



April 2, 2015

## **‘FIRST BUDGET’ INITIATIVE BRINGS TO NEW HAMPSHIRE A FOCUS ON THE DEBT**

CONCORD, N.H. -- First Budget brought its message for the 2016 presidential election to New Hampshire today as part of its campaign to highlight the growing federal debt.

First Budget, a joint effort of The Concord Coalition and the Campaign to Fix the Debt, is active in New Hampshire and Iowa, encouraging candidates to talk about our unsustainable fiscal path and urging citizens to ask candidates what their administration’s first budget would look like.

At the University of New Hampshire School of Law today, former Sens. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) and Evan Bayh (D-Ind.) explained why presidential candidates need to focus on developing credible budget plans before taking office.

“The national debt remains on an unsustainable path even though annual deficits have come down,” said Gregg, co-chair of Fix the Debt and a member of Concord’s Board of Directors. “It is critically important that the upcoming presidential campaign focus on the debt in a serious manner so that our next president comes into office ready to take action. New Hampshire residents have always taken seriously their responsibility as the first primary state, and they should press candidates to find out what they will do in their first budget as president to address the debt.”

Bayh, also a member Concord’s board and a member of Fix the Debt’s Congressional Fiscal Leadership Council, noted how debt is squeezing out spending on investments.

“Our ability to fund education, health care, defense and all the other things we care about will really be undermined by rising deficits in the coming years. More and more of our tax dollars will go to simply paying interest on the federal debt, which is already quite high by historical standards. No generation of Americans has passed on this level of debt to future generations, and we shouldn’t be the first,” he said.

Today’s event at the Warren B. Rudman Center for Justice, Leadership and Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire School of Law was presented by the center, First Budget and the Business and Industry Association of New Hampshire.

It followed a First Budget [event](#) in Iowa on Tuesday where former Iowa Congressmen Leonard Boswell, a Democrat, and Tom Tauke, a Republican, led students and community leaders in a budget exercise that involved making difficult choices to put the federal deficit on a sustainable downward path.

More [events](#) are scheduled in both states as First Budget builds a broad-based coalition of volunteers, business leaders, students and others to deliver an emphatic message of fiscal and generational responsibility to presidential candidates, the [media](#) and voters.

First Budget will encourage all potential candidates to acknowledge that the long-term debt is a serious **PROBLEM**. We will urge them to make dealing with the debt a top **PRIORITY** for their campaigns. We will ask them for a **PLAN** for what they would do to address the debt, not what they wouldn't. We will ask that they offer ways to **PAY** for their policy initiatives. Finally, we will urge them to use their platforms to engage and educate the **PUBLIC**, creating an environment where more Americans are aware of the tough choices ahead and are open to opportunities for bipartisan solutions.

A video of the program is expected to be made available on the [University of New Hampshire School of Law's website](#).

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First Budget is a joint nonpartisan initiative of [The Concord Coalition](#) and the [Campaign to Fix the Debt](#) to raise awareness of the dangers posed by the nation's unsustainable budget policies and make solving this problem a high priority for the 2016 presidential candidates, starting with the early nominating contests in Iowa and New Hampshire. Visit [firstbudget.org](http://firstbudget.org) to learn more and follow us on twitter: [@concorde](#) and [@fixthedebt](#).