

# **NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSING THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT**

**July 13, 2011**

Dear Representative/Senator:

The undersigned national organizations strongly urge you to oppose any balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

A balanced budget constitutional amendment would damage the economy, not strengthen it. Demanding that policymakers cut spending and/or raise taxes, even when the economy slows, is the opposite of what is needed to stabilize a weak economy and avert recessions. Such steps would risk tipping a faltering economy into recession or worsening an ongoing downturn, costing large numbers of jobs while blocking worthy investments to stimulate jobs and growth and address the nation's urgent needs in infrastructure and other areas.

Furthermore, the version of the balanced budget amendment that the House Judiciary Committee recently approved (H. J. Res. 1) would impose an arbitrary and severe cap on total federal spending, which, remarkably, would require much deeper cuts than the draconian cuts in the Ryan budget resolution. The bill also would require supermajority votes in the House and Senate to increase the debt limit, waive the balanced budget requirement — or to raise any taxes, including closing the most egregious tax loopholes. This irresponsible requirement would create an extremely steep hurdle to raising any revenues — effectively blocking revenue measures even as part of packages to restore long-term solvency to Social Security and Medicare — while protecting the more than \$1 trillion a year in “tax expenditures” and forcing severe program cuts.

In short, this amendment is a recipe for making recessions more frequent, longer, and deeper, while requiring severe cuts that would harshly affect seniors, children, veterans, people with disabilities, homeland security activities, public safety, environmental protection, education and medical research. It would almost certainly necessitate massive cuts to vital programs including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, veterans' benefits and other programs, and, as noted, lead to even deeper cuts than the House-passed budget.

A responsible deficit reduction plan must embrace both spending cuts and new revenues, including curbing special-interest tax loopholes, not a one-sided reliance on spending cuts.

A balanced budget amendment has no place in the Constitution of the United States. Our Constitution has served the nation well because it represents enduring principles that are the foundations of our government. It should not be used as a substitute for real leadership on fiscal policy.

We strongly urge you to oppose any constitutional balanced budget amendment.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women  
AFL-CIO  
African American Health Alliance  
AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth & Families  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
AIDS Project Los Angeles  
AIDS United  
Alliance for a Just Society  
Alliance for Excellent Education  
Alliance for Retired Americans  
Alliance to End Hunger  
American Association of Classified School Employees (AACSE)  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of School Administrators (AASA)  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American Counseling Association  
American Dance Therapy Association  
American Educational Research Association  
American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO  
American Federation of School Administrators, AFL-CIO  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO  
American Humane Association  
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association (AMRPA)  
American Network of Community Options and Resources  
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO  
American Public Health Association  
American School Counselor Association  
Americans for Democratic Action  
The Arc of the United States  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association for Career and Technical Education  
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP)  
Association of Education Service Agencies (AESAs)  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)  
Autism National Committee  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Bread for the World  
Building and Construction Trades Dept., AFL-CIO  
B'nai B'rith International  
CAEAR Coalition  
Campaign for America's Future  
Campaign for College Affordability  
Campaign for Community Change  
CANN - Community Access National Network  
The Cave Institute  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for Medicare Advocacy  
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities  
Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)  
Children's Defense Fund

Children's Dental Health Project  
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington  
Citizens for Tax Justice  
Clinical Social Work Association  
Coalition of Labor Union Women  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Committee for Education Funding  
Common Cause  
Communications Workers of America (CWA)  
Community Action Partnership  
Community Food Security Coalition  
Community Organizations in Action  
Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)  
Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED)  
Council for Exceptional Children  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
Council of the Great City Schools  
Dab the AIDS Bear Project  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Democracy 21  
Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO  
Direct Care Alliance  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund  
Easter Seals  
Every Child Matters Education Fund  
Families USA  
Federally Employed Women (FEW)  
Feminist Majority  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Food & Water Watch  
Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Friends of the Earth  
Gay Men's Health Crisis  
Generations United  
Gray Panthers  
Growth & Justice  
Half in Ten  
Health & Disability Advocates  
Health Care for America Now  
Health GAP (Global Access Project)  
HIV Law Project  
Horizons for Homeless Children  
Housing Works  
Interfaith Worker Justice  
International Association of Fire Fighters  
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers  
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers, and Helpers, AFL-CIO  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE)  
International Reading Association

International Society for Technology in Education  
International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO  
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)  
Knowledge Alliance  
Laborers' International Union of North America, (LiUNA!)  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
League of Conservation Voters  
League of Women Voters of the U.S.  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Main Street Alliance  
Medicare Rights Center  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Washington Office  
Mental Health America  
NAACP  
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys  
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National AIDS Housing Coalition  
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity  
National Alliance of HUD Tenants  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association for College Admission Counseling  
National Association for Music Education  
National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP)  
National Association for the Education of Young Children  
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD)  
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools  
National Association of Government Employees/SEIU  
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)  
National Association of Letter Carriers  
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)  
National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA)  
National Association of Postal Supervisors  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Black Child Development Institute  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
National Coalition for LGBT Health  
National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery  
National Coalition of STD Directors  
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare  
National Congress of American Indians  
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care  
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP)  
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare

National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)  
National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO)  
National Council on Independent Living  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Education Association (NEA)  
National Employment Law Project (NELP)  
National Family Caregivers Association  
National Family Farm Coalition  
National Federation of Federal Employees  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Health Law Program  
National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA)  
National Housing Trust  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Indian Head Start Directors Association  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC)  
National Organization for Women (NOW)  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU)  
National Priorities Project  
National Respite Coalition  
National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition (NREAC)  
National Rural Education Association (NREA)  
National School Boards Association  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
National Senior Corps Association (NSCA)  
National Title I Association  
National Treasury Employee Union  
National Urban League  
National WIC Association  
National Women's Conference Committee  
National Women's Law Center  
National Women's Health Network  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)  
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
Not Dead Yet  
OMB Watch  
Our Bodies Ourselves  
OWL-The Voice of Midlife and Older Women  
People For the American Way (PFAW)  
Pension Rights Center  
PHI – Quality Care through Quality Jobs  
Population Action International  
Progressive States Action  
Promise the Children  
Public Citizen  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition (REHDC)

## RESULTS

School Social Work Association of America  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)  
Sisters of Mercy Institute Justice Team  
Sojourners  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center  
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF)  
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association  
Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice  
TASH  
Teaching Strategies, Inc.  
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
Treatment Access Expansion Project  
Trust for America's Health (TFAH)  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United Cerebral Palsy  
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries  
United Food and Commercial Workers, International  
United for a Fair Economy  
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society  
United Mine Workers  
United Spinal Association  
United Steelworkers (USW)  
USAction  
U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW)  
US Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (USPRA)  
VillageCare  
Voices for America's Children  
Voices for Progress  
Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW)  
The Wilderness Society  
The Women of Color Policy Network, NYU Wagner  
Women of Reform Judaism  
Women Together for Change (WTFC)  
Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER)  
Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press  
World Knowledge Bank  
YouthBuild USA  
YWCA USA  
ZERO TO THREE