

November 30, 2010

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
H-204 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Boehner,

We write to urge you to institute principled spending reform that rejects the notion that spending cuts can be avoided in certain parts of the federal budget. Department of Defense spending, in particular, has been provided protected status that has isolated it from serious scrutiny and allowed the Pentagon to waste billions in taxpayer money. A new Congress, with a clear mandate to cut spending and the size of government, should signal its fiscal resolve by proposing cuts for all federal spending.

Proponents of a larger Department of Defense budget have argued that security outlays should be weighed against mandatory spending levels, suggesting that explosive entitlement growth serves as an appropriate metric for defense spending. This not only ignores the unsustainable nature of entitlement spending but also the reality of defense spending, which has increased by 86 percent since 1998.

Defense spending, like the rest of the federal ledger, has grown substantially over the past few years. Under President Bush, military spending averaged 3.9 percent of GDP. Under President Obama, it has averaged 4.9 percent—a full percentage point higher. It is outrageous to assume spending under the president who launched the War on Terror, started the Department of Homeland Security and began the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is not sufficient for even the most hawkish member of Congress.

And yet, defense spending continues to enjoy protected status. The Pentagon is slated to spend \$6.5 trillion over the next ten years – equal to the current projected deficit spending in the same time period. Ignoring the burden military spending places on the taxpayers promotes the same reckless spending ethos that led to failed “stimulus” policies, government bailouts and a prolonged economic recession.

Leadership on spending requires commitment that aims to permanently change the bias toward profligacy, not simply stem the tide in the short-term. True fiscal stewards cannot eschew real spending reform by protecting pet projects in the federal budget. Any such Department of Defense favoritism would signal that the new Congress is not serious about fiscal responsibility and not ready to lead.

As we enter a new Congress and search for ways to significantly decrease the size of government, we call on you to lead the crusade for a new era of responsibility – one that knows no sacred cows.

Sincerely,

Bill Pascoe, Citizens for the Republic

Brian Burch, CatholicVote.org

Chip Faulkner, Citizens for Limited Taxation

Christopher Preble, Cato Institute

Chuck Muth, Citizen Outreach

David A. Keene, American Conservative Union

Duane Parde, National Taxpayers Union

Grover Norquist, Americans for Tax Reform

Jim Martin, 60 Plus Association

John Tate, Campaign for Liberty

Karen Kerrigan, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

L. Brent Bozell, Media Research Center

Lewis K. Uhler, National Tax Limitation Committee

Lisa Miller, Tea Party WDC

Matt Kibbe, Freedomworks

Mattie Corrao, Center for Fiscal Accountability

Richard Viguerie, ConservativeHQ.com

Rick Watson, Florida Center-Right Coalition

Seton Motley, Less Government

Susan Carleson, American Civil Rights Union

Tim Phillips, Americans for Prosperity

Tom Schatz, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

William Greene, RightMarch.com

Institutional affiliations are listed for identification purposes only.