



April 13, 2016

FACT SHEET

Republicans, Poverty, and the Budget: Rhetoric vs. Reality

For several years now, House Republican leaders have professed an interest in overhauling the nation's anti-poverty safety net. They insist their interest is not budget-driven; instead, they say they just want to make life better for America's poor, based on evidence about what really works. However, actions speak louder than words, and the Republican budget for 2017 tells a very different story. It slashes the social safety net, cuts down ladders of opportunity, and will mean significantly increased hardship for millions of struggling Americans – all while refusing to close a single special-interest tax break to reduce the deficit.

REPUBLICAN RHETORIC ON OVERHAULING POVERTY PROGRAMS

"This initiative is not about numbers and budgets...Nobody is talking about slashing programs...That is not what we are interested in." (Chairman Tom Price, M.D., House Budget Committee hearing, October 28, 2015)

"This is not a budget-cutting exercise. Take the same amount of money. It should be a life-saving exercise." (Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, Kemp Forum on Expanding Opportunity, January 9, 2016)

REPUBLICAN 2017 BUDGET REALITY

The House Committee on the Budget reported a budget resolution for 2017 calling for trillions of dollars in cuts to programs serving vulnerable populations. **Major cuts affecting low-income individuals include:**

- \$2 trillion from **Medicaid** – up to \$1 trillion from cutting the base program plus another \$1 trillion from repealing the Affordable Care Act Medicaid expansion;
- \$887 billion from already-low non-defense discretionary funding levels, putting a broad array of programs serving low-income populations such as **housing assistance, WIC, job training**, and others at risk of deep funding cuts;
- \$185 billion from **federal college aid** for low-income students;
- \$157 billion from the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**; and
- \$0.6 trillion from other income security programs, a category where most spending is for safety-net programs such as **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, child nutrition, Supplemental Security Income for the aged and disabled, Unemployment Insurance, refundable tax credits for low-income workers, and child care.**