



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on January 13, 2019

GOP-controlled House Added Nearly \$8 Trillion to National Debt

“Nothing is more wild, fickle, and giddy, than the nature of man; not the clouds, nor the winds. We swallow greedily to day what we loathed yesterday, and will loathe again to-morrow; and would hang at night those whom we hugged in the morning. We love men for being of our opinion, when we are in the wrong; and hate them afterwards, if they be in the right.”

— John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, *Cato’s Letters*, No. 96 (1722)



During their eight years in control of the U.S. House of Representatives, Republicans added \$7.9 trillion to the national debt.

In a report published by the U.S. Treasury Department entitled “The Debt to the Penny and Who Holds It,” one need only set the correct date parameters to find out how much the money the self-professed “party of limited government” borrowed, adding to the already unimaginable national shortfall totaling nearly \$22 trillion!

On January 4, 2011, the day prior to the GOP’s majority being seated in the House of Representatives, the national debt total was \$14,014,049,043,294.41, as set out in the aforementioned Treasury Department report.

Fast forward to January 3, 2019, the day the Democrats took control of the House, and the debt total had grown to \$21,929,258,046,653.58.

I’m no math wizard, but subtraction I can handle and the Republicans, nearly each of whom ran on promises of paring down the government, oversaw over the course of four Congresses, the addition of \$7,915,209,003,359.17 to the national debt.

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While I’m on a roll, I did another math problem — this time division — and it works out that while the Republican Party had control of the country’s coffers, \$31,374 was added to the national debt every second!

Of course, there are Republicans who will protest these claims, insisting that being in the majority doesn’t mean it gets its way in Congress. They will defend their addition to the debt, claiming that such situations are caused by compromise.

Well, here’s a little bit of constitutional comeback for those Republicans brave enough (or partisan enough) to try and excuse the excessive explosion of the national debt they permitted.

Article I, Section 9 of the Constitution mandates:



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“No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law....”

For how a law is made, you’ll need to turn back to Article I, Section 7 of the U.S. Constitution sets out the process by which laws are made:

“All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other Bills.”

“Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a law.”

So, using yet another level of mathematics, the transitive property of debt blame dictates that if a law cannot be made without the approval of the House of Representatives, and the House of Representatives was controlled by Republicans, then the blame for the debt still sits squarely on the shoulders of the GOP.

There is one more evaluation that can be made with the Treasury Department’s debt website.

While it is true, nevertheless, that the Republicans did share federal power with the Democratic Party so the blame lies with both major political parties, there was a time that the Republican Party was in control of both the executive and legislative branches of the general government.

With that in mind, we can plug in the relevant dates in the debt report and find out if the Republicans, while in complete control of the federal lawmaking process, allowed the national debt to increase or if they used their political power to shrink the amount of money they are handing down as a pathetic patrimony to the coming generations of Americans.

At dawn on January 20, 2017 — the day Donald J. Trump was inaugurated president — the national debt was \$19,944,429,217,106.77.

Then, when the sun set on January 3, 2019, the Republicans’ last day of total control of the White House and Congress, the national debt was \$21,929,258,046,653.58.

So, subtracting the smaller number from the larger, while they ruled the swamp, Republicans ran up an additional \$1,984,828,829,546.81.

The hope is that by publishing these fiscal facts, many Americans will realize that neither party is interested in faithfully adhering to the limits of their enumerated power. Neither party is interested in repealing reams of regulations that prevent true prosperity by burdening private property to the point where it is good for nothing but to be taxed.

A couple of days ago it was the 387th birthday of Samuel von Pufendorf, a man whose name has been erased from our collective memory, but who, nonetheless, was of immense influence on the Founding Generation.

In 1695, Pufendorf warned what would happen should parties overshadow principle in a free society:

“[B]eing divided into Factions, they are more concern’d to ruin their Rivals, than to follow the Dictates of Reason.”



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Here's what reason and history make very clear: neither party that controls the federal government and the expenditure of the funds of the people can be relied on to fix the problem that they perpetuate and from which both benefit.

The people and the states must reclaim their sovereign authority and assert it in defense of fiscal freedom, refusing to participate in, pay for, or carry out any federal program or policy that is not absolutely allowed by the Constitution, the source of every power possessed by the federal government.

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