

Concord Party

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news

concordparty.org

what is Democracy?

Eric Decker
Chairman

What is Democracy?

We Americans use the word Democracy all the time. We are reverent about it, passionate about it, sometimes even angry about it. But what do we really mean by Democracy? The US State Department describes it as a government of the people, including majority rule but safeguarding basic rights, including the most fundamental right of equality. America blazed a path for the world to follow, imperfect, sometimes meandering, but always forward.

So what ingredients are necessary for Democracy? Education is critical. An uninformed public cannot participate in the formation of a good government. Thomas Jefferson wrote: "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free... it expects what never was and never shall be."

Today, we have unprecedented access to information, but how many of our citizens are using this information to improve our national leadership?

How many are holding government accountable? An ignorant vote is worse than no vote at all.

To know, however, is not enough. We must also act, in order to strengthen our Democracy. We must advocate, argue, and finally agree. We must coax our fellow citizens to join us, even when we disagree with them. Especially when we disagree.

We should welcome challenges to our views, and challenge our leaders to defend their views. We inherit a wonderful tradition of Democracy, which we must not squander.

The Concord Party can be a powerful force in our nation's Democracy, but only if we act. Only if we advocate, so that our fellow citizens know what we care about. Only if we argue, so that we can be confident that our positions have been tested. Only if we agree, so that we can move forward as a united force for change.

Join us.

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update

The Concord Party website receives approximately 12,000 hits per week, but gains new participants only rarely.

New initiatives are underway, including the establishment of this newsletter, to make our website and our Party more interesting to the visiting public. If you have an idea for an article, or a way to reach new members, please share it publicly or privately.

To reach our goal of backing at least one candidate in the upcoming elections of November, 2008, we are going to have to dramatically step up our recruiting efforts.

This is possible. We can make an impact. Each and every Party member is critical to our success.

fiscal responsibility

IrishTD
Voting Member

As should be common knowledge among this group, the federal government continues to outspend the amount they tax us. However, I will not be going into any great depth on that topic today. Instead, I will break down the spending and taxation done by the federal government into slices that provide a different perspective on the numbers.

Both the White House and the House of Representatives have proposed budget blueprints to spend approximately \$2.9 trillion for the 2008 budget year (which begins October 1, 2007). The current population of this nation is near 300 million. Dividing these two numbers out gives a spending estimate of nearly \$9700 for every man, woman, and child in this country. Put another way, the federal government will spend approximately \$330 million per hour which would be about \$1.10 (per hour) for every person. Or, let me put it a third way. This spending comes out to about \$91,700 per second. According to the Census Bureau, the median (50% make more, 50% make less) household income in 2005 (latest available data) was about \$46,500. So with that data, we can conclude that the federal government will spend, in one second, almost as much as two households will make in one year.

In terms of taxation, the IRS took in nearly \$1.67 trillion in 2005 from personal income taxes, payroll taxes, and estate and gift taxes. Again, let me use a population estimate of 300 million. For every man, woman, and child in this country, the IRS took in, excluding business taxes, of just under \$5600. Now, I will grant that about half of the collected payroll taxes were paid for by employers, but since the employer is paying that portion based on YOUR wages, it is effectively coming out of your paycheck.

Given an average household size of 2.6 people, did your household pay up its \$14,500 or so in taxes in 2005? Did you think the federal government spent that money wisely? Keep these things in mind as you consider the candidates for the 2008 election.

The Concord Party has adopted a position on spending (see insert), with a balanced budget amendment at the center. Controlling government spending is a problem that is gaining greater urgency with each passing year, and there is no end in sight.

Join us as we continue to discuss various spending bills and their relative merits and flaws.

position: Government Spending

The Concord party believes that responsible government spending is vital to ensure that current prosperity does not come at the cost of future economic stability. We propose that a balanced budget amendment be enacted that requires that the federal budget be balanced with no deficit spending except in the case of a declaration of war by congress or an economic recession defined as a decline in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for two or more consecutive quarters.

A provision should exist in the Amendment that allows Congress to recover half of any debt reduction to use as emergency spending in future years. This will encourage Congress to pay down the debt, without fearing that these funds might be needed in the future for non-qualifying emergencies. The debt level must be restored to its former amount with five years of the emergency spending. This emergency spending should require a 2/3 majority in both houses.