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JAFFREY — U.S. Rep. Charlie Bass, R-N.H., told members of the Jaffrey-Rindge Rotary Club on Thursday that only when America figures out how to live within its means and create an environment where businesses can thrive will it get out of the current recession.

Bass said that while he does not oppose tax reform, raising taxes is not a solution.

"People say raising taxes on the rich will balance the budget," Bass said. "That won't work."

While Bass said that increasing taxes on the rich makes for "great political discussion," it's that sector of the economy that is creating jobs. He added that any increase at this time would not be beneficial to potential employees or America's economic future.

Bass challenged his critics to show him the money on the spending side and the courage to get the country in a direction where America will have a balanced budget in less than 15 years. Amidst talk of spending reductions and tax increases in Washington, D.C., Bass suggested that both areas be looked at on a balance sheet like any business would do.

"The time for the government to put money into the economy hoping it will carry us through is done," Bass said.

Although the government must cut spending for the sake of the economy, Bass said, it also has an obligation to preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare programs.

"Medicare and Social Security are different because they are a joint partnership between U.S. government and its citizens," Bass said, adding that those programs needed to be protected for current and future generations.

Bass said he is hopeful that the bipartisan "super committee" on deficit reduction will be able to work together to develop future solutions to the country's financial problems. The committee, which is composed of 12 members, was created as a part of the recent deal in Congress to raise the debt ceiling.

During a question and answer session on Thursday, Rindge Selectman and Rotary member Jed Brummer said the biggest issue is job creation and asked Bass what could be done to improve the country's current financial situation.

Bass responded by saying the finest form of economic stimulus is job creation. While Bass did not say specifically where the potential for such creation exists, he said that one of the biggest problems is America's corporate tax rate, which is second highest only to Japan's in the world.

Rotary member Tom Doane of Jaffrey said in an interview with the Ledger-Transcript after the

event that he agrees with Bass that America cannot keep going in the current financial direction. Doane added that Washington needs to "stop spending and start running the country like a business."

Rotary member Tonya Albee of Jaffrey said in an interview with the Ledger-Transcript on Saturday that she agrees strongly that tax rates should not be increased.

"Locally and nationally the problems are the same," Albee said. "Consumers lack confidence in the economy... unemployment is significant, and the unsustainable national debt looms over all of us as well as our children and grandchildren."