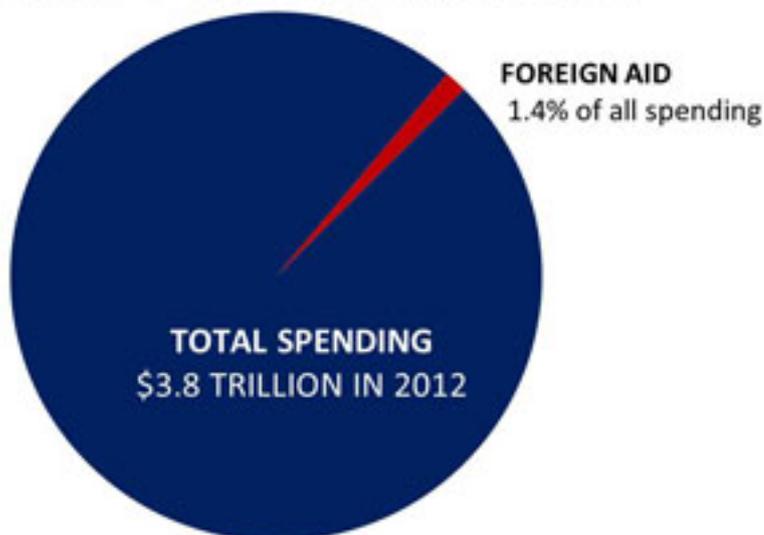


Many Northern Californians have expressed strong opposition to our nation's foreign aid budget. I agree that there is plenty to be concerned about. Foreign aid is notorious for waste and fraud, and too often limited taxpayer dollars support agencies that provide a short-term service in countries overseas without demanding reforms toward long-term stability and growth. Even worse, while many recipients like Israel have helped advance our security interests, other recipients such as Pakistan have not always done so. On average, most foreign aid does advance our security or help meet humanitarian needs around the world, but our nation still must always demand results and hold every recipient of foreign aid accountable.

With that said, I wanted to put into perspective how much our nation spends on foreign aid each year. Including our civilian efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, our nation is spending about \$53 billion in foreign aid in the current fiscal year. That figure is a \$6 billion cut from previous years, as foreign aid certainly does need to be reduced while we work on balancing the budget. However, as the graph below shows, it is important to point out that foreign aid represents only 1.4% of the entire federal budget.

WHAT IF WE CUT FOREIGN AID?



Sadly, our national deficit this year would still exceed one trillion dollars for the third year in a row even if we cut *every* foreign aid dollar. To truly address the debt crisis, we will need to reduce spending across the federal government, including on mandatory programs that represent nearly 60% of the federal budget.