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BETTER BUDGET PROCESS SUMMIT

Rebuilding Confidence in Congress: Breaking Through on Budget Reform

Monday, February 26, 2018

With Congressional approval stuck at just above single digits, reforming the way we budget and set national priorities in an effective and timely way can serve as a critically important step in regaining public trust in the Congress and American democracy.

The first annual *Better Budget Process Summit* brings together Members of Congress, Congressional staff, policy experts, members of the media, and others who share a common concern about our deteriorated state of affairs and the need to work together to restore a functioning budget process.

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Agenda

Opening Remarks

Maya MacGuineas, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget ([@MayaMacGuineas](#))

Recommendations from the Building a Better Budget Process Project

Robert Fersh, Convergence Center for Policy Resolution (Introductory remarks) ([@ConvergenceCtr](#))

Susan Willie, Convergence Center for Policy Resolution (Moderator) ([@ConvergenceCtr](#))

Neil Bradley, U.S. Chamber of Commerce ([@NeilBradleyDC](#))

Emily Holubowich, Coalition for Health Funding ([@healthfunding](#))

Matt Owens, Association of American Universities ([@mmowens](#))

Comprehensive Reform: What May it Look Like and How Can it Happen?

Peter Cohn, Congressional Quarterly (Moderator)

Stuart Butler, Brookings Institution ([@Stuartmbutler](#))

Frances Lee, University of Maryland

Steve Redburn, George Washington University ([@sredburn1](#))

Senate Perspectives on Budget Reform

Senator David Perdue (R-GA), Senate Budget Committee ([@sendavidperdue](#))

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Senate Budget Committee ([@SenWhitehouse](#))

Audience Q&A

Please use the question cards on your tables to write down any questions you have for the participants. You can drop this card off at the registration table before the event starts or raise your hand when prompted by the moderator and we will collect them.



Participant Biographies



Maya MacGuineas, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget

Maya MacGuineas is the President of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget as well as the head of the Campaign to Fix the Debt. Her areas of expertise include budget, tax, and economic policy. MacGuineas testifies regularly before Congress and has published broadly. Once dubbed “an anti-deficit warrior” by The Wall Street Journal, MacGuineas comments often on broadcast news and is widely cited by the national press. In the spring of 2009 MacGuineas did a stint on The Washington Post editorial board, covering economic and fiscal policy. MacGuineas has worked at the Brookings Institution and on Wall Street. As a political independent, she has advised numerous candidates for office from both parties, and works regularly with members of Congress on health, economic, tax, and budget policy.



Robert Fersh, Convergence Center for Policy Resolution

Rob Fersh is the President and Founder of Convergence Center for Policy Resolution, a non-profit organization founded in 2009 to promote consensus solutions to issues of domestic and international importance. Immediately prior, Rob served as the United States country director for Search for Common Ground, an international conflict resolution organization. While at SFCG, he directed national policy consensus projects on health care coverage for the uninsured and U.S.-Muslim relations. Rob also served as president of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), a leading NGO working to alleviate hunger in the United States, and prior to that, he served on the staffs of three Congressional committees, working for U.S. Representative Leon Panetta and for Senators Patrick Leahy and Edmund Muskie.



Susan Willie, Convergence Center for Policy Resolution

Susan Willie, Director of the Convergence Building a Better Budget Process, has spent more than 20 years working on budgets at the federal, state, and local level. Prior to coming to Convergence, she was a principal analyst at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) for more than 13 years. Her work at CBO covered a diverse portfolio that included, among other things, analyzing the budgetary effects of legislation affecting many of the federal financial regulatory agencies and analyzing federal legislation for its impacts on state, local, and tribal governments. Susan also served as the director of the Government Performance Project, an initiative of the Pew Charitable Trusts, which evaluated the quality of management performance in state governments across the country.



Neil Bradley, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Neil Bradley, executive vice president and chief policy officer at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, has spent two decades working directly with congressional committee chairpersons and other high-ranking policymakers to achieve solutions. At the Chamber, Bradley is responsible for aligning the organization’s overall policy priorities and advocacy efforts. Before joining the Chamber, Bradley was president of Chartwell Policy Solutions, LLC, and served as chief strategy officer for the nonprofit Conservative Reform Network (CRN). Bradley spent nearly 20 years working in the House of Representatives, including 11 years working for the House Republican leadership.

