

Republican Senator's Newfound Concern Over National Debt Comes After They Have Repeatedly Shown They Do Not Care About Exploding The Debt When It Serves Their Agenda

SUMMARY: Since Joe Biden was elected President, Republican senators have rediscovered their concerns about the national debt and deficit, even though they have repeatedly shown they are happy to explode the debt when it serves their agenda.

Just a few weeks after the 2020 election, Senate Republicans suddenly revived their old rhetoric calling for debt reduction to be a legislative priority. Under the Trump Administration, however, Senate Republicans had no problem adding trillions to the debt when it served their agenda.

Republican Senators passed and Trump signed into law \$4.7 trillion of debt, including:

- **\$1.8 trillion in debt from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), which disproportionately benefitted the ultra-wealthy**
 - TCJA provided a tax write off for private jets buyers, doubled the number of companies paying zero in federal taxes, and gave corporations a permanent tax cut while individual tax cuts are set to expire in 2025.
 - 51 Republican senators voted for the TCJA, and many defended their support of the bill by falsely claiming the bill would be deficit-neutral and even waving away debt concerns altogether.
 - Senator Mitch McConnell projected the tax bill would “be beyond revenue neutral,” producing enough revenue to fill the gap and then some.
 - Senator Roy Blunt said he was okay with short-term deficits to finance tax cuts, saying they would be worth it in the long run.
 - Senator Tim Scott accused the Joint Committee on Taxation of “consistently underestimating” new economic activity from tax cut bill.
- **\$2.7 trillion in debt combined from three major spending bills**
 - Senator Roy Blunt: The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 “includes additional resources that will save lives and strengthen communities.”
 - Senator Mitch McConnell: The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 was “the deal that every member of this body should support.”
 - Senator John Boozman: regarding H.R. 1865, funding the government is the “basic responsibility of Congress that provides accountability and transparency.”

And, if they had their way, key Republican Senators would have passed additional proposals over the last four years that would have increased the national debt even more, such as repealing the ACA, which the CBO estimated would add \$5 trillion to the debt. Senate Republicans must stop with the hypocrisy and vow to not stifle the Biden Administration’s ability to repair the American economy in the wake of the pandemic recession.

After Biden's Election, Republican Senators Suddenly Revived Their Rhetorical Concerns Over The Debt...

After Biden Was Elected, Republican Senators Began Calling For Debt Reduction To Be Priority In 2021.

On December 30, 2020, Sen. Ron Johnson Claimed In Op-Ed That "Since I Arrived In Congress In 2011, Federal Debt Has Almost Doubled" And "Unfortunately, Few In Congress Seem To Care." "Since I arrived in Congress in 2011, federal debt has almost doubled, from nearly \$15 trillion to more than \$27.5 trillion. The passage of \$900 billion in additional relief, combined with a \$1 trillion projected deficit for fiscal 2021, will increase federal debt to over \$29 trillion. Unfortunately, few in Congress seem to care." [USA Today, [12/30/20](#)]

Just After Thanksgiving 2020, Sen. John Thune Said "I Think Spending, Entitlement Reform, Growth And The Economy Are All Things That We're Going To Have To Be Focused On Next Year." "I think spending, entitlement reform, growth and the economy are all things that we're going to have to be focused on next year, and, yeah, I would expect you'll hear a lot more about that, 'Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), a member of the GOP Senate leadership team, told the Hill just after Thanksgiving." [Los Angeles Times, [01/04/20](#)]

November 2020: Senator Graham Said, If He Becomes Budget Chairman, He Would Like To Create Dialogue About "Finally" Addressing The Debt. "Senate committee talk from Graham: If we keep the Senate which I think we will and I become Budget chairman. I'd like to create a dialogue about how can we finally begin to address the debt." [Twitter - @ReporterCioffi, [11/6/20](#)]

Sen. Lindsey Graham Said "We've Got To Understand That We're Going To Be Raising The Debt Ceiling In Perpetuity If We Don't Find A Way To Bend The Curve," Meaning Institute "Spending Cuts." "Thune's words were reinforced by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), who is expected to become chairman of the Senate Budget Committee if the chamber remains in Republican hands. 'We've got to understand that we're going to be raising the debt ceiling in perpetuity if we don't find a way to bend the curve, 'Graham said. It should be obvious that 'bend the curve 'is code for spending cuts, and in the GOP playbook, that means cutting programs that serve the middle class and working class in their times of need, such as Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, food stamps and other forms of assistance." [Los Angeles Times, [12/04/20](#)]

Sen. Kevin Cramer Said He Wants "Offsets Such As Required Spending Cuts As Part Of A Deal To Increase Debt Ceiling Next Year." Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.) said he wants to see offsets such as required spending cuts as part of a deal to increase the debt ceiling next year. 'I think you can expect there to be conditions. At least some members will try to get them, 'Cramer said. 'I don't think there's any question that a lot of conservative Republican members are going to require some sort of conditions.'" [The Hill, [11/27/20](#)]

And, In Early Confirmation Hearings For Biden's Cabinet Nominees Republican Senators Signaled Blanket Opposition To Policies That Would Grow National Debt.

