

Suppose your employer paid you \$2000 every month and every month, you spent \$2800. Your excesses have gone on so long that you have accumulated over \$140,000 in credit card debt.

Would you be in a fiscal crisis?

The United States is in a far worse fiscal situation than this and yet many in Washington appear willing to ignore this crisis. Supporting the status quo means continuing to borrow nearly 40 cents of every dollar we spend and refusing to make meaningful changes in our spending patterns.

Is that good sense?

### **Budget Update**

Two weeks ago, the House passed a government funding resolution that reduced spending by \$100 billion from what the President requested for this year. But the Senate has failed to even allow a vote on this measure. So this week began with the passage of short term resolution to fund the government. Approved by the Senate and signed by the President, this temporary measure - funding government until the 18th of March - cut \$4 billion from last year's funding levels.

Next week, we will press forward with an adult discussion on budget priorities in the House. It's time to talk not only about reducing discretionary spending in 2011 but also about restructuring mandatory spending programs in the 2012 budget. That means it's time to take constructive steps to reform entitlement spending programs such as Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. As we have this discussion, I want to know your thoughts: I've set up a [poll](#) on my website, so you can easily signal what principles would guide your vote if you were in Congress.

### **DOMA**

As you may have heard, President Obama has instructed the Justice Department not to defend the *Defense of Marriage Act* (DOMA). This bipartisan 1996 legislation, signed into law by President Clinton, defines marriage as between one man and one woman for purposes of federal law and provides that no state shall be forced to recognize same sex relationships that are recognized under the law of another state.

The executive branch is charged with enforcing the laws of the United States. It is unacceptable for the President to decide on his own that a law passed by majorities of the House and Senate and signed by a prior President is unconstitutional. That is the role of the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Speaker of the House and members of the House Judiciary Committee have looked into

the appropriate response to this announcement from the White House. Today, Speaker Boehner announced that he convened the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group to consider instructing the House's Office of the General Counsel to defend DOMA in court. I support this action to defend the *Defense of Marriage Act*.

As always, I look forward to [hearing from you](#) about these or any other legislative matters.