor in Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts and Rhode Island will not get the food packages because there will be no funding to expand the Commodity Supplemental Food Program in their states;
 - 1.2 million poor households in public housing (two-thirds of whom are elderly or have a disability) will see maintenance and repairs on their apartments deteriorate because the Public Housing Capital Fund is cut by more than \$1 billion (over 40 percent);

- Fewer low-income households needing help to pay for heat during this harsh winter will get assistance because the House slashed nearly \$400 million out of a \$590 million fund allowing for more aid to be released to states. \$125 million from this fund has already been spent, leaving only \$65 million for the rest of the year. 8.3 million households received an average of \$456 in heating or cooling assistance last year; only about one in four of eligible households were able to get help.
- 10,000 low-income veterans will not receive housing vouchers to prevent homelessness. This would cut in half the number of veterans who would have received such housing assistance this year, despite HUD estimates that 135,000 veterans are homeless.
- 10,000 people with significant long-term disabilities would lose the rental assistance they now receive through the Section 811 voucher program (now, 14,000 people with disabilities receive vouchers); most of these would lose their homes.
- The House bill would abruptly terminate successful programs by zeroing out their funding. Some examples: YouthBuild, a jobs and education program that has served 92,000 low-income youth and built 19,000 housing units since 1994; the Green Jobs Innovation Fund; Title X Family Planning services; Teen Pregnancy Prevention grants; and the Corporation for National and Community Service; and Striving Readers (education program).
- Slashing funding indiscriminately and reducing the scope of critical federal programs will weaken us as a nation and undermine the recovery by threatening the health and development of millions of low-income children, risking harm to seniors and people with disabilities, and reducing the incomes of millions of families.
- We can make sensible reductions in the long-term deficit without hurting vulnerable people and sacrificing investments like education that will build our future. Instead of slashing vital programs, we should be reducing the billions spent in corporate subsidies and upper-income tax loopholes and making thoughtful cuts in wasteful military or other spending, while making wise investments that will pay long-term dividends for Americans and our country.
- Americans want to protect programs vital to economic security for all and future prosperity, and oppose cuts in K-12 education for low-income children (78 percent oppose), help for the poor, including nutrition aid for mothers and children (66 percent), Head Start (73 percent), meals for homebound elderly (73 percent), and medical research (71 percent). ([Democracy Corps, February 7-9, 2011](#))
- A majority of Americans (55 percent) would rather cut military spending than spending on Medicare (21 percent) or Social Security (13 percent). ([CBS NY Times Poll, January 5-9.](#))
- Sixty (60) percent of Americans support a combination of raising taxes and cutting spending to reduce the federal budget deficit. ([ABC News/Washington Post Poll, December 9-12.](#))

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