Senator Rob Portman Urged During Janet Yellen's Confirmation Hearing To Be Treasury Secretary, In Light Of "Historic Levels Of Deficits," That She Be "A Voice For Fiscal Sanity." "A Treasury Secretary can be very powerful within an administration, providing a voice for fiscal sanity and I would urge you to do that...We have historic levels of deficits now and as a percentage of our GDP, not seen since World War II, which is frightening." [C-SPAN, [1/19/2021](#)]

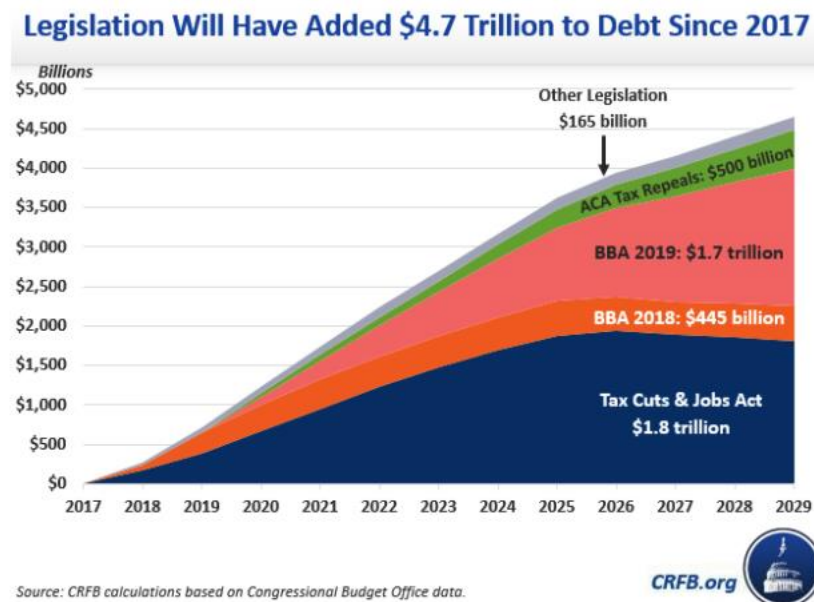
Senator Pat Toomey, An Architect Of 2017 Tax Cuts And Jobs Act, Told Yellen That Biden's Stimulus Bill Would Make It Difficult For Him To Work With Her As "We're Looking At Another Spending Blowout." "I look forward to working with you (Yellen) but I have to admit that the contours of the stimulus bill as proposed by the Biden administration are going to make that difficult...We're looking at another spending blowout. The only organizing principle I can discern is that it seems to spend as much money as possible seemingly for the sake of spending it." [C-SPAN, [1/19/2021](#)]

Senator John Thune Said During Yellen's Confirmation Hearing "One Thing That Concerns Me That No One Seems To Be Talking Anymore About Is The Massive Amount Of Debt That We Continue To Rack Up As A Nation." "The one thing that concerns me that no one seems to be talking anymore about is the massive amount of debt that we continue to rack up as a nation." [C-SPAN, [1/19/2021](#)]

... Even Though Republican Senators Have Shown They Do Not Care About Deficit Spending When It Serves Their Agenda.

Before The Pandemic Hit In U.S., Trump Signed \$4.7 Trillion Of Debt Into Law.

As Of January 2020, Trump Signed \$4.7 Trillion Of Debt Into Law "From 2017 Through 2029." "During the 2016 campaign, we estimated then-candidate Trump's campaign plans would add \$5.3 trillion to the debt from 2017 to 2026 (assuming policies were enacted immediately). In this analysis, we show that President Trump has already signed into law \$4.2 trillion of debt over a comparable budget window and \$4.7 trillion from 2017 through 2029." [Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, [01/08/20](#)]



[Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, [01/08/20](#)]

2017 Trump Tax Cut Bill Supported By Republican Senators Was Projected To Increase Debt By \$1.8 Trillion While Overwhelmingly Benefitting Ultra-Wealthy.

Trump Tax Cut Bill Supported By Republican Senators Was Projected To Increase National Deficit By \$1.5 Trillion.

Trump's Tax Reform Projected Increase In National Deficit By \$1.5 Trillion Over 10 Years. "Congress is speeding toward a budget plan that, in the name of cutting taxes, lets the government collect \$1.5 trillion less revenue for the next 10 years." [CNBC, [10/23/17](#)]

Vox: GOP Tax Plan “Is Projected To Raise The Deficit By \$1.5 Trillion Dollars, Justified By Republicans On Economic Gains They Say It Would Spur.” “The Senate version of the tax bill would permanently slash the corporate tax rate to 20 percent, allow its individual tax cuts to expire, and is projected to raise the deficit by \$1.5 trillion dollars — worth it, Republicans say, for the economic gains they believe it would spur.” [Vox, [11/27/17](#)]

... And More Recent Projections Show Increase To National Debt Will Actually Be \$1.8 Trillion.

2017 Tax Cuts Was Predicted To Increase “Debt By \$1.8 Trillion Through 2029.” “The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) was the single largest contributor to the \$4.1 trillion figure, increasing debt by \$1.8 trillion through 2029 (more than the entire cost is through 2027).” [Center for a Responsible Budget, 07/25/19]

51 Senate Republicans Voted In Favor Of Tax Cuts And Jobs Act. [U.S. Senate, [12/02/17](#)]

Reports Continued To Show Major Impact On Deficit, Along With Small Impact On Economy, From Tax Cut Bill

February 2019: CBO Said It Stood By April 2018 Projections That 2017 Tax Cut Bill Would Add \$1.8 Trillion To Deficit Over A Ten-Year Period. “Over the past year, in hearings and other contexts, I have received many questions about how the 2017 tax act (Public Law 115-97) has affected the Congressional Budget Office’s economic forecasts. [...] In the same April 2018 publication that contained its updated economic forecast after the enactment of the tax act, The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2018–2028, CBO estimated that the tax act would increase the primary deficit (that is, the deficit excluding the costs of servicing debt) by \$1.843 trillion over the 2018–2028 period. (When this blog post mentions budget numbers, the periods described are in fiscal years.) When debt-service costs were added, the increase in the total deficit came to \$2.314 trillion.” [Congressional Budget Office, [2/28/19](#)]

Tax Policy Center Projected That Under Republican Tax Cut, More Than Half Of Savings Would Go To Top 1% Of Earners, With 80% Of Savings Going To Top 1% By Last Year Of Tax Cuts. “President Trump and congressional Republicans have pitched their tax plan as a boost for the middle class. ‘The rich will not be gaining at all with this plan,’ Trump told reporters during a meeting with lawmakers in mid-September. But analysts at the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center who studied the proposal reached a very different conclusion. They predict that nearly three-quarters of the savings from the tax overhaul would go to the top 20 percent of earners — those making more than \$149,000. More than half the savings would go to the top 1 percent — people who earn more than \$732,800. The tax breaks are even more tilted to the wealthy by the 10th year of the overhaul, when the Tax Policy Center projects nearly 80 percent of the savings would go to the top 1 percent of earners.” [NPR, [10/4/17](#)]

