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**It's Time for Collaboration and Real Solutions
April 26, 2010**

The first meeting of the President's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform on Tuesday should mark a new period in the effort to put the United States on a sustainable fiscal course. Now is the time to develop specific budget strategies to deal with the mounting deficits and debt.

"There is no question that when it comes to the U.S. budget, we have to change course," stated Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget President Maya MacGuineas. "We must now start getting specific about how to address the problem. Sound bites and finger pointing won't do anything to bring the debt down."

As the White House commission begins its work, CRFB hopes that all sensible options will be on the table and that commissioners will work together in a bipartisan manner. The commission has an opportunity to set the standard for policymakers and the public to follow in addressing the fiscal imbalances in a collaborative and constructive manner.

"The solutions are there, it is a matter of political will to achieve them," said MacGuineas. "We hope that the commission can set the right tone for the national dialogue on this issue by objectively examining possible solutions and engaging in a way that restores faith in the public that Washington can get the job done."

The Peterson-Pew Commission on Budget Reform offers a model for the presidential panel; bringing together a bipartisan group of budget experts that deliberated and produced guidance in the report, *Red Ink Rising*. Its principal recommendation was for the U.S. to adopt a goal of stabilizing the debt at 60 percent of GDP by 2018.

"There are those who would prefer to see the commission fail than deal realistically with the options needed to break our national dependency on borrowing," added MacGuineas. "They focus on telling the commission what it shouldn't consider, instead of offering thoughtful ideas to solve the problem. If the commission does fail, we all lose."