

# A PLEDGE TO AMERICA



*a new governing agenda built on*

THE PRIORITIES OF OUR NATION,  
THE PRINCIPLES WE STAND FOR



AMERICA'S FOUNDING VALUES

*Republicans in Congress*

*[pledge.gop.gov](http://pledge.gop.gov)*

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America is more than a country.

America is an idea – an idea that free people can govern themselves, that government’s powers are derived from the consent of the governed, that each of us is endowed by their Creator with the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. America is the belief that any man or woman can – given economic, political, and religious liberty – advance themselves, their families, and the common good.

America is an inspiration to those who yearn to be free and have the ability and the dignity to determine their own destiny.

Whenever the agenda of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to institute a new governing agenda and set a different course.

These first principles were proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, enshrined in the Constitution, and have endured through hard sacrifice and commitment by generations of Americans.

In a self-governing society, the only bulwark against the power of the state is the consent of the governed, and regarding the policies of the current government, the governed do not consent.

An unchecked executive, a compliant legislature, and an overreaching judiciary have combined to thwart the will of the people and overturn their values, striking down long-standing laws and institutions and scorning the deepest beliefs of the American people.

An arrogant and out-of-touch government of self-appointed elites makes decisions, issues mandates, and enacts laws without accepting or requesting the input of the many.

Rising joblessness, crushing debt, and a polarizing legislative environment are fraying the bonds among our people and blurring our sense of national purpose.

Like free peoples of the past, our citizens refuse to accommodate a government that believes it can replace the will of the people with its own. The American people are speaking out, demanding that Republicans realign our country's compass with its founding principles and apply those principles to solve our common problems for the common good.

The need for urgent action to repair our economy and reclaim our government for the people cannot be overstated.

With this document, we pledge to dedicate ourselves to the task of reconnecting our highest aspirations to the permanent truths of our founding by keeping faith with the values our nation was founded on, the principles we stand for, and the priorities of our people. This is our Pledge to America.

We pledge to honor the Constitution as constructed by its framers and honor the original intent of those precepts that have been consistently ignored – particularly the Tenth Amendment, which grants that all powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

We pledge to advance policies that promote greater liberty, wider opportunity, a robust defense, and national economic prosperity.

We pledge to honor families, traditional marriage, life, and the private and faith-based organizations that form the core of our American values.

We pledge to make government more transparent in its actions, careful in its stewardship, and honest in its dealings.

We pledge to uphold the purpose and promise of a better America, knowing that to whom much is given, much is expected and that the blessings of our liberty buoy the hopes of mankind.

We make this pledge bearing true faith and allegiance to the people we represent, and we invite fellow citizens and patriots to join us in forming a new governing agenda for America.

Americans need no reminder that the challenges we face are enormous. Our economy has declined and our debt has mushroomed with the loss of millions of jobs. The social fabric that binds us as citizens, families and communities is unraveling. Voices in and out of government whisper that our standing as the world's leader of democracy and economic growth is ending.

The American people do not accept these counsels of timidity, failure, and despair. In town halls and on public squares, in every corner of this country, people have gathered and spoken out – in small groups and larger crowds, through phone calls and in letters, through websites and new technologies.

**Though these petitions come from different walks, their message is uniform: *Washington has not been listening.***

Legislators in Washington have imposed an agenda that doesn't reflect the priorities of the people. What's worse, the most important decisions are made behind closed doors, where a flurry of backroom deals has supplanted the will of the people.

It's time to do away with the old agendas: that much is clear. It's not enough, however, to swap out one set of leaders for another. Structure dictates behavior, so we have drafted this blueprint on a process of listening to the American people and fielding their concerns and ideas for turning things around.