The Ultra Wealthy Benefit Most From Trump Tax Bill, Which Included Giveaways Like Special Tax Incentive For Private Jet Owners And Permanent Tax Cut For Corporations

Republicans' 2017 Tax Bill Allows Private Jet Buyers To “Write Off The Full Amount Of Their New Plane's Cost On Their Tax Return.” “Buying a private jet comes with a hefty price tag — but the Republicans' new tax bill has made the extravagant purchase more appealing to some. Private jet buyers can now write off the full amount of their new plane's cost on their tax return, which applies to both new and pre-owned aircraft. That's due to a policy change within the Trump Administration's 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that updated the US tax code to allow 100% bonus depreciation for items such as aircraft.” [Business Insider, [03/01/18](#)]

Republican Tax Overhaul Gave Corporations “A Large, Permanent Tax Cut” While Individuals Received ‘Temporary Tax Relief That Expires’ In 2025. “The essential gamble of Republican plans to overhaul the tax code is now becoming clear: Big businesses get a large, permanent tax cut, while American families receive only temporary tax relief that expires.” [The Washington Post, [11/15/17](#)]

Under Trump's Tax Plan "60 Companies Reported That Their 2018 Federal Tax Rates Amounted To Effectively Zero, Or Even Less Than Zero," Which Is Double The Amount From Previous Years. "At least 60 companies reported that their 2018 federal tax rates amounted to effectively zero, or even less than zero, on income earned on U.S. operations, according to an analysis released today by the Washington, D.C.-based think tank, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. The number is more than twice as many as ITEP found roughly, per year, on average in an earlier, multi-year analysis before the new tax law went into effect." [NBC News, [04/11/19](#)]

- **HEADLINE: "Twice As Many Companies Paying Zero Taxes Under Trump Tax Plan."** [NBC News, [04/11/19](#)]

Trump's Tax Plan Included A Sharp Reduction In "Taxation Of Business Income, Primarily Benefiting The Small Share Of The Population That Owns The Vast Majority Of Corporate Equity." "The administration and its congressional allies are proposing to sharply reduce taxation of business income, primarily benefiting the small share of the population that owns the vast majority of corporate equity. President Trump said on Wednesday that the cuts would increase investment and spur growth, creating broader prosperity. But experts say the upside is limited, not least because the economy is already expanding." [The New York Times, [09/27/17](#)]

2017 Tax Cuts Benefitted "Affluent Americans By Eliminating The Estate Tax, Which Affects Just A Few Thousand Uber-Wealthy Families Each Year." "The plan would also benefit Mr. Trump and other affluent Americans by eliminating the estate tax, which affects just a few thousand uber-wealthy families each year, and the alternative minimum tax, a safety net designed to prevent tax avoidance." [The New York Times, [09/27/17](#)]

Tax Policy Center Projected That Under The Republican Tax Cut, More Than Half The Savings Would Go To The Top 1% Of Earners, With 80% Of Savings Going To The Top 1% By The Last Year Of The Tax Cuts. "President Trump and congressional Republicans have pitched their tax plan as a boost for the middle class. 'The rich will not be gaining at all with this plan,' Trump told reporters during a meeting with lawmakers in mid-September. But analysts at the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center who studied the proposal reached a very different conclusion. They predict that nearly three-quarters of the savings from the tax overhaul would go to the top 20 percent of earners — those making more than \$149,000. More than half the savings would go to the top 1 percent — people who earn more than \$732,800. The tax breaks are even more tilted to the wealthy by the 10th year of the overhaul, when the Tax Policy Center projects nearly 80 percent of the savings would go to the top 1 percent of earners." [NPR, [10/4/17](#)]

Republican Senators Defended Their Support Of Republican Tax Bill By Falsely Claiming It Would Be Deficit-Neutral And Even Waving Away Debt Concerns Altogether

Republican Senators Pushed Back On Deficit Projection By Attacking Reliability Of Nonpartisan Joint Committee On Taxation That Issued Estimate, Which Was Run By Republicans At Time.

Republican Senators Attacked Joint Committee On Taxation And Its Analysis Of Tax Cut Bill After Their Report Indicated Tax Cut Plan Would Not Pay For Itself. "A Republican requirement that Congress consider the full cost of major legislation threatened to derail the party's \$1.5 trillion tax rewrite last week. So lawmakers went on the offensive to discredit the agency performing the analysis. [...] But on Thursday, hours before they were set to vote on the largest tax cut Congress has considered in years, Senate Republicans opened an assault on that scorekeeper, the Joint Committee on Taxation, and [its analysis](#), which showed the Senate plan would not, as lawmakers contended, pay for itself but would add \$1 trillion to the federal budget deficit." [New York Times, [12/4/17](#)]

Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) Said Deficit Impact Of Trump Tax Cut Bill Was A Result Of Economic Impact Being “Lowballed.” “Republicans say the committee’s model underestimates how workers will respond to lower taxes and how private investment affects growth. They also say the model assumes that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates faster than Republican lawmakers expect, which would make borrowing more expensive and could slow economic growth. That sentiment was repeated over and over, before and after the vote. ‘We think they lowballed it,’ Senator John Cornyn of Texas, the majority whip, told reporters on Thursday.” [New York Times, [12/4/17](#)]

Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) Accused Joint Committee On Taxation Of “Consistently Underestimating” New Economic Activity From Tax Cut Bill. “Republicans say the committee’s model underestimates how workers will respond to lower taxes and how private investment affects growth. They also say the model assumes that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates faster than Republican lawmakers expect, which would make borrowing more expensive and could slow economic growth. That sentiment was repeated over and over, before and after the vote. [...] On Sunday, Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina said on CNN that ‘there’s no doubt that the J.C.T. has been consistently underestimating the activity in our economy.’” [New York Times, [12/4/17](#)]

