

In my three short years traveling back and forth from Montross to Washington, D.C., in my 2005 tan Toyota Corolla, I have learned that change is a tough goal inside the Beltway. Keeping the status quo or kicking the can down the road is the easy way out but is unacceptable. With almost 280,000 miles on my odometer, sometimes I think the only thing going up at a faster pace is our nation's debt.

Like so many Virginians I have talked with, I am deeply frustrated with the habits in Washington. Holding talks down to the wire is no way to govern this great country. We stand today at a historic crossroads: we must be resolute in our dedication to the generations ahead of us.

Our debt crisis – at an all time high -- is caused by spending too much. The federal government borrows nearly 42 cents out of every dollar it spends. When families are tightening their belts to make ends meet, shouldn't Washington do the same? This week I supported a first step in a long journey towards changing the culture of out-of-control spending. The Budget Control Act was not a perfect solution, but it starts this nation on the right path and begins an important conversation not on how to spend our way out of recession, but what to cut from a bloated government and how to get our economy back on track. In so doing, the conversation has been altered from how much can be spent -- to how much we can cut.

This legislation begins to cut spending now, caps spending into the future, and moves toward a Balanced Budget Amendment – all without raising taxes on job creators. Additionally, this bill's proposals must be carefully monitored to ensure a strategic plan is put in place – to make sure Congress funds our nation's defense needs not simply by numbers, but with solid strategic analysis. This will be especially important in the next phase of this process. The bill sets up a Joint Committee of Congress that is tasked with identifying \$1.5 trillion in deficit reduction in the coming months, and while I believe everything should be on the table as we curtail the government's spending binge, defense spending should not be the first or only place we look to do this. To blindly cut our nation's defense is shortsighted and could harm national security. I will fight to ensure our troops get the resources they need, while ensuring the Department of Defense is efficient with its funds, and cutting out waste fraud and abuse.

A strong and healthy economy is built through innovative, hardworking Americans, not through a large, indebted government. To promote growth in our economy and allow job creators to thrive, the government must become more efficient, spend less, and eliminate uncertainty by living within its means. The long journey toward a more responsible government has begun. Now we must finish the job.

