

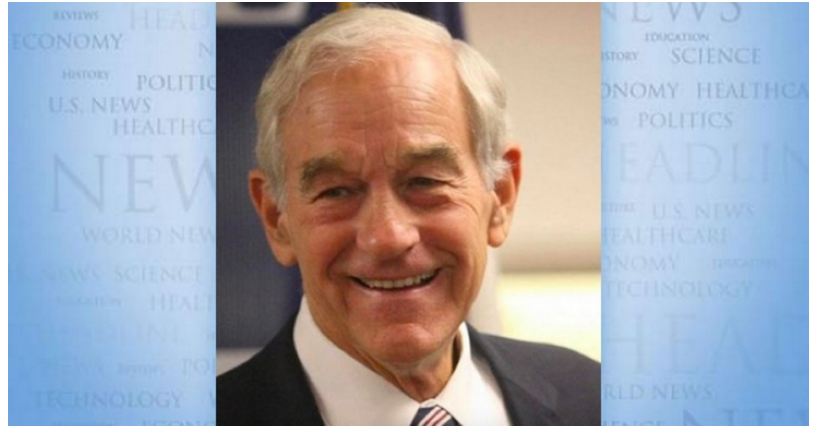


Written by [Ron Paul](#) on December 12, 2018

## Too Much Partisanship in Washington? No, Too Much Bipartisanship!

Washington is once again gripped by the specter of a government shutdown, as Congress and President Trump negotiate an end-of-year spending deal. A main issue of contention is funding for President Trump's border wall. Sadly, but not surprisingly, neither Congress nor the administration is fighting to cut, or at least not increase, spending.

Federal spending has increased from 3.6 trillion dollars to 4.4 trillion dollars since Republicans gained control over both chambers of Congress in 2014. Some may try to defend congressional Republicans by pointing out that for two years the Republican Congress had to negotiate spending deals with President Obama. But federal spending has increased by 7.5 percent, or over 300 billion dollars, since Donald Trump became President.



A big beneficiary of the Republican spending spree is the military-industrial complex. Republicans have increased the "defense" budget by eight percent in the past two years. President Trump and congressional Republicans claim the increases are necessary because sequestration "decimated" the military. But Congress, with the Obama administration's full cooperation and support, suspended sequestration every year but one, so the planned cuts never went into full effect. Congress and Obama also "supplemented" the official military budget with generous appropriations for the Pentagon's off-budget Overseas Contingency Operations fund. Spending on militarism increased by as much as 600 billion dollars over the amounts allowed for under sequestration.

President Trump has proposed reducing the projected military budget for fiscal year 2020 to 700 billion dollars. This would be a mere two percent cut, yet the usual voices are already crying that this tiny reduction would endanger our security. If history is any guide, the military-industrial complex's congressional allies and high-priced lobbyists will be able to defeat the president's proposed reductions and convince President Trump to further increase the military budget.

This huge military budget has little or nothing to do with America's legitimate security needs. In fact, as candidate Trump recognized, America's military interventions in the Middle East have endangered our security by empowering terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda.

While the warfare state has been a big beneficiary of the Republican spending spree, the GOP has hardly neglected the welfare state. Domestic spending has increased seven percent since 2016. Except for a half-hearted attempt to repeal Obamacare and some food stamp reforms that were included in and



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then dropped from this year's farm bill, Republicans have not made any effort to roll back or even reform the welfare state.

The farm bill, which Congress is expected to pass this week, will spend as much as 900 billion dollars over the next ten years. Much of that spending will be on taxpayer subsidies for wealthy farmers and even "farmers in name only."

Trump's budget deals have been supported by the majority of Democrats. Even those who have called for the president's impeachment are more than happy to vote with him when it comes to increasing spending and debt. These Democrats are the mirror image of 1990s Republicans who made a big spending deal with President Clinton while simultaneously trying to impeach him.

We suffer from too much bipartisanship when it comes to the welfare-warfare state. This bipartisanship has resulted in a national debt that is rapidly approaching 30 trillion dollars. This will inevitably lead to a major economic crisis. The way to avoid this crisis is to replace the bipartisan welfare-warfare consensus with a new consensus in favor of limited government, peace, free markets in all areas including currency, and auditing then ending the Fed.

*Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.*



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