Joint Committee On Taxation Is Nonpartisan. “The Joint Committee on Taxation is a nonpartisan committee of the United States Congress, originally established under the Revenue Act of 1926.” [Joint Committee on Taxation, accessed [01/22/21](#)]

In 2017, When Tax Bill Was Passed, Joint Committee On Taxation Was Run By Republican Senator Orrin Hatch And Republican Representative Kevin Brady. “The Joint Committee is chaired on a rotating basis by the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. During the first Session of each Congress the House has the Chair and the Senate has the vice-chair; during the second session the roles are reversed.” [Joint Committee on Taxation, accessed [01/22/21](#)]

- **In 2017, Orrin Hatch Was Chairman Of Senate Finance Committee.** [Ballotpedia, accessed [01/22/21](#)]
- **In 2017, Kevin Brady Was Chairman Of House Ways And Means Committee.** [Ballotpedia, accessed [01/22/21](#)]

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) Claimed That Tax Cuts Would Generate Enough New Revenue To Be Deficit Neutral, A Claim Which Turned Out To Be False – And One Year Later Blamed Deficit Increases On Social Security And Medicare

Dec. 2017: Senator Mitch McConnell Pushed Back On Claims The December 2017 Tax Cut Bill Would Add To The Nation’s Debt, Predicting The Tax Rewrite Would Generate Enough Revenue To Offset Deficits. “Fresh off his biggest legislative victory of the Trump era, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Saturday disputed projections that the Senate’s tax bill would add to the nation’s debt woes. Back home in Kentucky just hours after the Senate narrowly pushed through the nearly \$1.5 trillion tax bill, McConnell predicted that the boldest rewrite of the nation’s tax system in decades would generate more than enough economic growth to prevent the burgeoning deficits being forecast.” [Associated Press, [12/2/17](#)]

- **McConnell Projected The Tax Bill “Be Beyond Revenue Neutral,” Producing Enough Revenue To Fill The Gap And Then Some.** “Fresh off his biggest legislative victory of the Trump era, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Saturday disputed projections that the Senate’s tax bill would add to the nation’s debt woes. [...] ‘I not only don’t think it will increase the deficit, I think it will be beyond revenue neutral,’ he told reporters. ‘In other words, I think it will produce more than enough to fill that gap.’” [Associated Press, [12/2/17](#)]

October 2018: Senator McConnell Said Federal Spending On Healthcare And Retirement Benefits Were The “Real Drivers Of The Debt.”“ A day after the treasury department announced the federal budget deficit had reached [\\$779bn](#), Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell said popular government programs, not massive tax cuts passed by Republicans last year, were to blame. [...] Citing federal spending on healthcare and retirement benefits such as Medicare, Medicaid and social security, McConnell said changes to such programs would require cooperation from Democrats. ‘It’s disappointing but it’s not a Republican problem,’ McConnell said. ‘It’s a bipartisan problem: unwillingness to address the real drivers of the debt by doing anything to adjust those programs to the demographics of America in the future.’” [The Guardian, [10/16/18](#)]

Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO) Said He Was Okay With Short-Term Deficits To Finance Tax Cuts.

KCUR HEADLINE: “Senator Blunt OK With Short Term Deficits For Tax Cuts, Chides Trump And Senators.” [KCUR, [10/11/17](#)]

Senator Roy Blunt Said He Was Okay With Short-Term Deficits To Finance Tax Cuts, Saying They Would Be Worth It In The Long Run. “Missouri Senator Roy Blunt, a Republican, says he is optimistic that Congress will overhaul the tax system by the end of the year. Blunt says most people don’t know the details of the tax proposal he expects Senators to vote on this year, but he anticipates it will involve a break for working class people. He also thinks it will likely increase the budget deficit. ‘I think a short term increase in the deficit that leads to a long term increase in income is the right thing to do,’ Blunt says.” [KCUR, [10/11/17](#)]

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) Said Failure Was “Not An Option” For The Party On A Tax Cut Bill, Despite Deficit Concerns

On Passage Of The Tax Cut Bill, Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) Said “Failure Is Not An Option,” Despite Deficit Concerns.“ REPORTER: Some of you colleagues – Senator Corker, Senator Flake, for example – they’ve expressed concerns that this bill is going to make an even bigger hole in the deficit than there is now. So, are Republicans going to have the votes by the end of the month? GRAHAM: Yeah I think so. I think what they’re concerned about is the personal tax cuts expire in 2025, and that’s a bit of a gimmick. But we’ll get there because failure is not an option when it comes to the Republican Party and cutting taxes.” [CNN, [11/26/17](#)] (VIDEO)

Senator John Thune (R-SD) Praised That Tax Cuts Had “Delivered On” Their “Promises” In Release That Did Not Mention Impact On Deficit

December 2019: Thune Put Out Press Release Reaffirming That Tax Cuts Had “Delivered On” Their “Promises,” In Release That Did Not Mention Deficit Or Debt Projections. “U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) today discussed the upcoming two-year anniversary of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act being signed into law and the positive results it has delivered to the American people. Since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act became law in December 2017, hard-working middle-income American families have seen lower rates, improved benefits, better job opportunities, and many other positive results.” The budget impact was not discussed in the speech, which did not include the word “debt” or “deficit.” [Senator John Thune – Press Release, [12/17/19](#)]

Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK) Deflected When Asked About Tax Cut Bill’s Effect On The Deficit

Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK) Deflected When Asked About Tax Cut Bill’s Effect On The Deficit, Saying “We Gotta Get This Economy Growing Again” And That “Those Deficits Won’t Be Such A Challenge” With A Growing Economy. BLITZER: “Are you comfortable though, senator, with a bill that would add, according to the Congressional Budget Office, \$1.4 trillion to the national debt over the next 10 years?” SULLIVAN: “That score by the CBO they estimate that our economic growth with that score would be 1.9 percent over the next 10 years. Well, I think that vastly underestimates what we can do in this economy. One of the things that’s so important about this tax bill is we gotta get this economy growing again. We’ve had a lost

decade of economic growth, about less than 2 percent GDP growth. We can get to three, three-and-a-half percent growth, I think we can do that, and then those deficits won't be such a challenge." [YouTube, Senator Dan Sullivan, [11/28/17](#)]

Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) Continued To Praise The Trump Tax Cut Bill Into 2019, Despite Deficit Impacts.

