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Dear Connection Reader:

Congress continues to grapple with budget decisions that will affect everyone in our nation – especially those living at the economic margins. The bipartisan congressional “Super Committee” is facing a series of critical budget deadlines.* The first deadline is next week (November 23), when it is supposed to approve a plan to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion.

We are calling on all “[Super Citizens](#)” (you!) to convince them to do the right thing – i.e., to protect people who are struggling and to approve a fair, progressive tax system. Please read the article below to learn more.

On another note, we want to make sure that the *InterConnection* is a useful tool for you as you seek justice in our world. Please take a few moments to [respond to this SURVEY](#) about your preferences. Your input will help us decide how to focus future issues!

During this holiday season, we hope you will also consider making a special contribution to our work for economic justice. **You can [click here](#) to make a donation. We are deeply grateful for your continuing support!**

All of us at NETWORK join in sending you our best wishes for a joyous Thanksgiving holiday and blessed Advent. Thank you for all that you do.

Stephanie Niedringhaus, NETWORK Communications Coordinator

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Super Committee Update

By Marge Clark, BVM, NETWORK Lobbyist and Claire Wheeler, Lobby Associate

Despite the October 14th deadline, members of Congress have continued to submit detailed proposals to the Super Committee with recommendations for reducing the deficit. As illustrated in the chart below, the proposals of both the Republican and the Democratic parties are sadly far from an equitable solution. The Democratic members’ proposal is to the right of the economic experts’ suggestions, who were asked to put forth their own detailed solutions in the past year. It is crucial that we have a much larger plan that allows us to meet our current needs and continue working on lowering the debt. This would require considerably

higher revenue.

Late October Proposals to the Super Committee for Deficit Reduction

Issue	Democratic Members' Proposal	Republican Members' Proposal	Significance
Total Deficit Reduction	\$4 trillion	\$3 trillion	The Republican plan achieves less deficit reduction and makes much deeper cuts in programs that benefit low- and moderate-income families/individuals than does the Democratic offer.
Medicare & Medicaid Cuts	\$475 billion	\$685 billion	The Republican cuts to Medicare & Medicaid are more than \$200 billion greater than the average between the Democrats' and the bipartisan commissions' numbers.
Revenue	\$434 billion	-\$826 billion	According to the common baseline used in standard budget accounting, the Republican Party's proposal provides for more than \$800 billion in tax cuts over 10 years. These new tax cuts would be the largest for the people with the highest incomes!
Spending Cuts	\$2.16 trillion	\$2.52 trillion	Both parties are recommending cuts that are hundreds of billions higher than those proposed by bipartisan commissions. Both parties need to focus more on raising revenue than making additional cuts.
Debt Service Savings	\$489 billion	\$320 billion	This money would be saved as a result of paying off more debt in the next ten years, as opposed to further delaying budget stabilization. We would essentially be minimizing the amount of increasing interest.

**This chart compares the savings in deficit-reduction proposals, relative to the Fiscal Commission's Plausible Baseline. The baseline assumes that Bush tax cuts have expired in due course (2012). Figures provided by the*

Center on Budget Policies and Priorities.

Since the chart above was created, Sen. Toomey (R-PA) and his Republican colleagues on the Super Committee presented a new plan to reduce deficits. This plan is far from a “significant concession,” as some media outlets have characterized it. Close examination of the proposal by multiple think tanks raise serious concerns that it is highly inequitable and in some cases could *increase* our nation’s deficit.

In this plan, Sen. Toomey and his colleagues devote most of the savings that would result from eliminating tax credits for low- and middle-income families and from closing loopholes to **reducing tax rates** (from 35% to 28%) for high-income taxpayers. They prefer this to applying that money toward deficit reduction. Additionally, taxpayers with incomes below \$200,000 would see their tax bills rise, on average. These additional taxes on lower- and middle-income Americans would be **in addition** to how they’re affected by the nearly \$900 billion in spending cuts to the social safety net over ten years under the Republican plan.

How we choose to address our deficit problems now can set the stage for future deficit reduction in a positive or negative way. Based on what is being said today by members of the Super Committee, as well as other members of Congress, increased revenue and a big plan are unlikely to happen. This makes the 2012 elections extremely critical. Keep an eye on our website for Super Citizen alerts to see how YOU can play a role in putting our nation on the right path to a more just use of national resources.

(*This *Washington Post* [link](#) will provide updates about the Super Committee’s calendar.)

Have you responded to our InterConnection survey? If not, please [click here](#). It will only take a few minutes.

And please remember to [click here](#) to support our work for justice and peace. Thank you!

NETWORK's ministry of justice, including this Legislative Update, is funded through the generosity of our members. To **donate to NETWORK or become a NETWORK member**: www.donationpay.org/network/

Thank you for your activism, your prayers, your financial support and your solidarity with our mission of economic and social transformation.

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