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Biography



News

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## Principles of Government

Last week was tax day, and Americans paid more in taxes than they will spend on food, clothing and shelter combined. In fact, it took you working from January 1 until April 9 just to earn enough money to pay for your tax obligation at the federal, state, and local levels. And if the government actually decided to require you to pay for all government spending, including the \$1.3 trillion federal budget deficit, you would have had to work an additional 38 days until May 17<sup>th</sup> just to pay your taxes. The 137 days of hard work you have to put in just to pay for



government spending is what economist Milton Friedman said is “a system that increasingly taxes work and subsidizes nonwork.”

I am a fiscal conservative. I believe you put in the hard work and therefore the money you earn is yours; not the governments. The government will never spend someone else’s

money as carefully as you spend your own and to take it away from you to eventually mismanage and give to another is wrong.

I recently read a story that focuses the truth of free markets and fiscal conservatism.

*“An economics professor was told by his students that socialism worked and that wealth distribution would mean that no one would be poor and no one would be rich.*

*This professor decided on an experiment where all grades would be averaged and everyone would receive the same grade so no one would fail and no one would receive an A. For the first test, the grades were averaged and everyone got a B. The students who studied hard were upset and the students who studied little were thrilled. For the second test, the students who studied little for the first test studied even less, and the ones who studied hard the first time around decided they wanted a free ride too. The second test average was a D.*

*When the third test rolled around, the average was an F. All the students failed and the professor told them that socialism would also ultimately fail because when the reward is great, the effort to succeed is great; but when government takes all the reward away, no one will try or want to succeed.”*

Margaret Thatcher once put it that “the problem with socialism is that eventually you run out of other people’s money.” Because leaders in government are spending other people’s money, they lack budget discipline resulting in the government becoming overextended and unable to meet all its commitments.

In my opinion, a responsible government operates with the core principle that the money you work hard to earn is yours. This means policymakers must make sure government lives within its means. Economic growth is a function of the private sector and not of government. Therefore, instead of spending money we borrow from China or call for new taxes to fund new wealth redistribution dreams, government needs to become more efficient in how we spend your money.

It is critical we listen to the warning of Thomas Jefferson when he said that “a government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything

you have.” I hope you will join me in remembering government works for you; you don’t work for government. Thank you for reading and let me know what you think.

### **Contact Me**

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions, and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: [jcrowell@senate.mo.gov](mailto:jcrowell@senate.mo.gov) or visit me on the web at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

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