



Sources: *The Path to Prosperity*, House Committee on the Budget; *Honest Solutions: Fiscal Year 2012 Budget*, Republican Study Committee; *The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2012*, Office of Management and Budget
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This chart by Mercatus Center Senior Research Fellow Veronique de Rugy illustrates the bottom line of federal spending under the three most prominent budget plans under public consideration: the President's Budget proposal, and Republican Study Committee (RSC) proposal, and the House Budget Committee proposal. Under each plan, spending levels are projected to grow, albeit at a pace slower than that of the economy. The differences in spending are meaningful: by 2021, there is a \$1.5 *trillion* dollar difference in the level of spending called for under the President's Budget and the Republican Study Committee's proposals.

We are at the start of a serious conversation about government spending reform. In response to the President's Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2012, the House Budget Committee has put forth a plan which, though leaving defense spending and Social Security untouched, proposes \$6.2 trillion dollars less in federal spending between 2012 and 2021. This, in turn, was followed by a Republican Study Committee plan which puts all spending categories on the table, including Social Security. The RSC proposal would place spending between 2012 and 2021 at \$9.5 trillion less than that proposed under the President's Budget.

Unsustainable overspending leads to debt and deficits. In turn, debt and deficits hinder economic growth and destroy jobs. These budget proposals mark the beginning of a budget conversation that must end in a tenable plan to reduce federal spending.

Veronique de Rugy [reviews](#) the federal budget debate on the John Stossel show.