December 2019: On The Two-Year Anniversary Of Trump Tax Reform's Passage, Tillis Boasted Of The "Positive Results It Has Produced For North Carolinians Without Mentioning The Deficit Impact. "This week, Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) discussed the upcoming two-year anniversary of the landmark Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and the positive results it has produced for North Carolinians." The linked video does not mention the impact on the deficit. [Office of Tom Tillis, Press Release, [12/20/19](#)]

Senator Jim Risch Cheered Passage Of Trump's Tax Cuts And Claimed It Would Reduce Deficits And Debt In Long-Term.

Senator Jim Risch Cheered Passage Of Trump's Tax Cuts And Claimed It Would Ultimately "Reduce The Deficit And Debt Long-Term."

- **Office Of Jim Risch, December 2017 HEADLINE: "Risch Cheers Passage Of Historic Tax Reform"** [Office of James Risch, Press Release, [12/20/17](#)]
- **"This Historic Reform Will Stimulate Business Activity For Large And Small Enterprises, Which Will Reduce The Deficit And Debt Long-Term."** [Office of James Risch, Press Release, [12/20/17](#)]

On Campaign Trail, Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) Explicitly Argued Tax Cuts Should Take Priority Over Budget Deficit And Expressed Support For Trump Tax Bill.

Candidate Hawley Specifically Called For Tax Cuts To Take Priority Over The Budget Deficit. "Hawley said that it was more important for Congress to approve tax cuts than tackle the federal budget deficit, which has been a GOP concern for years. The current federal fiscal year ended Sept. 30 with the first increase in the budget deficit in several years. 'I think that at this point, our focus right now needs to be on providing tax relief and we can worry at the next stage what needs to be done on the spending side of the ledger,' Hawley said." [St. Louis Public Radio, [10/25/17](#)]

- **Senate Candidate Hawley Said He Supported Trump Tax Cuts While On The Campaign Trail.** "Missouri Attorney Gen. Josh Hawley endorsed President Donald Trump's framework for tax reform on Wednesday, saying it was 'the right way forward.' [...] 'It is important that right now D.C. seizes the opportunity to do something for the American people and particularly for the middle class ... It needs to be done and it needs to be done now,' Hawley said." [McClatchy DC, [10/26/17](#)]

Rick Scott Expressed Support For Trump Tax Cuts, Despite Deficit Concerns.

Senator Rick Scott (R-FL) Supported Trump Tax Cuts, Despite Deficit Concerns, Saying It Would Create More Jobs. "Scott stopped in West Palm Beach Thursday morning after returning from a trade mission to Argentina. He met with Business Development Board members and then, in remarks to journalists, praised Trump's commitment to the environment, urged state legislators to include funding for Hoover Dike repairs in the state budget and said he supports the Trump administration's recently released plan to reduce taxes for individuals and businesses. Trump's tax plan is being panned by Democrats, who say it would make the deficit soar for the sake of providing large tax cuts to the wealthy. Scott, however, said he agrees with the principles of tax reduction. 'Reductions in taxes puts more money in your pocket as a citizen, puts more money in a business person's pocket so they can hire more people, do more marketing and create more jobs,' he said.

'What the federal government's doing, I think, is going to help us create more jobs in this state.'" [Palm Beach Post, [4/27/17](#)]

Republican Senators Voted For 2017 Republican Tax Bill After Having Previously Claimed To Oppose Debt Increases

Senator Todd Young (R-IN) Said He Would Not Support Tax Reform If It Would "Blow A Hole In The Budget" But Still Voted For Trump Tax Cuts.

Senator Todd Young Said He Would Not Support A Republican Tax Reform Plan If It Would "Blow A Hole In The Budget." "U.S. Sen. Todd Young says he is eager to accomplish tax reform—but he's not willing to 'blow a hole in the budget' in the process. Young—speaking to IBJ reporters and editors Tuesday about President Donald Trump's tax-reform plan—said he would not vote for a proposal that raised the deficit. [...] 'We need to recognize there are growth effects of improving our tax environment. Otherwise, what's the point of this process?' Young said. 'But we can't assume unreasonable rates of economic growth or we're being fiscally irresponsible. ... My own party needs to be realistic with what can be accomplished through tax reform alone.'" [Indiana Business Journal, [10/11/17](#)]

- **Young Ultimately Voted For The Tax Cut Legislation.** "Young joined fellow Senate Republicans in voting for the Trump-backed tax reform bill, which lowered taxes for corporations and most individuals and will add \$1 trillion to the deficit by 2020. He's supported the administration's use of the Congressional Review Act to repeal 16 regulations, as well as the president's attention to military issues through pay increases and other legislation, such as one bill updating the veteran health care system to include more opportunities to see private doctors." [News and Tribune, [8/9/18](#)]

Senator Jim Risch (R-ID) Previously Claimed "Each Dollars Added To Our Debt Is A Dollar Lost From Critical Investments"

Risch, September 2017: "Each Dollars Added To Our Debt Is A Dollar Lost From Critical Investments In American Roads, Bridges, Healthcare, Schools, And Other Essential Services. We Have To Get Our Fiscal House In Order." "Our national debt has grown nearly \$10 trillion in ten years and the federal government, unfortunately, has no plan on how or when to pay it down. Each dollar added to our debt is a dollar lost from critical investments in American roads, bridges, healthcare, schools, and other essential services. This pattern of reckless, uncontrolled spending threatens the future of our country and ensures our children and grandchildren have a bleak financial future. Congress must cut spending and recognize that we do not have a no-limit credit card to fund everything everyone wants. Like hard-working Idahoans, the federal government must prioritize, budget, and say no to things that are not absolute essentials. We have to get our fiscal house in order before it's too late. In daily terms, the U.S. adds over \$1.5 BILLION to its debt EVERY DAY!" [Office of Jim Risch, Press Release, [9/12/17](#)]

