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According to the Congressional Research Service, in Fiscal Year 2010, the federal government spent \$3.4 trillion (23.8% of GDP) and collected \$2.1 trillion in revenue (14.9% of GDP), resulting in a budget deficit of \$1.3 trillion (8.9% of GDP).

Approximately 55 percent of the Fiscal Year 2010 federal budget was mandatory spending (entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid); 39 percent of the budget was discretionary spending (all other federal programs); and approximately six percent of the budget was spent on net interest.

Congress must take action now to reduce spending and reform entitlement programs, but unless we address the budget process itself, substantive reductions in expenditures may not be realized. Not only does our current budget process encourage and enable expenditures, Congress rarely completes a budget on time. In fact, since enactment of the 1974 Budget Act, Congress has met the deadline for completion of a budget resolution only six times.

That's why I support the following budget process reforms:

- **Spending Reduction Committee:** [I introduced legislation \(H.Res. 307\)](#) to create a new House Select Committee whose sole function will be to report legislation on the elimination or reduction of all nonessential expenditures of the federal government. Modeled after Senator Harry Byrd's Joint Committee on the Reduction of Nonessential Federal Expenditures, which was founded in 1941 to pay for World War II by cutting wasteful spending rather than raising taxes on American families, this committee will have the authority to address all federal expenditures and its recommendations will receive expedited consideration before the full House of Representatives.
- **Biennial Budgeting:** Inspired by New Hampshire's own budget process, one solution is to amend the budget calendar by requiring biennial rather than annual budgets. I am a [cosponsor of legislation, the Biennial Budgeting and Appropriations Act of 2011 \(H.R. 114\)](#), which will streamline the budget process and improve the fiscal management and oversight of government programs.
- **Balanced Budget Amendment:** I am also the cosponsor of legislation ([H.J. Res 2](#) and [H.J. Res 11](#)) to require a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
- **Congressional Budget Accountability Act:** I am a [cosponsor of legislation \(H.R. 121\)](#) that requires any amounts remaining in House Members' Representational Allowances after payments are made for the year to be deposited into the Treasury and used for deficit reduction.

While such solutions may not cure everything that ails Washington's big-spending ways, a biennial budget and spending reduction committee are common-sense proposals that would get us started – and ones that we know can work. Meanwhile, a balanced budget amendment will constrain the growth of government over the long term. Such budget process reforms mark an

important first step in reining in wasteful Washington spending.

**For a complete list of the bills I am sponsoring and cosponsoring, please [click here](#) .**

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