



## **Budgets and Taxes Toolkit: Talking Points**

*The following are talking points to use as a reminder during media interviews or when writing. Specific policy proposals can be introduced after using these talking points.*

Instead of postponing our response to fiscal problems, we should use our resources today to prevent them from becoming worse in the future. When we postpone dealing with these problems, they get bigger and cost more to fix later on. But there are many steps we can take right now to prevent the fiscal problems that we know will affect the future well-being of our [community/state/nation]. (Value: Prevention)

New reports show problems in our nation's budget and tax systems. Put simply, projections now show that current patterns in U.S. spending and revenue can't be continued in the long run. Decisions must be made about the goals we want our country to meet and how we raise the money to meet them. According to these reports, there are a number of choices that must be made if the country is to meet this fiscal challenge. Solutions now under consideration include changing budget priorities, changing the tax system or some combination of both. (Issue Area: Budgets and Taxes combined)

Making budgets is how our country, states, and communities plan for the public goods that we all use and need both now and in the future. It's a system of forward exchange. These public goods are things we all agree on, like schools and colleges, health and safety agencies, highways, and others. In the future, people will have access to these goods, just as we have inherited the public goods that were planned for with budgets in the past. (Simplifying Model: Forward Exchange)

Good federal, state and local budgets are plans that put everyone in the forward exchange. A good tax structure allows our country, states, and communities to pay for the necessary public goods and services that we've planned for in our budgets. Sometimes we're tempted to put off spending for public goods, but we run the risk of leaving us in a position in the future when costs will be higher and meeting the increased need will be unaffordable. (Simplifying Model: Forward Exchange; Value: Prevention)