

**Statement by the Honorable Andy Biggs  
U.S. Representative, Arizona's 5<sup>th</sup> District**

**before the**

**United States House Budget Committee**

**March 6, 2019**

Thank you, Chairman Yarmouth and Ranking Member Womack, for allowing me to testify before the House Budget Committee.

A few weeks ago, our national debt surpassed \$22 trillion. That's roughly \$68,000 owed per person in the United States.

Since 2017, the national debt grew by almost \$2 trillion; yet, only a few in Congress recognize this issue for what it is – a threat to our national security.

Democrats and Republicans are both at fault for the current fiscal state of our country. Both parties have failed to restore regular order in the appropriations process and have become accustomed to passing irresponsible continuing resolutions and omnibus spending bills. And both parties have failed to reform Social Security and Medicare to ensure these programs remain sustainable. Social Security and Medicare make up the majority of our federal budget.

Many of my colleagues and I have promised to cut spending and enact substantial budget reforms but have been unable to keep our commitments because of the current warped process that the Legislative Branch currently operates. As long as we have this distorted and irregular budget process, we will persist on our reckless course.

In fact, the inefficiencies in Congress have caused the United States' credit rating from Standard and Poor's to fall from AAA to AA+, and without a targeted effort to balance our budget our credit rating will surely continue to fall.

President Trump's National Security Strategy highlights the need to reduce the national debt through fiscal responsibility, and President Trump is not alone in recognizing the national debt as a threat to national security.

A bipartisan group of national security leaders like former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Mullen, former Secretaries of Defense James Mattis and Leon Panetta, Director of

National Intelligence Dan Coats, and others have warned that continued increase in our national debt will eventually hinder our ability to sustain our national security.

To address this issue, I introduced a resolution recognizing the national debt as a threat to America's national security. And I am honored that it is supported by many of our colleagues who serve on this Committee. This resolution calls on Congress to restore regular order to the appropriations process and address our nation's fiscal crisis.

It will take more than campaign promises, soundbites, and tweets to bring our federal budget back to normalcy. We have an overspending problem in our federal government and until both political parties realize the urgent need to cut our spending and balance our budget, our nation's finances will continue to spiral out of control. Unfortunately, we are currently taking few measures to save ourselves from the fall and ruinous fate once we go over the edge.

Chairman Yarmouth, Ranking Member Womack, Members of the Committee: I ask that you join me in heeding the warnings of our national security leaders and act. Let's do it not for us, but for future generations, so that they may live out the American Dream free from fiscal catastrophes.