

## **House Republicans' Misguided Budget Priorities**

Last week, House Republicans introduced a budget resolution for fiscal year 2016 that is a repeat of the same irresponsible, unworkable, and unrealistic policies they have put forward for the past several years. Instead of pursuing a budget that invests in our nation's future and ensures all American families have access to the economic opportunities they need to buy a home, send their kids to college, and have a secure retirement, the Republican budget makes the wrong choices. Below are a few examples:

### **Taking away health care coverage from millions:**

- Threatens the health care coverage of more than 16 million previously uninsured Americans who now have coverage through the Affordable Care Act
- Eliminates tax credits that help make health care more affordable for 15 million people

### **Disinvesting in education:**

- Freezes the maximum Pell grant and eliminates \$89 billion for Pell grant increases that Congress already enacted and paid for, making college less affordable for students and their families

### **Imposing damaging cuts to nutrition assistance, Medicaid, and other critical assistance programs for low-income families:**

- Merges CHIP into Medicaid and slashes funding by \$913 billion over the next ten years, in addition to repealing the Affordable Care Act Medicaid expansion
- Cuts the base Medicaid program by 14 percent in 2017 and by one-third in 2025
- Cuts \$125 billion from SNAP over ten years, which primarily benefits children, elderly, disabled, and low income families
- Allows vital improvements to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit to expire
- Causes 133,000 fewer families to receive Housing Choice Vouchers, and another 20,000 fewer rural families receiving help for affordable rental housing compared to the President's budget [White House, [3/17/15](#)]

### **Making it harder for seniors to obtain a safe and secure retirement:**

- Ends the Medicare guarantee as we know it, changing it so Medicare beneficiaries would receive a voucher
  - CBO found if a voucher plan were in effect in 2020, the average premiums across the country for traditional Medicare would be 50 percent higher
  - Those remaining in traditional Medicare would pay 25 percent more, on average
- Increases costs to current seniors by repealing Medicare benefit improvements in the Affordable Care Act, including a provision that closes the Part D coverage gap, or "donut hole," which has enabled 9.4 million seniors to save more than \$15 billion on prescription drugs since the law was enacted

- Raises retirement contributions for federal employees by \$127 billion over ten years by requiring higher employee retirement contributions, which translates into a 6 percent pay cut for current employees

### **Crippling our ability to build a competitive, twenty-first century workforce and create jobs:**

- Results in more than two million fewer workers receiving job training and employment services compared to the President's budget [White House, [3/17/15](#)]
- Eliminates the Manufacturing Extension Partnerships, which serve 30,000 small manufacturers that contribute to the creation of middle-class jobs and economic growth compared to the President's budget [White House, [3/17/15](#)]

### **Disregarding collapsing infrastructure:**

- Cuts \$187 billion, or more than 19 percent, from transportation funding over the coming decade
- Puts funding for successful infrastructure programs like TIGER grants at risk, which help repair and modernize our infrastructure while creating well-paying jobs [White House, [3/17/15](#)]

### **Ignoring immigration reform:**

- Ignores the majority of Americans, as well as the strong bipartisan support from Members of Congress, who agree that our nation's immigration system is broken and needs to be fixed in a comprehensive way
- Rejects comprehensive immigration reform, which would reduce the deficit by an estimated \$900 billion over the next two decades, boost the economy by 5.4 percent, and extend the solvency of Social Security

### **Cutting funding for veterans' programs:**

- Cuts veterans' funding below the President's request by \$1.9 billion for 2016 and \$19 billion over ten years

### **Promoting fiscal irresponsibility:**

- Relies on a "magic asterisk" to make it look like their budget will balance in nine years, without providing any detail on exactly what policies would achieve the \$1.1 trillion in cuts vaguely referred to as "other mandatory" [Washington Post, [3/17/15](#)]
- Ignores the hundreds of billions of dollars in lost revenue, as scored by the Joint Committee on Taxation, from the permanent tax extender bills that Republicans have brought to the Floor [WSJ, [11/26/14](#)]
- Makes it official policy that extensions of expiring tax provisions do not have to be paid for

*Unless otherwise noted, all figures from the House Budget Committee Democrats.*