



Mitch Daniels, Leon Panetta, Tim Penny Named Co-Chairs of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget July 28, 2015

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The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget is pleased to announce that Mitch Daniels, Leon Panetta, and Tim Penny are the new co-chairs of the nonpartisan organization.

“We are uncommonly lucky to have these three great leaders join together to lead the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget,” said Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee. “Between them, they have written several books; led states, congressional committees, and federal agencies; and headed the Office of Management and Budget—not to mention all being well-known leaders in calling for fiscal responsibility.”

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget has many projects underway to help educate and focus the country on the important fiscal challenges and opportunities it faces, including:

- Sponsoring the [McCrery-Pomeroy SSDI Solutions Initiative](#), a project dedicated to identifying practical policy changes to improve the Social Security Disability Insurance program and other services for people with disabilities. The recommendations will be presented in 12 commissioned papers at a conference in Washington this summer.
- Providing policy solutions for high-profile legislation from the highway bill to the Sustainable Growth Rate to long-term budget issues.
- Fact-checking campaign promises related to budgetary issues to ensure that the campaign conversation is grounded in facts.
- Working with Fix the Debt and The Concord Coalition on the [First Budget](#) project to urge candidates in the 2016 presidential campaign to make fiscal issues a priority, particularly in Iowa and New Hampshire.
- Conducting budget exercises with members of Congress in their home districts, giving community leaders an opportunity to simulate making the hard decisions needed to get our debt under control.
- Using our latest interactive tool, "[The Reformer](#)," to allow users to design their own Social Security plan. Users can select from a wide variety of benefit and revenue changes to make the system sustainably solvent. The tool then shows the effect on the program's finances and benefit and tax levels.
- Educating lawmakers through our "[Better Budget Process Initiative](#)," which gives Congress options on how to reform and improve the budget process in a wide range



of areas, including increasing focus on the long-term fiscal outlook, improving the process for dealing with the debt limit, strengthening statutory budget enforcement, revising the content and structure of the budget resolution, moving to biennial budgeting, and addressing treatment of tax expenditures in the budget process.

The new co-chairs will help direct the future for the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

“The debt our nation has amassed over decades is a result of the misplaced view that it is OK to duck the hard choices inherent in governing. But this is harming our economy and squeezing important budget priorities—particularly those that affect the next generations,” Daniels said.

“Lawmakers and presidents often preach fiscal responsibility only to backslide when hard decisions are needed. We need to change course and it will take courage, leadership, and compromise. We have done it before as a nation, and we can do it again,” Panetta said.

“In Congress, I sometimes felt that I was howling in the wind when it came to fiscal responsibility. At least I knew the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget was howling there with me. I look forward to jointly and loudly pointing out when policies are being pursued that make the debt worse and finding ways to help make them better,” Penny said.

The leadership team has many accomplishments among them. Daniels, the president of Purdue University, served as governor of Indiana (2005-2013), director of the Office of Management and Budget (2001-2003), and senior adviser to President Reagan (1985-1987). In the private sector, he was president of Eli Lilly and Company's North American Pharmaceutical Operations. He is the author of the best-selling book, "Keeping the Republic: Saving America by Trusting Americans."

Panetta has served as secretary of Defense (2011-2013), director of the CIA (2009-2011), chief of staff to President Clinton (1994-1997), director of the Office of Management and Budget (1993-1994), and as a representative for California's 17th District (1977-1993). In Congress, he chaired the Budget Committee. He founded the Panetta Institute for Public Policy in 1998 with his wife, Sylvia, and serves on many boards and commissions, including the Public Policy Institute of California.

Penny served as Minnesota's 1st District representative in the House of Representatives from 1982-1994. He chaired the Democratic Budget Group as well as the Porkbusters Coalition. In 2001, he was appointed to President Bush's bipartisan commission on Social Security. Currently, Penny serves as the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation's president and CEO. He is the co-author of two books, "Common Cents" and "The 15 Biggest Lies in Politics."

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