



Soon, your food will be more dangerous, your vacation will be ruined, cures for diseases will slow, and national security will be threatened. Find out why...and how you can stop it.

Overview

In 2011, there was a debate in Congress about raising the amount of money the federal government is allowed to borrow. In order to allow increased borrowing (and prevent a government shutdown), Congress passed the **Budget Control Act of 2011**. This act allowed the government to continue borrowing, but only if the borrowed amount would be recovered, either through reduced government spending or revenue increases over the next ten years. The Act created a new, temporary, bipartisan, and bicameral Committee that was directed to find those savings/revenues. The Committee had a hostage: if they could not agree on the \$1.2 trillion in savings/revenues to offset the raised borrowing limit, then the **\$1.2 trillion would come out of the budget, the cuts split evenly between defense and non-defense** discretionary spending. These automatic cuts, called sequestration, will be **applied indiscriminately**—every single budget account and line will take the same percentage hit.

However, the threat of these automatic cuts was not enough. The Committee was unable to find a compromise, and now the entire country will suffer. **Sequestration was never intended to happen.** The impacts were intended to be so devastating that Congress would be forced to reach an agreement to prevent the trigger. Unfortunately, that has not happened.

If the cuts occur, it will be like taking a sledgehammer to the budget. There will be little room to pick and choose which programs to support; everything will be cut equally. Imagine if your household budget was cut 10%. That may be manageable, but if you had to apply an across the board 10% cut instead of prioritizing how to find the savings, it would be a disaster. Instead of cutting a new television, movie dates, or eating out, you'd lose the same amount of money in groceries, doctor's bills, and heating. **It is a disastrous way to reduce any kind of budget.**

How will this affect me?

Non-defense discretionary spending would be reduced by about 9.8%, or \$59 billion a year for ten years. This impact on government services will be felt by every person in every zip code. The next time you travel, relax at home, or send your child to school, consider that these cuts will mean:

Poorer Schools

- Know a child? Their education is about to suffer. Cuts to grants and training programs means fewer resources for students and 16,000 fewer teachers.
- College financial aid and support services will also suffer, meaning fewer college enrollments and more young people with fewer opportunities.

Ruined Vacation and Travel

- Going on vacation this summer? If you're flying, there will be fewer air traffic controllers, aircraft safety/certification inspectors, and TSA agents, which makes a safe trip a lot more dangerous.
- Driving? Highway and infrastructure improvements will have to wait...and many bridges in America are aging and miss regular inspections already.
- Planning a low cost trip to one of our country's beautiful national parks? With a smaller staff and less funding, National Parks will not be open as long (and will have poor maintenance and fewer emergency response capabilities)
- Thinking about heading to the beach? That will be dangerous: cuts to the Coast Guard funding means less funding for rescue operations.
- Travelling abroad? With fewer resources for the State Department, U.S. relations with foreign countries will be reduced, meaning less support if you lose your passport or are a victim of a crime abroad.

A More Dangerous Home

- Decide to stay home instead? You won't be much safer there. Cuts to the Department of Justice will reduce the investigations and prosecutions of our country's most serious crimes: terrorism, drug gangs, human trafficking, and violent crime.
- Any household product you use may be less safe: with less funding for the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there will be less oversight and information about faulty and dangerous products.
- Worried about hurricanes, tornados, floods, or any other natural disaster? With cuts to meteorological and satellite services, weather and natural disaster predictions will be less reliable.

Poorer Health

- Better watch that cold: cuts to the CDC will cut immunizations to 30,000 children and 20,000 adults. Cuts to the National Institute of Health means research on cures for numerous diseases will stop immediately.

A World without Inspiration

- The world was amazed when the Curiosity Rover landed on Mars. Inspiring future scientists and exploring our universe, projects like Curiosity will be drastically cut.
- Nothing inspires us more than the Olympics---except the Special Olympics. With most funding for the Special Olympics coming from federal funding, there will be fewer medals and fewer smiles.

The Bottom Line

Sequestration will hurt you. No matter where you live, what you do, or who you are, you will feel the impacts of these cuts. They were designed to be so horrible that Congress would have to compromise to find better ways to resolve our budget crisis.

Contact your Congressman today and tell him to compromise and find a bipartisan solution to stop sequestration.