



## NASE Survey May 2011 Results

### America's Growing Deficit

Its budget season in Washington D.C. which means Members of Congress and the Administration are hashing out funding for federal government agencies and programs as well as discussing how to address the growing U.S. deficit.

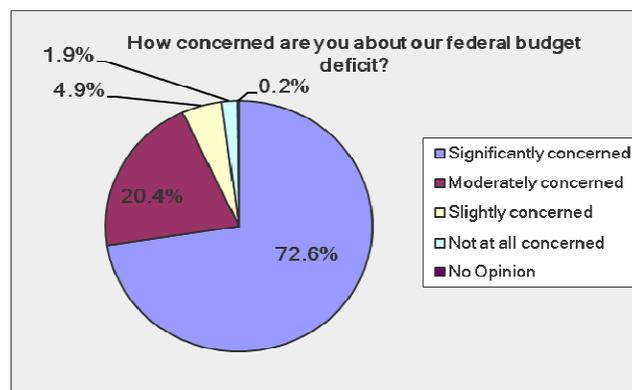
The federal budget deficit is when the government spends more than it receives in revenue. According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in FY 2011 the deficit is projected to be \$1.26 trillion. The largest expenditures in the federal budget are mandatory spending programs such as Social Security, Medicare and military retirement programs. Of discretionary budget items, funding for the defense department is the most significant.

The National Association for the Self-Employed (NASE) would like to hear your opinion on the direction our lawmakers should take with efforts to balance our government budget and deal with the federal deficit.

Please take this short survey and share with us your thoughts. All responses are confidential and anonymous.

#### 1) How concerned are you about our federal budget deficit?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Significantly concerned	72.6%
Moderately concerned	20.4%
Slightly concerned	4.9%
Not at all concerned	1.9%
No Opinion	0.2%

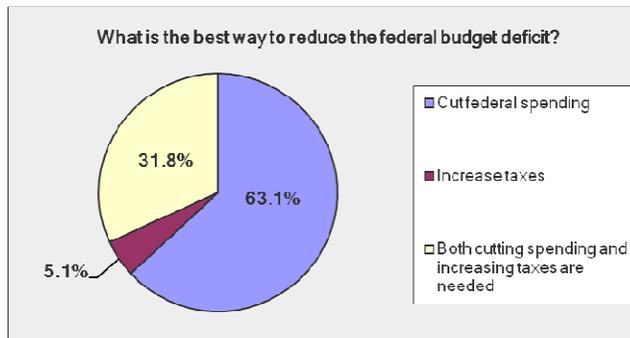


**2) Which of these statements best describes how you feel about the federal budget deficit?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
The federal budget deficit is a significant problem that needs to be addressed immediately.	74.2%
The federal budget deficit is a significant problem that needs to be addressed after our economy fully recovers.	17.2%
The federal budget deficit is a growing problem but we have time to address it.	6.1%
Operating with a budget deficit is the norm of industrialized countries and is not a significant problem.	2.5%

**3) In your opinion, what is the best way to reduce the federal budget deficit?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Cut federal spending	63.1%
Increase taxes	5.1%
Both cutting spending and increasing taxes are needed	31.8%



**4) Of the major cost drivers to our federal budget highlighted below, which do you believe lawmakers should tackle first to help control costs and curb the deficit?**

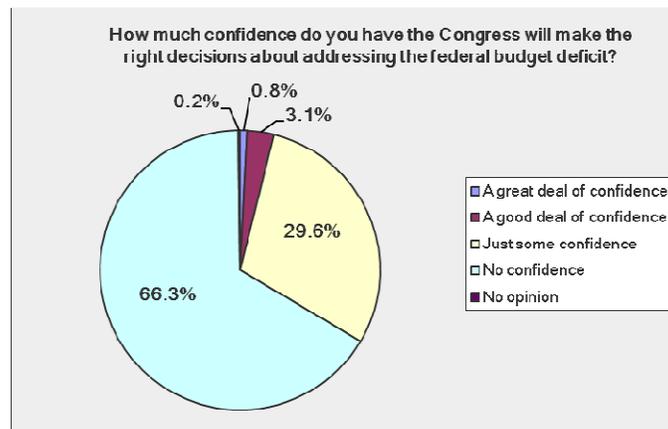
Answer Options	Response Percent
Social Security	4.4%
Medicare	5.6%
Income support programs (Medicaid, Food Stamps, Unemployment Compensation, Child Tax Credits, Student Loans, etc.)	25.6%
Retirement and disability programs for military and civil servants	5.4%
Military spending/ Dept. of Defense budget	26.4%
Tax cuts, tax subsidies to specific industries, and job creation initiatives	32.7%

5) Do you favor or oppose the following recommendations to curb costs and address the deficit?

