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## Coloradans would suffer under House budget plan, new report shows

At a time when 228,000 Coloradans are out of work, the U.S. House of Representatives' approach to the federal budget fails those who are struggling most, according to a [new report](#) by the Coalition on Human Needs for the SAVE for All campaign.

The Senate recently passed a two-week stopgap bill with nearly \$4 billion dollars in cuts to prevent the government from a shutdown. However, the final budget package that must be negotiated is yet to be seen. The House is still pursuing talks around decimation of key programs that support local communities, which would cause more hurt to all Americans who are still under financial duress because of the tough economy.

The report draws a sharp contrast between the president's budget for next fiscal year and the House plan for the remainder of this year, although it also notes serious concerns with elements of the president's budget. It shows how the proposed budget cuts would both harm individuals and damage the country's fragile economic recovery.

Ultimately, the biggest deficit-reduction measure is an expanding economy, with more people working and paying taxes, according to the report, "A Better Budget for All: Saving Our Economy and Helping Those in Need."

The [Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute](#) released the report in Colorado in partnership with The Coalition on Human Needs to help launch the Strengthening America's Values and Economy for All Campaign, or SAVE for All. SAVE for All is supported by more than 1,000 organizations across the country.

The report reviews the biggest differences in the two approaches to the federal budget, as well as the cuts with the largest effect on vulnerable people. The House plan, HR 1, includes the largest cuts, on an annualized basis, in domestic appropriations funding in history.

Tens of thousands of Coloradans would suffer under the House plan for the rest of fiscal year 2011.

"Coloradans are already reeling from the Great Recession and years of reductions to public services," said Kathy White, deputy director of the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute. "We need our representatives in the House and Senate to recognize that reality. Reducing the federal budget deficit is important, but not at the expense of working families who depend on these critical domestic programs. Slashing these programs is short-sighted and irresponsible. It would lead to considerable hardship for Coloradans and put our economic recovery at risk."

The report also analyzes current proposals for changing the federal budget process, pointing out that all of them share a common flaw: they reject revenue increases as part of a balanced solution for reducing the federal deficit and debt. The report calls on Congress to look at the entire federal budget -- including revenues, tax loopholes, and military spending -- not just domestic annual appropriations.

"Cutting only from a portion of domestic spending that constitutes less than a fifth of our total budget simply cannot solve our federal deficit and debt, but it will cause enormous pain and cripple our economic future," said Deborah Weinstein, executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs, an alliance of national organizations that promotes public policies to address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable populations.

Here's a sampling of what the House plan would mean for Colorado:

- 1,388 young children would not be able to receive Head Start services and 155 Head Start jobs would be lost;
- 11,653 poor children will lose or have reduced extra academic support and 100 jobs providing that support would be lost;
- 1,687 children would lose or have reduced after-school programs, and 14 after-school jobs would be lost;
- 47,731 patients would lose health care they would have received at Community Health Centers over the next year; one health center site would have to close and 91 jobs would be lost;
- 149,000 low-income Colorado college students would lose some or all of their Pell Grants;
- 14,418 low income Colorado college students would lose some or all of their Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants;
- Poor households in federal public housing (two-thirds of which are elderly or have a disability) would see maintenance and repairs on their apartments deteriorate due to a \$6.6 cut in Colorado's Public Housing Capital Fund;
- Colorado will lose \$25.7 million that it could have used for a wide range of community development projects;
- The majority of the approximately 365 households of people with significant and long-term disabilities in Colorado receiving rental assistance will lose their vouchers and are at risk of losing their home because of the 70 percent cut to the Section 811 housing voucher program.

The report calls for any deficit reduction plan to:

- Make major steps towards deficit reduction gradual and long-term, because the solutions will be much easier and the resulting pain much less severe if the economy is stronger;
- Not rely primarily on cuts in domestic appropriations, which are not the cause of the ballooning federal deficit;
- Include equitable revenue increases;
- Reduce wasteful spending;
- Protect low-income people from harm.

The complete report is [available online](#).

The Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute is a project of the Colorado Center on Law and Policy, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and advocacy organization seeking justice and economic security for all Coloradans.

The Coalition on Human Needs (CHN) is an alliance of national organizations working together to promote public policies which address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable populations. The Coalition conducts analyses of federal budget proposals and policies to determine their impact on people in need. The Coalition's members include civil rights, religious, labor and professional organizations and those concerned with the well being of children, women, the elderly and people with disabilities. CHN is located at 1120 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite 312, Washington, D.C. 20036. For more information please visit [www.chn.org](http://www.chn.org).

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