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57th KZGN News Talking Points Editorial
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Who’s to blame for another possible government shutdown over spending priorities?

As I reported earlier in today’s regular news, it’s possible we are headed to another huge debate over Washington spending priorities. The current story, in summary, is as follows: Congress appeared no closer last Tuesday to finding a way to avoid yet another government shutdown showdown in the fall. Democrats are angry that Republicans have proposed spending bills that hike defense while continuing to cut other domestic programs. Dems have begun to filibuster all of those appropriations measures in the senate saying it's the only way to make Republicans negotiate and compromise on some items sought by Democrats and President Barack Obama. Obama has also threatened to veto those bills, and the real basis of this dispute goes back to the sequestration spending levels it passed in 2011, when it was also unable to agree on debt and spending cuts. "In a world of alternatives, it is not wise to pursue sequester numbers. That’s bad for our country," Hoyer said, referring to the automatic, across-the-board cuts set in the 2011 budget control act, which also raised the nation's debt limit.

Here we are again. When they couldn’t agree in 2011, they passed a law that hits everything. Now that the law is in effect, they don’t want to follow it. As I remember, the Democrats gained the most in that particular budget agreement. The Republicans caved in then. With a major election coming next year, is either party ready to go to a government shutdown over this disagreement? The sad thing is that even if Republicans were correct, the mainstream media would vilify the Republicans into submission. For some reason it’s never the Dems’ fault in the media—only the Republicans.

One very important twist to the budget negotiations every year is as follows: The Dems always scream about Republican cuts to entitlement programs. That is, and always is, a distortion of the truth. The truth is the Republicans never propose cuts to those programs. They only propose fewer increases in spending to the programs. The Republicans only try to not increase spending over last year’s spending. That is not a cut in spending the Democrats decry every year. It is just less of an increase they want. Some Dems argue the increase in spending is to keep up with inflation. This, too, is false. Their proposed spending increases are almost always more than an inflation rate. This is pure deception on the part of the Dems. The Republicans need to do a better job getting that fact out to the people. In past debates, even the congressional budget office has made the same declarations. However, the liberal mainstream media always jumps into the fray and convinces the public the Republicans are the bad guys. The Republicans are not against entitlement spending. They only want to control the rapid rate of increase in that spending. The Republicans have both house of congress now. They should dig in and pass legislation they feel appropriate. They should lead the PR battle by releasing a daily budget analysis. Make it real simple: Provide the public the main categories of government funding. Provide a graph showing this year’s budget, and next years proposed budget.

Executive branch:

Congress:

Judicial:

Defense:

Social security:

Education:

Irs:

Epa:

Foreign aid:

Infrastructure:

Entitlement programs:

Homeland security:

Show us those simple numbers. All they would need is three simple columns of numbers. Show current approved budget numbers in the first column. In the second column, show the Republicans proposed budget, and in the third column show the Dem’s proposed budget. They could show everyone the Dem’s proposed budget, compared to the Republicans proposed budget, compared to last year’s approved budget. It’s too easy for the liberal media to distort the numbers. The Republicans should show a graph like this every day during negotiations. Every morning, they should show the numbers. Point out if there are any changes. Boehner and McConnellshould have this graph on their websites, updated daily during negotiations. Then they should pass a funding bill. Unlike when Dems controlled the Senate and they never passed a complete budget as required by law. Harry Reed and company never passed a complete budget, instead, opting to single line item funding and continuing resolutions. That was a disgrace.

It’s time for Congress to do their job. Pass a budget. And then if Obama doesn’t like it, let him veto the bill and shut down government. Congress should not let their disagreement shut down government. Make Obama veto and shutdown government. Republicans now control both houses of Congress. I propose the Republicans use this strategy will all new bills. They should now take the fight to Obama on their terms. They should pass legislation and send it to the White House for signature or veto. Don’t succumb to veto threats. Pass the bill. Make him use his veto. Then everyone will see who is stopping progress.

In conclusion, I’m sick and tired of Republicans always being blamed for a government shutdown. If there is a shutdown, it’s both parties’ fault. If the Republicans make budget negotiations more open, I’m sure they can win the media battle over funding priorities.

To the Republicans is say, Pass your budget. And send it to Obama.

I’m Tom Wiknich, and that’s what I think. I’d like to know what you think. If you have any comments about this editorial, or would like to discuss or recommend a topic, I’d like to hear from you. Please email them to info@kzgn.net.