



CONGRESSMAN JIM SENSENBRENNER KEEPING IN TOUCH

ISSUE NUMBER 49 -- APRIL 1999

KEEPING OUR BUDGET PROMISES

In 1997, Congress and the President agreed to the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) which is a five year budget plan intended to meet the goals of balancing the budget by fiscal year (FY) 2002, providing tax relief for families, saving Medicare from bankruptcy and restoring power and influence to the people in their states and communities. The BBA establishes budget caps, which are voluntary limits on government spending. The success of the BBA has not only balanced the budget years earlier than anticipated, but has allowed us to realize a surplus. This surplus is the result of increased personal and corporate tax receipts combined with hard-won reductions in federal spending.

Now that we have a growing surplus, plans to break the protective BBA budget caps are already underway. In his FY 2000 budget proposal, President Clinton seeks to break the budget caps - to the tune of \$30 billion in the first year alone - with massive new government spending. His budget includes \$200 billion in new spending over five years on more than 120 new federal programs.

Although not all government programs are wasteful, spending on discretionary programs like AmeriCorps and Goals 2000, as well as the vast bureaucracies they create, is already at record levels. I simply cannot support violating the BBA's budget caps.

Rather than spending the surplus on new government programs, my priorities are saving Social Security, refunding a portion of the revenue surpluses to the American people in the form of tax cuts, and beginning to pay down our massive national debt.



SO, WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "OFF-BUDGET"?

The budget surplus is divided into two parts. The "on-budget" surplus includes revenue the federal government receives from income taxes and other sources. It is expected to total \$800 billion over 10 years. The "off-budget" surplus comes from Social Security payroll taxes and the interest they earn. This portion of the surplus is expected to be \$1.8 trillion over 10 years.

For the first few years, most of the surplus will be found in the "off-budget" category. **That is why it is imperative that we lock away the Social Security surplus now to make sure it is not used to fund unnecessary spending programs.** Then as the "on-budget" surplus grows, more and more tax relief can be passed on to the American people.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Currently, forty-four million Americans depend on Social Security, including over twenty-seven million retired workers and nearly five million disabled individuals. The retirement of the baby-boom generation beginning in approximately 2010 will strain the financial resources of the system. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) now predicts that without dramatic action, the Social Security Trust Fund will go bankrupt by 2032.

The President's FY 2000 budget request proposes to reserve only 62 percent over 15 years of the projected budget surplus for Social Security. In addition, the President calls for a risky plan in which one quarter of the surplus funds directed towards Social Security will be invested by the federal government in the stock market.

This is a bad idea. Investing Social Security funds in the stock market can lead to problems of accountability in the event of a bad investment, market fluctuation, or the worst case scenario of a market crash. Future beneficiaries who are paying into Social Security now should not have to face the possibility that they will be short-changed when it is their turn to retire. The whims of the stock market should not determine the solvency or insolvency of the Social Security program.

We must make Social Security safe for future beneficiaries...*continued on page 3*



REMINDER...

**TOWN HALL
MEETINGS**

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1999 ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE INSIDE

1999 ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The 106th Congress is involved with many issues vital to you, your family, and the nation. Please take a few minutes to complete this year's questionnaire. **All questions have a YES or NO answer unless otherwise indicated. Please mark your answer by placing an "X" in the space provided.** In some cases, a YES or NO answer may seem oversimplified, but I am often left with that same choice when voting on complex legislation on the House floor. Please let me know what matters to you. Fill out the response card on the next page, place a stamp on it, and return it to my Washington office. Thank you for your time.

Tax Reform

1. Do you support increased taxes for new federal programs?
2. The 106th Congress is considering a variety of tax cut proposals. Pick your top three choices by placing an "X" in the space provided.
 - a) A 10% across-the-board income tax cut?
 - b) Eliminating the 1993 tax increase on Social Security benefits?
 - c) Eliminating the capital gains tax?
 - d) Eliminating the marriage penalty?
 - e) Eliminating the estate (death) tax?
 - f) Permanently removing the tax on employer- provided education benefits?

