

Principles for End of Year Budget Deal Signed by 94 National Organizations

November 5, 2013

Dear Member of Congress:

As work accelerates toward a possible end of the year budget agreement, with the Budget Conference Committee expected to issue its report by Dec. 13, the undersigned organizations strongly believe that any budget agreement must meet the following key principles:

End Job-Killing Sequestration Cuts

The greatest challenge facing our economy today is the continuing jobs crisis, not the deficit. Over 20 million people are in need of full-time work. Meanwhile, the annual deficit has been cut by more than half since 2009 as a portion of the economy, and is now falling faster than at any time since the end of World War II.

The across-the-board budget cuts – called “sequestration” – that began in March of this year are making the jobs crisis worse and holding back economic growth. According to the Congressional Budget Office, simply repealing sequestration would generate 900,000 jobs over the next year. The sequester cuts have also deprived children of needed educational opportunities, prevented low-income seniors from receiving meals, and hindered scientific and medical research.

We call on Congress to repeal sequestration – period – not replace sequestration cuts with other harmful cuts. If Congress cancels sequestration cuts to defense spending, the same dollar-for-dollar protection must be provided to non-defense discretionary programs. Congress must not simply replace defense sequestration cuts with cuts to non-defense programs.

If Congress chooses to replace sequestration cuts – whether over nine years or over a minimum of two years in a smaller budget agreement – it must not do so in ways that harm workers, low-income people, or others most at risk in this economy. Congress can avoid all of these pitfalls by enacting specific tax provisions that ask the wealthiest Americans and profitable Wall Street corporations to contribute their fair share in taxes. To date, 70 percent of policy or deficit savings have come from cuts, with just 30 percent from revenues; this rises to a 79-21 split if the sequester remains in place.

Protect Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security from Benefit Cuts

We urge you to oppose any cuts in Social Security, Medicaid, or Medicare benefits, including the shifting of health care costs to beneficiaries. We should be improving Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare by expanding benefits, not cutting them, because working people and families need more economic security, not less.

Defend Core Programs for Those Most at Risk

Congress should defend the core security programs for those most at risk in this economy, such as impoverished women and children, the elderly, or the long-term unemployed. The savage cuts proposed for food stamps (SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) are unconscionable. Any budget agreement must protect essential programs such as housing, home heating, Head Start, infant nutrition, education, and other programs vital to low-income families.

Eliminate All Tax Incentives for Sending Jobs Overseas and Instead Create Jobs at Home

Powerful corporations and the rich should pay their fair share of taxes. As a start, we call on Congress to eliminate all tax incentives that encourage companies to ship jobs abroad. Ending these tax subsidies would – by itself – increase investment and employment in the U.S. At the same time, it would generate hundreds of billions in revenue which could help rebuild our economy without increasing the deficit.

This money could be used to launch a five-year plan to rebuild our outmoded infrastructure; to help ensure that the U.S. captures the lead in a green industrial revolution that is already generating growing numbers of good jobs; and to invest in education, from pre-K to affordable college to prepare our children to succeed in the 21st century. Prioritizing job creation, including proposals like the American Jobs Act, is urgently needed.

For more information, please contact Rob Randhava, Senior Counsel at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at (202) 466-3311.

Sincerely,

9to5

AFL-CIO

African American Ministers in Action

AIDS United

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Federation of Government Employees

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Federation of Teachers

American Friends Service Committee

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance and Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations

Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living

Bazon Center for Mental Health Law

Bread for the World

Campaign For America's Future

Campaign for Community Change

The Center for APA Women

Center for Effective Government

Children's Defense Fund

Coalition on Human Needs

Communications Workers of America

Community Action Partnership

Council for Opportunity in Education

CourageCampaign.org

DC Vote

Demos

Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund

The Every Child Matters Education Fund

Fair Share

Families USA
Family Equality Council
Food Research and Action Center
Gamaliel
Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union GMP
Green For All
Half in Ten
Health Care for America Now
International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of
America, UAW
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
League of United Latin American Citizens
League of Women Voters of the U.S.
Legal Momentum
Mental Health America
NAACP
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO)
National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.
National Association of Human Rights Workers
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Community Reinvestment Coalition
National Conference of Black Mayors
National Congress of American Indians
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of our low-income clients
National Council of Jewish Women
National Disability Rights Network
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National People's Action
National Priorities Project
National Senior Citizens Law Center
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
People For the American Way
PolicyLink
Pride at Work, AFL-CIO
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition

RESULTS

Service Employees International Union

Social Security Works

Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

The Strengthen Social Security Coalition

Transgender Law Center

Union for Reform Judaism

United Steelworkers (USW)

USAction

Wider Opportunities for Women

Women's Action for New Directions

Workmen's Circle