- ❖ Our plan offers a clear and clearly different approach, one in which the people have the most say and the best ideas trump the most entrenched interests.
- ❖ Our plan stands on the principles of smaller, more accountable government; economic freedom; lower taxes; fiscal responsibility; protecting life, American values, and the Constitution; and providing for a robust national defense.
- ❖ Our plan puts forth a new governing agenda that reflects the priorities of the American people – priorities that have been ignored, even mocked by the powers-that-be in Washington – and can be implemented today.
- ❖ These are focused concrete examples of the policies through which we will promote greater liberty, wider opportunity, and national economic recovery - and they can be implemented today.

***A plan to create jobs, end economic uncertainty, and make America more competitive*** must be the first and most urgent domestic priority of our government. So first, we offer a plan to get people working again. We will end the attack on free enterprise by repealing job-killing policies and taking steps to assure current businesses and future entrepreneurs that the government will not stifle their ability to compete in the global marketplace.

By permanently stopping job-killing tax hikes, families will be able to keep more of

their hard-earned money and small businesses will have the stability they need to invest in our economy and help grow our workforce. We will further encourage small businesses to create jobs by allowing them to take a tax deduction equal to 20 percent of their income.

We will rein in the red tape factory in Washington, DC by requiring congressional approval of any new federal regulation that may add to our deficit and make it harder to create jobs. In addition, we will repeal the costly small business mandates contained in the new health care law.

If we've learned anything over the last two years, it's that we cannot spend our way to prosperity. We offer ***a plan to stop out-of-control spending and reduce the size of government.***

With common-sense exceptions for seniors, veterans, and our troops, we will roll back government spending to pre-stimulus, pre-bailout levels, saving us at least \$100 billion in the first year alone and putting us on a path to balance the budget and pay down the debt. We will also establish strict budget caps to limit federal spending from this point forward.

We will launch a sustained effort to stem the relentless growth in government that has occurred over the past decade. By cutting Congress' budget, imposing a net hiring freeze on non-security federal employees, and reviewing every current government program to eliminate wasteful and duplicative programs, we can curb Washington's irresponsible spending habits and reduce the size of government, while still fulfilling our necessary obligations.

We will also prevent Washington from forcing responsible taxpayers to subsidize irresponsible behavior by ending bailouts permanently, canceling the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), and reforming Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Instead of pushing off our long-term fiscal challenges, we will reform the budget process to ensure that Congress begins making the decisions that are necessary to protect our entitlement programs for today's seniors and future generations.

Of course, Americans remember that President Obama argued his support for the government takeover of health care was the single most important thing we could do to address our growing debt crisis. This notion has since been thoroughly discredited: we now know the new health care law will mean more financial pain for seniors, families, and the federal government. We offer ***a plan to repeal and replace the government takeover of health care*** with common sense solutions focused on lowering costs and protecting American jobs. We will enact real medical liability reform; allow Americans to purchase health coverage across state lines; empower small businesses with greater purchasing power; and create new incentives to save for future health needs. We will protect the doctor-patient relationship, and ensure that those with pre-existing conditions gain access to the coverage they need. We will permanently end taxpayer funding of abortion and codify the Hyde Amendment.

We recognize that these solutions are ambitious, and that we are proposing them at a time of intense public distrust in Congress and the legislative system. That's why we are offering ***a plan to reform Congress and restore trust*** so that we can put power back where it belongs: in the hands of the people. We will require that every bill contain a citation of Constitutional authority. We will give all Representatives and citizens at least three days to read the bill before a vote. We will make sure that the floor schedule and operations reflect the priority of revitalizing the economy, and ensure there is an open process that makes it easier – not harder – to eliminate unnecessary spending on any legislation that spends the people's money.

Above all else, the primary obligation of the federal government remains providing for the common defense against all threats foreign and domestic. We offer ***a plan to keep our nation secure at home and abroad*** that will provide the resources, authority, and support our deployed military requires, fully fund missile defense, and enforce sanctions against Iran. We will keep terrorist combatants in Guantanamo Bay not in our local jails and courtrooms. Our borders are a vital part of our security, so we will act decisively to ensure that the federal government fulfills its constitutional duty to protect our citizens and our Nation, working closely with our state and local governments.