



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on April 6, 2011

## Libertarian Party: Paul Ryan is “Worse than Bill Clinton”

Third in size of party, but first to defend the Constitution. The Libertarian Party is not impressed with Representative Paul Ryan’s proposed federal budget. Ever since the GOP’s announcement of a substantially smaller federal budget, conservative blogs daily have etched new tributes on the monument to Paul Ryan’s legislative achievements.

Libertarian Party Chair Mark Hinkle (picture, left) isn’t joining in the throng, however.



In a [statement](#) released on Tuesday, Hinkle calls Ryan out for mortgaging America’s financial future on unconstitutional programs and projects.

Hinkle pulls no punches; instead he accuses the House Budget Committee Chairman of “sucker-punch[ing]” America:

Republicans want to spend \$40 trillion over ten years. That averages a staggering \$4 trillion per year. As recently as 2000, federal spending was only about \$1.8 trillion.

They also want to increase the federal debt from \$15.0 trillion to \$23.1 trillion. I hope our children and grandchildren enjoy paying interest on that extra \$8.1 trillion.

And, when conservative defenders of Ryan and the GOP forward the “at least they’re not as bad as the Democrats” argument, the Libertarians call them out for setting the wrong standard for judging real reduction in the size of government:

People should not judge the quality of this Republican plan by the standard President Obama has set. Everyone knows Obama is a big spender. Democrats rarely campaign on cutting government.

Particularly irksome to Libertarians is the fact that so many Republicans elected in 2010 were sent to Washington to regain control of government and cut out all wasteful spending. The problem now, says Hinkle, is that the party that once promised a return to traditional values has chosen instead to return to the federal feed trough, rooting around in equal measure to the Democratic majority that preceded them.

What this budget shows is, Republicans are hypocrites. They have no intention of cutting the federal government down to size. In 2021, Paul Ryan still wants the feds to be spending 19.9% of GDP. That’s a higher percentage than during Democrat Bill Clinton’s second term. In 1997, federal spending was 19.5% of GDP, and it dropped to 18.2% by 2000.

As if branding Ryan and his colleagues as “hypocrites” wasn’t clear enough, the Libertarian press release puts a fine point on just how far the Republicans have descended: “Paul Ryan is worse than Bill Clinton.”



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The amount of American treasure spent on the various foreign entanglements is not left out of the Republican rap sheet. In his recrimination of the majority party, Mark Hinkle demonstrates a critical distinction between “conservatives” and “constitutionalists” regarding the idea of the virtue of defense spending:

Another unfortunate but predictable thing about Paul Ryan’s budget is that it continues to mollycoddle the Pentagon. Paul Ryan is the Military-Industrial Complex’s best friend. He apparently can’t find one penny to cut from Obama’s bloated levels of military spending. Only a big-government Republican could come up with language like “reinvesting \$100 billion in higher military priorities.”

Then, Hinkle makes it personal:

It’s interesting that when the Republicans controlled both houses of Congress and the White House from 2001-2006, they did nothing to shrink government, or even slow down government growth. On the contrary, back then, Paul Ryan was busy voting for expensive foreign wars, No Child Left Behind, and the huge 2003 Medicare expansion. More recently he’s voted for the TARP bailouts and even ethanol subsidies.

That is to say, regardless of his shows and speeches, Congressman Ryan’s voting history is dispassionate evidence of his true political design.

Since taking office in 1999, Paul Ryan has [voted](#) in favor of:

- HR 2642 — Continuing funding for the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan;
  - 
  - HR 514 — Extending several key PATRIOT Act provisions;
  - 
  - HR 1424 — Passing the so-called TARP law;
- and
- HR 4954 — Expanding the Medicare program in 2003.

Mr. Hinkle and his party have a point: votes such as those (and scores of others not listed in this article) do not evince a sincere desire to reduce the size of government.

Finally, in case there was any doubt as to the position the Libertarians take on all of the expenditures with which the have issues in Congressman Ryan’s budget proposal, the statement ends with this declaration:

We Libertarians propose eliminating federal functions that are not authorized in the Constitution. Furthermore, Libertarians propose ending foreign wars and foreign troop deployments, allowing huge cuts in military spending. Libertarians would cut the federal government down to less than 10% of GDP, and we’d keep cutting once we got there.



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