Senator Lindsey Graham "Made A Politically Neutral Offer ... To Help The Ultimate Winner [Of The 2016 Election] Reduce The National Debt"

May 2016: Senator Graham "Made A Politically Neutral Offer ... To Help The Ultimate Winner [Of The 2016 Election] Reduce The National Debt." "Having already promised not to vote for either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump in the November election, Sen. Lindsey Graham made a politically neutral offer on Wednesday to help the ultimate winner reduce the national debt. [...] 'Don't you think the next president is going to need a lot of help?' Graham told an economic policy summit in Washington. 'I will try to be the Republican who will put on the table things that are necessary for my party to embrace in order to help country as a whole.'" [Greenville News, [5/12/16](#)]

2017: South Dakota Standard: Senator Thune Spoke About Lack Of Responsible Budgeting In Washington, But Voted For \$440 Billion Budget Deficit. “Our senior Senator John Thune preaches in his website that ‘for too long responsible budgeting has not been practiced in Washington’ and that ‘our country is on an unsustainable fiscal path. ‘Not to be out-evangelized, junior Senator Mike Rounds said in his website last August that ‘with our debt spiraling out of control ... it’s clear that federal spending at current levels is unsustainable. ‘So just how did Thune and Rounds mount their crusades against unsustainability? They ignored them and voted last week to approve a budget of about \$4.1 trillion in spending with revenues anticipated at \$3.65 trillion, leaving a deficit of \$440 billion through October 2018. What’s more, in the byzantine process of Senate deliberations, this budget sets the stage for deficits totaling \$1.5 trillion over the next 10 years. So much for unsustainability.” [Rapid City Journal – John Tsitrian, 10/25/17]

In 2019, 29 Republican Senators Voted To Suspend Debt Ceiling For Two Years.

On August 1, 2019, “A Two-Year Agreement To Raise Federal Spending And At The Same Time Lift The Government’s Borrowing Limit” Passed In Senate And Suspended “Debt Ceiling Until The End Of July 2021.” “A two-year agreement to raise federal spending and at the same time lift the government’s borrowing limit will go to the president’s desk after it passed the Senate with more Democrats voting for it than Republicans. The bill, which provides for more than \$2.7 trillion in discretionary spending over the next two years, was the result of weeks of negotiations between Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D., Calif.). It suspends the debt ceiling until the end of July 2021 and sets spending levels roughly \$320 billion above limits set in a 2011 law.” [The Wall Street Journal, [08/01/19](#)]

- **29 Republican Senators Voted In Favor Of H.R.3877.** Senators Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Susan Collins, John Cornyn, Kevin Cramer, Mike Crapo, Joni Ernst, Lindsey Graham, Chuck Grassley, John Hoeven, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Inhofe, Mitch McConnell, Martha McSally, Jerry Moran, Lisa Murkowski, David Perdue, Rob Portman, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Richard Shelby, Dan Sullivan, John Thune, Roger Wicker, and Todd Young voted yea on H.R.3877. [United States Senate, [08/01/19](#)]

In Suspended Debt Ceiling, “The Government Can Borrow As Much As It Needs In Order To Pay Off Its Current Debts And Obligations For Two More Years” Then, “After The Suspension Ends, The Debt Ceiling Will Automatically Be Raised To Reflect How Much Was Borrowed.” “What does suspending the debt ceiling mean? In the current deal, the debt ceiling would be suspended for two years. That means the government can borrow as much as it needs in order to pay off its current debts and obligations for two more years. After the suspension ends, the debt ceiling will automatically be raised to reflect how much was borrowed.” [Forbes, [07/22/19](#)]

The Bipartisan Budget Acts Of 2018 And 2019, Supported By Dozens Of Republican Senators, Added Combined \$2.2 Trillion To The Debt.

The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018, Supported By 34 Senate Republicans, Added \$445 Billion To Projected Debt

The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018 Added \$445 Billion To Projected Debt. [Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, [01/08/20](#)]

34 Republican Senators Voted For The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018. Senators Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Boozman, Shelley Moore Capito, Thad Cochran, Susan Collins, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, Ted Cruz, Joni Ernst, Deb Fischer, Cory Gardner, Lindsey Graham, Orrin Hatch, Dean Heller, John Hoeven, John Inhofe, Johnny Isakson, Mitch McConnell, Jerry Moran, Lisa Murkowski, David Perdue, Rob

Portman, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Marco Rubio, Tim Scott, Richard Shelby, Dan Sullivan, John Thune, Thom Tillis, Roger Wicker, and Todd Young voted yea on The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. [United States Senate, [02/09/18](#)]

Senate Republicans Praised The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018.

Mitch McConnell: The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018 Was “Bipartisan, Bicameral Agreement On Defense Spending And Other Kentucky Priorities.” “As the Senate Majority Leader, I am pleased to announce that our bipartisan, bicameral agreement on defense spending and other Kentucky priorities was signed by President Trump.” [Office of Senator Mitch McConnell, [02/09/18](#)]

Roy Blunt: The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018 “Includes Additional Resources That Will Save Lives And Strengthen Communities.” “The Bipartisan Budget Act provides the level of defense funding we need to keep our military strong and our country safe,” Blunt said. “The measure also includes additional resources that will save lives and strengthen communities, like a two-year extension and funding increase for community health centers, additional funding for opioid-related programs, and funding for disaster relief and infrastructure investments. With this agreement in place, I look forward to continuing our work to fund the government and make sure every dollar we spend reflects the priorities of the people we work for.” [Office of Senator Roy Blunt, [02/09/18](#)]

John Cornyn: The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2018 Was “Long-Overdue” And “Big Step Forward For Texans Impacted By Hurricane Harvey.” “While long-overdue, this bill is a big step forward for Texans impacted by Hurricane Harvey up and down our coast. We know the recovery process is far from over, but these resources will go a long way for Texas families, small businesses and communities who are still rebuilding.” [Office of Senator John Cornyn, [02/09/18](#)]

The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019, Supported By 29 Republican Senators, Added \$1.7 Trillion To Projected Debt.

