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Bass among 38 Republicans, Democrats "willing to buck their party leaders" to support "plausible, passable, bipartisan plan to bring the deficit under control"

April 10, 2012

USA Today editorial: "The Brave 38..."

"One of the surest ways to lose all hope that Congress will ever solve the nation's toughest problems is to watch the annual debate over the federal budget, which took place in the House last week.... There aren't many heroes in this soul-destroying process, but we found a tiny band of 38." ([April 3, 2012](#))

Dallas Morning News editorial: "House moderates stand up for fiscal sanity ... give these guys a red badge for courage"

"They got walloped on the House floor this week. But at least Democrats Jim Cooper of Tennessee and Mike Quigley of Illinois and Republicans Charlie Bass of New Hampshire, Tom Reed of New York and Steven LaTourette of Ohio had the courage to offer a bipartisan plan that would have put the budget on a glide path toward sanity. The budget resolution of the centrist legislators followed the recommendations of the bipartisan Bowles-Simpson commission from last year. Together, their balanced proposals would have lowered the deficit by \$4 trillion, overhauled the tax code and streamlined health costs. But the sensible goals fell on deaf ears. The left and right combined to kill it in the House. Taxpayers lost out, but give these guys a red badge for courage." ([March 30, 2012](#))

Washington Post: "widely praised" Bipartisan Budget not embraced by "the president nor congressional leaders in either party"

"Though it was widely praised, neither the president nor congressional leaders in either party embraced the Simpson-Bowles plan outright and House leaders in both parties greeted Wednesday night's vote warily. The budget called for reducing deficits by \$3 trillion over the next decade, with \$2 trillion coming from new spending cuts and \$1.2 trillion from higher tax revenues. Revenue dollars would come through a rewrite of the tax code intended to sweep out loopholes and subsidies and ultimately lower rates ... The plan had faced vigorous opposition from left and right. Grover Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform opposed the plan for its tax hikes, and indicated the group would consider a vote in support a violation of a pledge signed by more than 230 House Republicans promising not to raise taxes ... But the effort was endorsed by Simpson and Bowles, as did former senator Pete Dominici (R-N.M.) and Alice Rivlin, who chaired a separate effort by the Bipartisan Policy Center to devise a broad strategy to reduce the deficit. 'The courage of the members who are supporting the Cooper-LaTourette budget shows that a vital middle can exist in Congress, despite the deeply polarized ideological atmosphere of the recent past,' they said in a statement." ([March 28, 2012](#))

Chicago Tribune editorial: "Credit to a few who pushed a bipartisan budget"

"Yes, the U.S. House last week torpedoed the only bipartisan budget resolution to reach the floor in more than a decade. As we note in the other editorial on this page, just 38 members voted in favor of the proposal. The vast majority of House members put partisanship above

progress on the nation's debt. The plan... incorporated recommendations from the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. That's the group created by President Barack Obama and chaired by former White House Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, a Democrat, and former Republican Sen. Alan Simpson. That report recommended an overhaul of government spending, tax reform and deficit reduction, but most of Congress, and even the president who created the commission, wouldn't embrace the result. The Cooper-LaTourette measure tried to revive the ideas behind Simpson-Bowles." ([April 1, 2012](#))

Conservative economist and CNBC anchor Larry Kudlow Squawk on the Street interview: "I always thought Simpson-Bowles would be the framework"

The original Simpson-Bowles tax framework as "pro-growth tax reform" ... that it would "lower rates across the board, simplify them, and then stop the deductions which are used by upper income people"... he "doesn't agree with everything that may be in there," but that he "thinks it's pretty good." ([April 5, 2012](#))

Veteran Scripps-Howard columnist: "plausible, passable, bipartisan plan to bring the deficit under control"

"The fact that a plausible, passable, bipartisan plan to bring the deficit under control was defeated in the House this week 382-38 should tell you something. For those looking for some faint, very faint, glimmer that the lawmakers will get their act together, it was not, like most of these affairs, a straight party-line vote: 16 Republicans and 22 Democrats voted for it. They were voting on basically what was the Simpson-Bowles deficit-reduction plan put forth two years ago by a presidentially appointed deficit-reduction commission. President Barack Obama ignored the plan, although part of it formed part of the 'grand bargain' the president reached with House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, last summer that Boehner was unable to sell to his own party." ([March 29, 2012](#))

Spokane (WA) Statesman Review: Bipartisan Budget the "lone legitimate compromise being offered"

"On Wednesday, Congress finally cast a bipartisan budget vote – to kill a bipartisan approach to solving the nation's long-term deficit and debt issues. And so, after the glimmer of hope over a 'grand bargain' last summer, the parties have agreed to intensify their disagreement ... Wednesday's vote was on an amendment offered by Reps. Steven LaTourette, R-Ohio, and Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., that reflected the goals of the Simpson-Bowles Commission, which was assembled – and then abandoned – by President Barack Obama. It's the lone legitimate compromise being offered, but it attracted only 38 votes. That's a significant step back from last summer when a bipartisan congressional effort co-directed by Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, called for the congressional 'super committee' to 'go big' on long-term deficit reduction. That Go Big coalition drew the support of 100 House member... Nonpartisan budget experts are nearly unanimous in their belief that the nation cannot achieve long-term fiscal health without cutting spending and raising revenue. The LaTourette-Cooper Amendment offered both." ([March 30, 2012](#))

Oregon Statesman-Journal editorial page editor: "thoughtful, pragmatic proposal" backed by "centrist lawmakers willing to buck their party leaders"

"That was a thoughtful, pragmatic proposal from a bipartisan deficit-reduction commission, and

it went nowhere. Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., and Rep. Steven LaTourette, R-Ohio, put the Simpson-Bowles concepts into a budget amendment. They were backed by Schrader and other centrist lawmakers willing to buck their party leaders, but the House rejected the proposal Wednesday night ... [M]any Oregonians would face lower taxes under the Cooper-LaTourette legislation. That's because federal tax rates would be lowered as the tax code is streamlined to eliminate many deductions and credits. Is Schrader on the right track? I'm no tax expert, but I believe the Bowles-Simpson framework is good for what ails the country's national budget." ([March 29, 2012](#)

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