Answer Options	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion
-- Phase out tax cuts for those making over \$250,000	55.7%	38.0%	6.3%
-- Cut defense spending	57.5%	37.9%	4.5%
-- Undergo corporate tax reform and lower corporate tax rates	55.4%	36.1%	8.5%
-- Eliminate all tax deductions and subsidies	27.9%	61.1%	11.0%
-- Minimize Social Security benefits for upper income recipients	64.9%	26.4%	8.7%
-- Increase the qualifying age for Social Security benefits	42.3%	49.3%	8.5%
-- Impose a national sales tax	19.9%	69.4%	10.7%
-- Increase the federal gas tax	19.3%	76.6%	4.1%
-- Increase the payroll tax cap on wages; at present you only pay Social Security taxes on wages up to \$106,800	60.1%	30.8%	9.1%
-- Change Medicare to require seniors to purchase private coverage and receive a subsidy from the government to help pay for premium costs	28.7%	59.6%	11.7%
-- Increase Medicare patients' co-payments for doctor visits and other medical services	36.2%	52.2%	11.6%
-- Repeal and defund health reform law	59.0%	34.6%	6.4%
-- Cut all discretionary spending in areas such as the arts, education, and foreign aid	56.0%	37.2%	6.8%

**6) How much confidence do you have that Congress will make the right decisions about addressing the federal budget deficit?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
A great deal of confidence	0.8%
A good deal of confidence	3.1%
Just some confidence	29.6%
No confidence	66.3%
No opinion	0.2%



**7) How much confidence do you have that the Obama Administration will make the right decisions about addressing the federal budget deficit?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
A great deal of confidence	5.5%
A good deal of confidence	12.7%
Just some confidence	21.9%
No confidence	59.7%
No opinion	0.2%

**8) How willing are you to make sacrifices such as an increase in taxes you pay or a cut in government benefits you receive, if it would mean that in the next five years our federal budget deficit would be addressed and our nation's economy would improve?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Very willing	23.8%
Somewhat willing	46.1%
Not at all willing	26.2%
No opinion	3.9%

**Please share with us additional comments you have on America's growing deficit.**

**Subset of responses:**

We can't run our businesses or our households the way the government runs it's "house", and the vote last year was a dramatic call to get that house in order. Small business owners, housewives, people who live on a budget, and the average person on the street can all see the waste; why can't our policymakers?

We have a spending problem, not an income problem. We can only solve it by cutting spending.

This problem needs to be addressed NOW! It is a very complex issue and will take considerable time to arrive at viable solutions. I think that all areas of spending/revenue should be looked at for possible adjustments.

If we cut even 10% of the defense budget, we could pay for many of our other programs! Also, if we overhaul the WAY that health care is delivered, rather than how we pay for it, we could make it much, much cheaper.

The government needs to give up a significant amount of control they desire to have and let private enterprise have more freedom to do business without so many regulations. Small businesses would grow and hire more workers if big government would get out of the way.

I have paid into Social Security since 1962. It wasn't much then and I don't collect much now, but it's not an "entitlement" - it's MY MONEY.

Tax laws should be simplified by eliminating the provisions that allow special groups to receive tax breaks, which is the best way to increase revenues.

Members of both parties are primarily concerned about protecting their own careers and the interests of their major corporate contributors. Their second allegiance is to their respective party and doing whatever is necessary to subvert the opposing party. They are minimally concerned about doing what is best for the country or the average American. Small businesses need help, but all the breaks are designed to help the major corporations avoid paying taxes and qualify for exclusions to regulations.

### **Methodology**

Posted on the NASE Web site and sent to NASE members via e-mail, the survey was available to take from May 3<sup>rd</sup> through May 11<sup>th</sup> . Over 500 self-employed and micro-business owners opted-in to the online survey and respondents were prohibited from taking it more than once.

### **About the NASE**

The National Association for the Self-Employed (NASE) is the nation's leading resource for the self-employed and micro-businesses, bringing a broad range of benefits to help entrepreneurs succeed and to drive the continued growth of this vital segment of the American economy. The NASE is a 501(c) (6) non-profit organization and provides big-business advantages to hundreds of thousands of micro-businesses across the United States. For more information, visit the association's web site at [www.NASE.org](http://www.NASE.org).