The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019 Added \$1.7 Trillion To Projected Debt. [Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, [01/08/20](#)]

29 Republican Senators Voted For The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019. Senators Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Susan Collins, John Cornyn, Kevin Cramer, Mike Crapo, Joni Ernst, Lindsey Graham, Chuck Grassley, John Hoeven, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Inhofe, Mitch McConnell, Martha McSally, Jerry Moran, Lisa Murkowski, David Perdue, Rob Portman, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Richard Shelby, Dan Sullivan, John Thune, Roger Wicker, and Todd Young voted yea on The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. [United States Senate, [08/01/19](#)]

The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019 Supported By 29 Senate Republicans Raised Spending By \$320 Billion And Was Criticized By Conservative Heritage Foundation As “Fiscally Egregious”

Heritage Action Opposed Bill, Saying It “Would Be The Most Fiscally Egregious Deal In Recent Years And Would Create Annual Deficits On Par With President Obama’s.” “Heritage Action Position: N, Congress Member Position: Y The two-year agreement would raise the 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA) caps by \$322 billion and suspend the debt ceiling until July 31, 2021. If enacted into law, this Mnuchin-Pelosi budget deal would be the most fiscally egregious deal in recent years and would create annual deficits on par with President Obama’s.” [Heritage Action, [2019](#)]

Vox HEADLINE On BBA 2019: “Thursday’s Budget Deal Proves Once Again Republicans Never Cared About The Deficit” Subheadline: “Let’s remember for the next time they flip-flop.” [Vox, [8/1/19](#)]

Vox: Despite Professing Concern About Direction Of The Budget Deficit, Republicans Supported A Budget Deal Which Raised Spending \$320 Billion.“ Republicans used to profess to be extremely worried about the budget deficit. Many of us suspected at the time that they were full of it. And one big thing we’ve learned this week is that they were, indeed, full of it. The budget deal the Senate is passing today will raise spending by \$320 billion, split between defense and non-defense measures, in the context of deficits that have already soared to more than \$1 trillion per year.” [Vox, [8/1/19](#)]

Senate Republicans Praised The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019.

Mitch McConnell: The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019 Was “Deal That Every Member Of This Body Should Support.” “We need to address the debt limit and secure the full faith and credit of the United States. We need to continue to secure the funding that our national defense demands. Fortunately, the pending legislation will accomplish precisely that. [...] This is the deal that every member of this body should support when we vote later this morning.” [Office of Senator Mitch McConnell, [08/01/19](#)]

Mike Crapo: Not Passing The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019 Would Have “Caused Economic Damage To Hard-Working Americans And Their Families.” “Although I am disappointed this budget agreement did not contain greater spending cuts, failure to enact it would have resulted in even greater spending. That would have inevitably led to a supercharged partisan push for even higher spending and a drastically increased likelihood of the political weaponization of government shutdowns. That, in turn, would have driven up spending and caused economic damage to hard-working Americans and their families.” [Office of Senator Mike Crapo, [08/01/19](#)]

Shelley Moore-Capito: Passing The Bipartisan Budget Act Of 2019 Was Part Of “One Of Our Most Important Jobs As Members Of Congress” In “Delivering The Resources To Fund Our Government, Provide Certainty And Support For Our Military And Our Veterans, And Ensure Economic Stability For American Families.” “I’m glad that President Trump and the administration were able to negotiate a budget agreement with House leadership that allows us to now move forward with the appropriations process. One of our most important jobs as members of Congress is delivering the resources to fund our government, provide certainty and support for our military and our veterans, and ensure economic stability for American families. This agreement puts us on the path to accomplish all of those goals, and as chair of the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, I’m ready to get to work and do my part to make sure we do so responsibly, effectively, and with the best interests of West Virginians and all Americans in mind.” [Office of Senator Shelley Moore-Capito, [08/01/19](#)]

2019 Spending Bill Supported By Dozens Of Republican Senators Added \$500 Billion To Debt

Spending Deal In December 2019 “Added \$500 Billion Of Debt” In Making “A Number Of Tax Cuts.”

“Finally, the December 2019 spending deal added \$500 billion of debt by tacking onto ordinary appropriations a number of tax cuts. Most significantly, the bill permanently repealed three taxes meant to fund the Affordable Care Act.” [Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, [01/08/20](#)]

12/19/19: 32 Republican Senators Voted In Favor Of H.R. 1865. Senators Lamar Alexander, Roy Blunt, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Susan Collins, John Cornyn, Kevin Cramer, Mike Crapo, Joni Ernst, Deb Fischer, Cory Gardner, Lindsey Graham, Chuck Grassley, John Hoeven, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mitch McConnell, Martha McSally, Jerry Moran, Lisa Murkowski, David Perdue, Rob Portman, Pat Roberts, Mitt Romney, Mike Rounds, Marco Rubio, Richard Shelby, Dan Sullivan, John Thune, Thom Tillis, Roger Wicker, and Todd Young voted yea on H.R. 1865. [United States Senate, [12/19/19](#)]

Republicans Praised Package Of Appropriations Bills Passed.

