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## A Budget To Beggar Us

By Judd Gregg  
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When speaking with the hardworking New Hampshire families and business owners whom I represent in Washington, I hear the same concerns echoed by Americans across the country. People are worried about keeping their jobs, their homes and their savings safe. They ask, "When will the economy recover? What kind of economic future will our children have?"

These questions are not easy to answer. Yet I believe that over the next couple of years, the country will recover from this severe recession. We are an inherently resilient nation.

Our longer-term future is harder to predict, though, especially since the Democratic Congress is on the cusp of adopting President Obama's budget blueprint. This is a defining budget. It shows very clearly where the president and the Democratic majority want to take our country: sharply to the left.

There is no doubt that the president came into office facing significant economic challenges. To stabilize the economy, he has been forced to take aggressive steps, some of which may have been necessary to avert a systemic financial collapse.

But don't be fooled when the president says the economy he inherited is the reason that future deficits and debt skyrocket.

The president's budget makes clear that a huge expansion of government is not just about today's economic downturn. Once the recession is behind us, this budget will continue pushing for more and more government in our everyday lives.

Instead of tightening Uncle Sam's belt the way so many American families are cutting back these days, the president's proposal spends so aggressively that it essentially adds \$1 trillion to the debt, on average, every year.

Except for some accounting gimmicks, the budget makes no attempt to cut wasteful spending or find savings. It ignores reform for major entitlement programs such as Medicare and Social Security, which are on track to cost us \$67 trillion more than we have over the next 75 years.

The new spending is coupled with the largest tax increase in U.S. history -- \$1.5 trillion over 10 years.

Who will pay all those taxes? The president says it's just the rich. But let's keep in mind that a lot of these "rich" people are actually small-business owners, and small businesses create 70 percent of the new jobs each year. When millions of Americans are out of work, taxing job creators and making it harder to run a business are certainly not the answer.

Moreover, all American families will get stuck with a new "light-switch tax" on electricity bills that is in the president's budget. Even though taxes will go up dramatically, this new revenue will not be used to reduce the deficit. Instead, it is going to expand the government beyond what we can afford.

And since the revenue the government collects still won't cover all its spending, we will be left with an unsustainable level of debt. Under the president's budget, the national debt doubles in five years and nearly triples in 10 years. Our debt will exceed 80 percent of GDP by 2019 -- the highest level since World War II.

This borrowed money is certainly not free. Our children and grandchildren will be hit with the bill. Sadly, in 10 years, we will spend more on interest payments on this debt than we spend on education, energy and transportation combined -- almost four times as much.

Imagine that as your family budget. Could you afford to spend so much on credit card finance charges that it dwarfed what you spent on food, utilities and other necessities? Neither can our country.

At the heart of this budget debate are differing philosophies on the role of government in our lives. Republicans do not believe that we can expand prosperity by expanding government, or by increasing the burden of spending, taxes and debt. We believe that it is the individual American who creates prosperity and good jobs, not the government.

Our nation has a history of each generation passing on to its children a stronger and more prosperous country, but that tradition is being jeopardized by this budget's attempts to dramatically expand the size and cost of the government, to the point that our children's opportunities will be crushed under the burden of debt. This budget plan is clearly not the right path for America today or for future generations.

So the goal of Republicans in Congress is to restrain spending and to reduce the deficit while still moving forward on important issues such as health-care reform, energy independence and national security. Only then will our children and grandchildren inherit a healthy economy and enjoy the opportunities for prosperity, peace and freedom that we were given.

*The writer, a Republican from New Hampshire, is ranking minority member of the Senate Budget Committee.*

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