Budget

3. The Congressional Budget Office projects a unified budget surplus of \$2.5 trillion in the coming years. How do you think the federal government should use the money? (Check only one)
 - a) For reduction of the national debt
 - b) For tax cuts
 - c) To preserve Social Security
 - d) For increased spending programs

Social Security

4. Congress is discussing ideas to preserve the long-term solvency of Social Security. Do you: (Check only one)
 - a) Support government investment of Social Security funds in the stock market as proposed by the Clinton administration?
 - b) Support giving individuals more control over investing their Social Security contributions?
 - c) Oppose any reform and prefer to maintain the current system?

Space

5. If Russia fails to deliver promised components of the International Space Station, should the United States: (Check only one)
 - a) Send money to Russia to finance completion of the work there, or
 - b) Perform the work here in the U.S.?

HMO Reform

6. Do you believe Congress should enact protective measures for patients insured by Health Maintenance Organizations?

Medicare

7. Should the government allow senior citizens who participate in fee-for-service plans the option to be treated by the physician or healthcare practitioner of their choice?

Agriculture/Dairy

8. Do you support a completely free market for the dairy pricing system?

Education

9. Should the government provide vouchers for students to use at the school of their choice?
10. Should federal education funds be sent directly to states and school districts rather than channeled through Washington bureaucracies?
11. Do public schools in your area provide students with adequate preparation for college or careers?
12. Do you feel that your local public schools are providing good value for your tax dollars?

IRA

13. Do you support increasing the maximum allowable contribution to a traditional IRA (Individual Retirement Account)?

Light Rail

14. Should surrounding counties pay to fund a light rail system that operates solely in Milwaukee County?

Executive Branch

15. Should Congress require the executive branch to demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs to taxpayers before receiving more money?

Judiciary

16. Do you support allowing the Independent Counsel Law to expire on June 30, 1999?

Campaign Finance Reform

17. Would you support campaign finance reform if it allowed the use of your federal tax dollars for the purchase of campaign TV ads, brochures, or mailings for candidates you may or may not support?

Abortion

18. Should Congress pass legislation prohibiting partial birth abortion?

Research

19. Do you support federal funding of human embryo research at the National Institutes of Health?

Gun Control

20. Should individuals or states be permitted to sue gun manufacturers on behalf of people killed or injured by guns?

Global Warming

21. Should the United States Senate ratify a global warming treaty that exempts China, India, Mexico, and many of the world's developing nations?
22. Do you support efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency to perpetuate use of reformulated gas, increase vehicular emissions standards, and promote light rail?

Wisconsin

23. In which COUNTY do you live?

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE CARD

Respondent # 1

Respondent # 2

YES NO	YES NO
1. ___ ___	13. ___ ___
2. a)___ b)___ c)___ d)___ e)___ f)___	14. ___ ___
3. a)___ b)___ c)___ d)___	15. ___ ___
4. a)___ b)___ c)___	16. ___ ___
5. a)___ b)___	17. ___ ___
6. ___ ___	18. ___ ___
7. ___ ___	19. ___ ___
8. ___ ___	20. ___ ___
9. ___ ___	21. ___ ___
10. ___ ___	22. ___ ___
11. ___ ___	
12. ___ ___	23. _____
	COUNTY

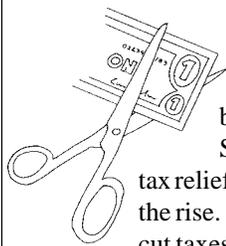
YES NO	YES NO
1. ___ ___	13. ___ ___
2. a)___ b)___ c)___ d)___ e)___ f)___	14. ___ ___
3. a)___ b)___ c)___ d)___	15. ___ ___
4. a)___ b)___ c)___	16. ___ ___
5. a)___ b)___	17. ___ ___
6. ___ ___	18. ___ ___
7. ___ ___	19. ___ ___
8. ___ ___	20. ___ ___
9. ___ ___	21. ___ ___
10. ___ ___	22. ___ ___
11. ___ ___	
12. ___ ___	23. _____
	COUNTY

CUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE, STAMP, AND MAIL

continued from page 1...

ciaries, however, the President's plan simply does not go far enough. WECAN DO BETTER, AND WE HAVE. The recently passed FY 2000 Budget Resolution envisions locking away **100 percent** of the Social Security surpluses - payroll taxes and interest - in a "lock box" for our nation's elderly. This translates into **\$1.8 trillion** for Social Security over the next ten years. Because the budget is not a law, separate legislation needs to be passed to establish a legal mechanism for locking away these funds until a long-term reform measure can be considered.

TAX CUTS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Even with a majority of the total budget surplus directed towards Social Security, room still exists to enact historic tax relief. In Wisconsin, taxes are continuously on the rise. The state government has made efforts to cut taxes, but the federal government continues to

take and spend more. With the "on-budget", non-Social Security surplus expected to total \$800 billion over the next 10 years, Wisconsin taxpayers deserve to be able to keep more of their hard-earned dollars. Congress must give taxpayers a break.

According to Clinton Administration proposals, taxes will creep up an additional \$172 billion over the next ten years. I believe that by using the growing "on-budget" surplus, we can remove the IRS's hands from our pockets. And, since tax relief would



come directly from the "on-budget" surplus, the money set aside for Social Security would not be touched, and Social Security would be fully protected.

Several tax reform proposals are currently under consideration. The proposals range from targeted tax cuts - elimination of the marriage penalty, the death tax, and the capital gains tax - to broader reforms like a 10 percent across-the-board tax cut.

PAYING DOWN THE DEBT

When we talk about the national debt, most people know the term represents a vast sum of money, but few know that in the wake of the 1997 BBA, early surpluses have allowed us to begin re-payment. This year alone, a nearly \$100 billion down payment will be made toward canceling the national debt, and progress will not stop there. The FY 2000 budget plan will allow growing debt re-payment in the upcoming years as the surplus continues to rise.

...FOR THE FUTURE

We will only accomplish these goals if we ensure that the surplus isn't washed into the wasteland of the President's big government spending programs. Not only is the budget balanced earlier than expected in the BBA, but due to the conservative estimates used in 1997, we are also experiencing a budget surplus ahead of schedule. The FY 2000 Budget Resolution not only stays within the 1997 BBA caps, but provides the landscape for shoring up Social Security, implementing tax cuts, and reducing the national debt. For these reasons and for a more secure future, I supported the Budget Resolution.



PLEASE PRINT BELOW

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Please
place
33 cent
stamp here

If you do not wish to be added to my
regular mailing list, check this box

REP. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.
2332 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4909

CUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE, STAMP, AND MAIL

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Sunday, May 23

12:00 noon Jefferson City Hall
Wisconsin Room

Sunday, June 6

7:00 p.m. Menomonee Falls Village Hall

Sunday, June 13

7:00 p.m. Lake Mills Library

Sunday, June 20

7:00 p.m. Hartland Village Hall

Sunday, June 27

7:00 p.m. Juneau Community Center

Saturday, April 24

9:00 a.m. Richfield Town Hall

1:00 p.m. Delafield Town Hall

Sunday, April 25

3:00 p.m. Port Washington Police Department

Saturday, May 22

9:00 a.m. Sheboygan Mead Library

1:00 p.m. Grafton Village Hall

Saturday, April 17

9:00 a.m. Sheboygan Falls City Hall

1:00 p.m. Cedarburg City Hall

Sunday, April 18

12:00 noon Horicon City Hall

Upper Meeting Room

Town Hall Meetings and Office Hours provide me the chance to hear your views on the issues before Congress or to help you with problems you may be experiencing in dealing with a federal agency. I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting nearest your home. Please contact my district office if you require special accommodations to attend.

Congressman

**JIM
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