

Republicans Once Again Walk Away from the American People

Today, Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan is unveiling the House Republican budget. In addition to ending the Medicare guarantee, their budget has broken the agreement made by Speaker Boehner last year as part of the Budget Control Act by setting spending levels below the level Republicans agreed to.

Less than a year ago, Republicans seemed ready to uphold the agreement made in the Budget Control Act:

Speaker John Boehner:

- **“The 1.043 [Trillion] is going to happen.** And in addition to the \$1.043T there’s an average on the disaster relief that’s already been budgeted. And so **I believe on the discretionary side we’ve done most of what can be done.**” [Press Conference, [12/1/11](#)]
- **“But Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) and other leaders are in no mood for another budget battle,** and the Appropriations Committee is expected to produce a CR that runs through November that **meets the budget levels set in the debt deal...** GOP leadership aides said that while Boehner and his team are aware of conservatives' concerns, most members of the Conference returned from the August recess wanting to leave the fiscal wars of the spring and summer behind them and focus instead on the economy.” [Roll Call, [9/12/11](#)]

Republican Leader Eric Cantor:

- **“We did reach an agreement ...and I am supportive of the CR being written at that level....** I think we would try always to go below it, but I think that the risk of bringing back brinksmanship or another potential shutdown is not something right now that we need.” [Politico, [8/12/11](#)]
- **“But Mr. Rogers and House Republican leaders like Representative Eric Cantor of Virginia, the majority leader, are advocating that Republicans abide by the new agreement and not try to force lower spending.** ‘While all of us would like to have seen a lower discretionary appropriations ceiling for the upcoming fiscal year, the debt limit agreement did set a level of spending that is a real cut from the current year level,’ Mr. Cantor said in a recent memorandum to his colleagues. ‘I believe it is in our interest to enact into law full-year appropriations bills at this new lower level.’” [NY Times, [8/27/11](#)]
- **“The ‘rancor’ of the fight, which was followed by the equally bitter fight over raising the debt limit, has been unsettling to Americans, Cantor said. For that reason, Republicans should stick with the deal that they agreed to, and move ahead efficiently with fiscal 2012 appropriations, he said.”** [CQ, [9/12/11](#)]

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell:

- **“McConnell himself— as the chief architect of the August deal— is said to be strongly opposed to tampering with the \$1.043 trillion target.”** [Politico, [8/12/11](#)]
- **“In contrast to the House, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said in late February that since lawmakers have already negotiated the top-line discretionary spending figure for the coming fiscal year, he saw ‘no good reason for this institution not to move forward with an appropriations process.’”** [CQ, [3/19/12](#)]

But instead of keeping to their word, Republicans are walking away from a compromise they made – making any future agreements more difficult to achieve and undermining their credibility as negotiators. Rather than pursue a partisan path forward on the budget, Republicans leaders should support the agreement that was made in August and work on a bipartisan basis to reduce the deficit and restore fiscal responsibility.

Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 3/20/12