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Emily J. Holubowich, Coalition for Health Funding

Emily J. Holubowich, Senior Vice President at CRD Associates, has more than fifteen years of experience in health and fiscal policy, government relations, strategic communications, and coalition management. Emily represents clients in public health and health research and serves as the Executive Director of the Coalition for Health Funding—an alliance of 100 national health organizations representing patients, health care providers, public health professionals, and scientists. Emily holds a Master of Public Policy from The Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and English from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Matt Owens, Association of American Universities



Matt Owens has served at the Association of American Universities (AAU) since 2002. As Vice President for Federal Relations and Administration, he oversees the AAU's federal relations activities and the association's office operations and finances. He staffs the AAU Board of Directors, the Audit and Finance Committee, and the Membership Committee. He has primary responsibility for overall federal budget and appropriations policy and advocacy. Mr. Owens previously worked at Stanford University, where he worked on federal research policy and funding issues, as well as university land use policies and local governmental relations. He also worked for the AAU from 1994-1997.



Peter Cohn, CQ

Peter Cohn is budget and tax policy editor at CQ Roll Call, on his second tour with CQ upon returning in September 2017. Peter covered transportation and budget policy as a reporter for CQ in the early 2000s, before moving to National Journal to cover the budget, appropriations, and tax policy through 2010. Prior to returning to journalism in late 2017, Peter spent several years analyzing fiscal and regulatory policy for an investment research and advisory firm, as well as a stint in public affairs consulting for corporate and non-profit clients.



Dr. Steve Redburn, George Washington University

Dr. Steve Redburn worked for 20 years in the Office of Management and Budget. He directed studies of long-term options to stabilize the federal debt and ideas for process reform for a committee of the National Academy of Sciences and National Academy of Public Administration in 2008–2010 and as project director for the Peterson-Pew Commission on Budget Reform in 2010 and 2011. Redburn was advisor to the budget director of Kosovo in 2007. He is a Professorial Lecturer in the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, George Washington University, where he has taught a graduate course on the federal government's budget process and institutions since 2005.



Stuart Butler, The Brookings Institution

Stuart Butler is a Senior Fellow in Economic Studies at The Brookings Institution. Prior to joining Brookings, Butler spent 35 years at The Heritage Foundation, as Director of the Center for Policy Innovation and earlier as Vice-President for Domestic and Economic Policy Studies. He is also a Visiting Fellow at the Convergence Center for Policy Resolution. He is a member of the editorial board of Health Affairs and the board of Mary's Center, a group of Washington DC-area community health centers. Butler earned a MA in economics and history and a Ph.D. in American economic history from St. Andrews University.



Frances E. Lee, University of Maryland

Frances E. Lee is professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland. Her most recent book is *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Her other books include *Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles, and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate* and *Sizing Up The Senate: The Unequal Consequences of Equal Representation*. She is co-editor of *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.



U.S. Senator David Perdue (R-GA)

David Perdue is the original outsider and the only Fortune 500 CEO in Congress. He has over 40 years of business experience leading the Reebok athletic brand and Dollar General stores, where he created thousands of quality jobs and helped working families make it from payday to payday. Prior to his decisive election to the U.S. Senate in 2014, David had never held public office and was inspired to help change the direction of our country. In 2016, David was an early supporter of President Donald J. Trump, Chairman of Trump's Georgia Campaign, and continues to be one of the President's closest allies in the U.S. Senate. David is a champion for term-limits for politicians, free-market economic principles, strengthening our military, and increasing American competitiveness. His role on the powerful Armed Services, Banking, Budget, and Agriculture Committees puts him at the intersection of dealing with our national debt and global security crisis.

U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)



Senator Sheldon Whitehouse has been a member of the Senate Budget Committee since 2007 and has worked with both Democrats and Republicans on the committee to improve the Congressional budget process. In addition to serving on the Budget Committee, Sheldon serves on the Finance Committee; the Judiciary Committee, and the Environment and Public Works Committee. A graduate of Yale University and the University of Virginia School of Law, Sheldon served in multiple senior roles in the administration of Governor Bruce Sundlun before his appointment by President Clinton as Rhode Island's United States Attorney in 1994. He and his wife Sandra, a marine biologist and environmental advocate, live in Newport. They have two children.

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