

FEDERAL BUDGET TOPICS OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Braver Angels mission is to bring Americans together to bridge the partisan divide and strengthen our democratic republic. To achieve this mission, Braver Angels wants to educate Americans on issues that divide Americans. One of these issues is the Federal Budget. Braver Angels wants to:

1. Educate Americans about the Federal Budget.
2. Educate Americans about how they could work together to deal with the Federal Budget.

This document provides a brief overview of the topics included in the Federal Budget curriculum.

CONCORD COALITION

The Concord Coalition is a bipartisan organization formed in 1992. It was founded by U.S. Senator Warren Rudman, former Secretary of Commerce Peter George Peterson, and U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas.

The Concord Coalition educates, engages, and empowers citizens with credible, nonpartisan information on the risks and consequences of the growing federal debt and the unsustainable fiscal policies. The Concord Coalition is dedicated to preserving the economic strength of the United State of America and to bolstering the integrity of government institutions through reducing the national debt and strengthening federal budget processes and procedures.

Principles & Priorities is an interactive exercise in which participants learn how difficult it is to balance the federal budget. Participants working in groups review current tax and spending policies, suggest priorities for the future, and apply their personal principles throughout the exercise.

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

Most policy experts agree that Social Security faces a looming financial crisis and requires significant reforms to remain sustainable. Social Security is expected to run out of money in its retirement trust fund around 2033.

MEDICARE REFORM

Experts predict that the future of Medicare involves rising costs, increased enrollment, and potential changes to benefit structure, with concerns about the long-term financial sustainability of the program. Medicare's Hospital Insurance trust fund is projected to be unable to pay full benefits after 2036.

FEDERALISM

In Chapter 4 of *American Covenant: How the Constitution Unified Our Nation—and Could Again*, Yuval Levin explores the ongoing tension and balance between national unity and local diversity in American politics. He views federalism as a key tool in achieving this balance by promoting cohesion at the national level while preserving autonomy at the local level.

Levin observes that as the U.S. government has become increasingly centralized, Americans have grown more divided. He suggests that this correlation is no accident. To reduce political polarization, Levin argues for a clearer distinction between national and state responsibilities. This distinction impacts the federal budget

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HEALTH CARE BUDGET and HEALTH CARE REFORM

The Federalism discussion deals with the distinction between national and state responsibilities in health care. The health care budget represents those items that are national responsibilities. The health care reform discussion represents those items that are state responsibilities.

EDUCATION BUDGET and EDUCATION REFORM

The Federalism discussion deals with the distinction between national and state responsibilities in education. The education budget represents those items that are national responsibilities. The education reform discussion represents those items that are state responsibilities.

BUDGET OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Could the United States reduce the active military manpower? Could the United States reduce the cost of maintaining military bases outside the country? Answering these questions requires an understanding of the foreign policy goals of the United States.

RAISING REVENUE: TAX REFORM VS ECONOMIC GROWTH

Tax rates and economic growth both impact Federal revenue. Understanding the relationship between tax rates and economic growth helps identify the best policy for sustainable revenue gains.