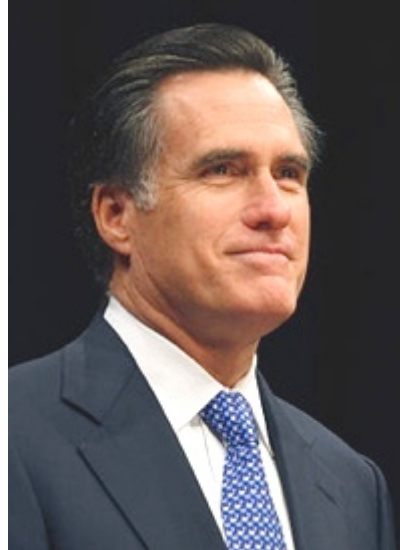




Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on November 7, 2011

Romney Proposes Partial Cuts for PBS, Nat'l Endowment for the Arts

In Washington, D.C. on Nov. 4, Mitt Romney promised attendees at the Defending the American Dream Summit that if elected, he would end funding for several federal programs. Conservative Republicans, however, may not have been comforted by Romney's reasons for denying these programs federal funding. At the event, sponsored by Americans for Prosperity, he stated:



For each program that we have in the government, I'm going to look at them one by one. Im going to ask this question: Is this program so critical, so essential, that we should borrow money from China to pay for it? Now, for example, I like Amtrak. But Im not willing to borrow \$1.6 billion dollars a year from China to pay for it.

Look, I really like the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. But I will not borrow almost \$1 billion dollars a year from China to pay for them. Im gong to make the federal government simpler, smaller, and smarter by eliminating programs, by sending programs back to states, and by making the federal government itself more productive. Ill at the same time provide for the national defense, enforce our laws, preserve our safety net and honor all our promises to our elderly.

Constitutionalists noted that he failed to mention that the U.S. Constitution provides no authority for federal spending in the areas of national information and entertainment. Romney, however, did not propose *ending* federal funding for either the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or the National Endowment for the Arts; instead, he proposed *reductions* in federal spending for the two.

Romney identified other types of federal spending he would eliminate: Did you know we give \$27 million dollars a year guess to which country to China. I will stop sending any money to a country that can take care of itself, and no foreign aid will go to countries that oppose American interests.

Again, he failed to mention that the U.S. Constitution give the federal government absolutely no authority to send foreign aid to *any* country. In fact, one of the earliest positions by Congress during the Barbary Pirates War was, "Millions for defense, but not one penny for tribute." This quote reflected the nation's belief that while it would always be a friend of liberty and peace abroad, it would not support (through either aid or extortion, as was the case at that time) any other countries with the dollars of American taxpayers.

Romney pointed to other areas of federal spending such as for abortion services, commenting, And you



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know well that we spend \$300 million a year on groups like Planned Parenthood that provide abortions or abortion-related services. Its a long time past for that to be over. He also proposed capping Medicaid spending, seemingly implying that some Medicaid spending, if modest and affordable within the federal budget, was permissible.

In some areas, the former Massachusetts Governor proposed ending federal activity. For example, he suggested that the federal government should privatize Amtrak. His rationale, not without merit, is that this rail service operates consistently at a loss.

Overall, Romney focused on the economic practicality of taxpayers supporting foreign aid, public television, abortion services, and a host of other federal activities. He cited the costs of these programs on the federal budget. The unstated assumption was that if the federal government were running a budget surplus and if the economy were stable, then it would be acceptable to give money to Red China or pay for federally-sponsored broadcasting.

Constitutionalists have noted that if those in Congress had first read America's founding document including Article X of the Bill of Rights, which provides that the powers of the federal government are to be severely limited then Congress would never had funded most of what it today is underwriting.



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