



2:8 - False Solutions: Balanced Budget Amendment

Beware of false solutions.

There are many people and organizations that sound as if they want to protect the Constitution. Unfortunately, their solutions will ultimately destroy the Constitution and dramatically increase the size and scope of government.

One of these so-called “solutions” is the Balanced Budget Amendment, or BBA. Supporters of a BBA hope to pass it by calling an Article V convention. This not only could wipe out the Constitution and the freedoms it protects, but it will more than likely expand the federal government.

Over the decades, there have been many versions of a BBA. Virtually every proposal has included loopholes that would allow Congress to continue massive federal spending, instead of balancing the budget.

For example, many proposed BBAs allow for deficit spending if 60 or 67 percent of Congress approves. This wouldn't fix the problem since Congress already approves most of its big-spending bills by such margins.

There are some BBA proposals that say it would only apply “in the absence of a national emergency.” However, as of April 2023, 80 emergencies have been declared, with 39 having expired, and 41 currently in effect. How likely will there actually be an absence of a national emergency?

We also have some BBA proposals that mention a war as a legitimate circumstance for not having to balance the budget.

Congressman Thomas Massie of Kentucky said it best when he tweeted:

If you can fully fathom the proclivity of Congress to spend money it doesn't have, then you understand that any Constitutional Balanced Budget Amendment that has an exception for War will only encourage more War.

The John Birch Society

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— Thomas Massie (@RepThomasMassie) [March 8, 2023](#)

There are other serious loopholes you have to consider. For example:

- potentially exempting Social Security,
- and not needing to balance the budget during a recession.

Just considering the loopholes mentioned, a BBA won't balance the budget. Instead, it will legitimize Congress to pass unbalanced budgets.

Our Founders gave us a Constitution that prohibits the vast majority of current spending — Congress just needs to enforce it. A BBA and its many loopholes will only increase the size of government by making it constitutional to do the very opposite of what the amendment is intended to do.

Enforcing the Constitution — and demanding that our elected officials obey it — is the solution to stopping massive overspending.

Make no mistake. A BBA or a so-called fiscal restraints amendment is not a solution. It's a massive waste of time that risks further worsening the current problem.

Learn more about Article V and the amendment process by visiting [JBS.org](#).