

During the eight years I served on the House Budget Committee, we had the only four years of balanced budgets since the 1960s. Unfortunately, over the last several years we have seen a return to large deficits. During the first two years of the Obama Administration, Congress passed a trillion-dollar “stimulus” bill that failed to create jobs and a trillion-dollar health care bill that fails to reduce health care costs, along with many other big-spending bills. The result is a national debt that is now over \$14 trillion – more than \$125,000 for every taxpayer in America. This incredible debt burden undermines job creation and threatens our future prosperity.

The federal government must once again learn to live within its means. I believe we should begin by cutting domestic spending back to the level it was in 2008, before the recession and the failed stimulus, and enacting budgetary reforms that place firm caps on federal spending. In addition, Congress should go further and completely eliminate federal programs that are ineffective, duplicative, or wasteful. I also support a ban on federal earmarks until Congress gets our fiscal house back in order.

The projected future growth of entitlement programs, such as Social Security and Medicare, poses an even greater challenge. The unfunded future liabilities of these programs dwarf the size of our current debt. On their present course, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid will consume an ever-greater share of the federal budget until they crowd out everything else, from national defense, to roads and highways to federal flood control efforts. We simply cannot overcome the debt crisis in our nation unless we reform these programs. Current Social Security and Medicare benefits should be preserved for those who are already retired or nearing retirement, but we must begin this difficult task so these programs can meet the needs of future generations. Otherwise, we will bestow a crushing burden of debt to our children and grandchildren.

[Click here to read about my latest actions on this issue.](#)

[ [go back to "On the Issues" main page](#) ]