Mitch McConnell: Government Funding Bill Agreement Provided “Unprecedented Levels Of Federal Funding” Which Enabled Delivery Of “Critical Assistance.” “U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) announced today that several important provisions to help Kentucky fight the opioid and substance abuse epidemic are included in the Fiscal Year 2020 government-funding agreement. [...] ‘Through comprehensive legislation and unprecedented levels of federal funding, I’ve delivered critical assistance to Kentucky’s local leaders for prevention, treatment, and enforcement in their work to help save lives.’” [Office of Senator Mitch McConnell, [12/19/19](#)]

Roy Blunt: Funding Bills Enhanced “Economic Opportunities” For Families. “The funding measures make critical investments in two of my top priorities: strengthening our transportation networks and enhancing economic opportunities for Missouri farm families.” [Office of Senator Roy Blunt, [12/19/19](#)]

John Boozman: Government Funding Is The “Basic Responsibility Of Congress That Provides Accountability And Transparency To The American People.” “Funding the government is a basic responsibility of Congress that provides accountability and transparency to the American people. Passage of these pieces of legislation creates certainty for the military and federal agencies as they plan for the future and fund their current priorities.” [Office of Senator John Boozman, [12/19/19](#)]

...And, If They Had Their Way, Republicans Would Have Increased National Debt Even Further

Repeal Of The ACA Could Add \$5 Trillion To The Debt And Republican Proposals To Repeal And Replace Would Drive Up Out Of Pocket Health Care Costs.

In 2015, CBO Predicted That Repeal Of ACA “Could Add About \$5 Trillion To The Debt By 2035.”

“Therefore, because the Medicare savings and revenue in the Affordable Care Act grow so much more quickly than the net costs, the relatively small cost of repeal in the first few years is expected to grow rapidly over time. Roughly, based on CBO’s numbers, repealing the ACA (before incorporating dynamic effects) would cost \$3.5 trillion increase in the second decade. Including interest costs associated with those higher deficits, though, repeal could add about \$5 trillion to the debt by 2035, which translates into a roughly 12 percent of GDP debt increase.” [Center for a responsible Federal Budget, [06/23/15](#)]

Meanwhile, The ACA “Remains Likely To Reduce Federal Budget Deficits Substantially In Coming Years.” “The Affordable Care Act (ACA) remains likely to reduce federal budget deficits substantially in coming years, despite December’s repeal of three ACA taxes. Repealing the excise tax on high-cost health plans (the “Cadillac tax”), the fee on health insurance providers (the “health insurance tax”), and the medical device excise tax will sacrifice hundreds of billions in revenues and marks a significant step backwards in health and fiscal policy, as we’ve written. But the ACA’s remaining spending reductions and tax increases will more than offset the cost of its coverage expansions.” [Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, [01/09/20](#)]

Trump’s Economic Advisors Considered Proposing 15% Tax Rate For Middle Class That Would “Dramatically Add To The Deficit.”

Trump’s Economic Advisers Considered Having Him “Campaign For Reelection Proposing A 15 Percent Tax Rate For The American Middle Class.” “President Trump’s economic advisers are exploring whether the president should campaign for reelection proposing a 15 percent tax rate for the American middle class, with some seeing the idea as a simple way of selling Republicans’ economic agenda as not merely beneficial to the rich, according to multiple people involved in the White House’s internal deliberations over ‘tax cut 2.0.’” [The Washington Post, [11/12/19](#)]

Reduction Of The Middle-Class Tax Rate To 15% “Would Lower Taxes By Hundreds Of Billions Of Dollars” And “Would Also Dramatically Add To The Deficit Unless The Cuts Were Offset By Major Spending Reductions To Federal Programs.” “Reducing the tax rate to 15 percent for middle-class taxpayers would lower taxes by hundreds of billions of dollars, according to budget experts, although precise estimates are impossible given that details remain vague. Doing so would free up much more money for Americans to spend, but it would also dramatically add to the deficit unless the cuts were offset by major spending reductions to federal programs. The GOP tax law of 2017 already added more than \$1.5 trillion to the national debt.” [The Washington Post, [11/12/19](#)]

Trump’s Economic Advisers Also Discussed Other Tax Proposals Such As “A Payroll Tax Cut,” A Change To Capital Gains Taxed, “Exempting Savings From Taxes,” And Reducing The Seven Tax Brackets To Three Or Four.

Trump’s Economic Advisers Also Considered “A Payroll Tax Cut, Revamping How Capital Gains Are Taxed, Exempting Savings From Taxes, And Reducing The Number Of Tax Brackets From Seven To Somewhere Around Three Or Four.” “Other ideas that have been discussed include a payroll tax cut, revamping how capital gains are taxed, exempting savings from taxes, and reducing the number of tax brackets from seven to somewhere around three or four, according to Stephen Moore, a conservative tax expert at the Heritage Foundation who has worked with the White House on tax policy.” [The Washington Post, [11/12/19](#)]

House Republicans ‘Proposed 2.0 Tax Plan Would Have Driven Up Debt By Giving More Tax Cuts To The Wealthy

In 2018, House Republicans Proposed A “2.0 ‘Tax Plan” That Would Have Doubled Down “On The 2017 Tax Law’s Flaws” In Giving “More Tax Cuts To High-Income Households” And “Significantly Increasing The Nation’s Long-Term Fiscal Challenges.” “The House is expected to vote this month on its ‘2.0 ‘tax plan, which would double down on the 2017 tax law’s flaws by delivering substantially more tax cuts to high-income households than to those with low or moderate incomes, significantly increasing the nation’s long-term fiscal challenges, and creating opportunities for tax avoidance by wealthy filers. Its centerpiece is the permanent extension of the 2017 tax law’s individual provisions that are slated to expire after 2025.” [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [09/06/18](#)]

Republican’s Proposal Would Lessen “Revenues Just As The Retirement Of Baby Boomers Will Drive Spending Higher.” The proposal “Weakens revenues just as the retirement of baby boomers will drive spending higher. Federal spending will necessarily rise as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) over the next few decades due to several factors, the most significant of which is the aging of the population. Over the next two decades, people 65 or older will grow from 15 to 21 percent of the population. And the “old-old” population — those aged 85 and above, who have much higher health care costs than other elderly individuals — will grow even faster. This will increase spending on programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.” [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [09/06/18](#)]