

Creating a budget before spending money is a concept that American families understand, but it is routinely forgotten in Washington. President Obama and members of Congress have a new opportunity to pass a responsible budget this year as the President and House Republicans offer budgets over the next couple of months. You may remember that last year, President Obama offered a big spending budget that was voted down 97 to 0 in the Senate and abandoned by the President himself. House Republicans, on the other hand, passed the [Path to Prosperity](#), which called for \$6.2 trillion in spending cuts over the next ten years. Senate Democrats voted it down as well, but they failed to offer their own budget. In fact, the Democrat-controlled Senate hasn't passed a budget in over 1,000 days.

The need for a responsible budget has never been greater. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reminded us this week that deficits are still far too high. Their [latest report](#) forecasted a \$1.1 trillion deficit in fiscal year 2012—the fourth consecutive deficit over a trillion dollars. CBO also projected that the national unemployment rate will remain above 8 percent throughout 2012 and into next year. It is clearly time that Congress supports policies that create a favorable environment for job creation, and I strongly believe that confronting our nation's debt crisis is a critical part of that effort.

This week the House continued our efforts to reduce wasteful spending in Washington and to promote a more effective budgeting process. With my support the House passed three common sense reforms:

- H.R. 3835 – Freezing pay for Members of Congress and federal workers
- H.R. 3582 – Requiring the CBO to report on every major bill's effects on the economy, such as GDP, business investment, and employment, when determining its cost. Currently, CBO's projections do not fully consider whether proposed legislation would suppress or spark economic activity, making their projections less accurate.
- H.R. 3578 – Requiring the CBO to use a baseline, or starting point, based on the previous year's spending allocation. Currently, the CBO assumes spending will increase as a result of inflation and does not count these increases as additional spending.

Both the President and the Senate Democrats should be able to support these simple but important reforms as the negotiations on the broader fiscal year 2013 budget begin. I look forward to seeing the President's budget, and I hope that Senate Democrats will join House Republicans in working to pass a fiscally-responsible budget this year.

