

# Trump budget keeps pledges: Cuts for poor, more for military

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump fulfilled a major campaign promise Tuesday, proposing a \$4.1 trillion budget plan that would upend Washington in a big way. But he drew rebukes, even from some Republican allies, for the plan's jarring, politically unrealistic cuts to the social safety net for the poor and a broad swath of other domestic programs.

The budget, Trump's first as president, combines his spending plan for the upcoming 2018 fiscal year with a promise to balance government books after a decade, relying on aggressive cuts, a surge in economic growth — and a \$2 trillion-plus accounting gimmick.

"Through streamlined government, we will drive an economic boom that raises incomes and expands job opportunities for all Americans," Trump declared in his budget message.

"Basically dead on arrival," opined the Senate's No. 2 Republican, John Cornyn of Texas.

The proposal reflects a conservative vision of smaller government, a drastic rollback of programs for the poor and disabled to prod them into the workforce and a robust hike for the military and border security. It foresees scuttling Barack Obama's health care law and an overhaul of the tax code, a boon to the wealthiest Americans.

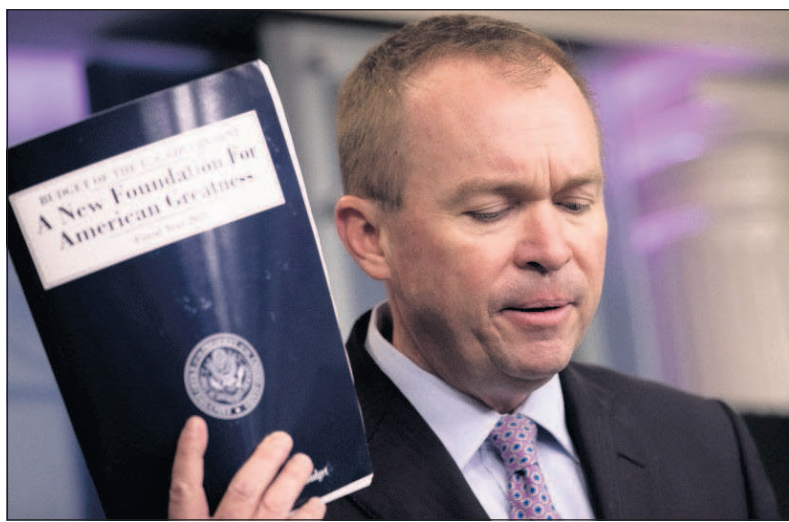
The plan is laced with \$3.6 trillion in cuts to domestic agencies, food stamps, Medicaid, highway funding, crop insurance and medical research, among others. Many of the voters who propelled Trump into the presidency last November would see significantly less from the federal government.

"We're no longer going to measure compassion by the number of programs or the number of people on those programs, but by the number of people we help get off those programs," said Mick Mulvaney, director of the Office of Management and Budget and a former tea party congressman.

At the same time, the blueprint boosts spending for the military by tens of billions and calls for \$1.6 billion for a border wall with Mexico that Trump repeatedly promised voters the U.S. neighbor would finance. Mexico emphatically rejects that notion.

The proposal got a chilly reception from congressional Republicans and Democrats, who insist they will have the final say as they struggle to complete a health care bill and rewrite the tax code.

Food stamp cuts would drive millions from the program, while a wave of Medicaid cuts — on top of more than \$800 billion in the House-



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik  
Budget Director Mick Mulvaney holds up a copy of President Donald Trump's proposed fiscal 2018 federal budget as he speaks to members of the media at the White House on Tuesday.

passed health care bill — could deny nursing home care to millions of elderly poor people. It would also force some people on Social Security's disability program back into the workforce.

"These cuts that are being proposed are draconian," said veteran GOP Rep. Harold Rogers, who represents a poor district in eastern Kentucky. "They're not mere shavings, they're deep, deep cuts."

Said Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La.: "I don't think the president's budget is going anywhere."

The budget would reduce pension benefits for federal workers by \$63 billion by eliminating cost-of-living adjustments for most and by requiring employees to make larger contributions. In agriculture, it would limit subsidies to farmers, including for purchasing crop insurance, an idea already attacked by farm state lawmakers.

"We've lost 40 percent of our wheat crop and you're telling me there's going to be large cuts to crop insurance?" asked Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan. "Come on. That doesn't add up."

The Trump plan would roll back Obama-era increases to a children's health program for lower-income families who don't qualify for Medicaid, take an ax to the Environmental Protection Agency and climate change programs, cut \$95 billion from highway trust fund transfers to state highway departments, and curb payments to disabled veterans of retirement age who are eligible for Social Security.

Trump's budget holds true to his campaign pledge to leave Medicare and Social Security pension benefits alone and contains spending increases for the military and veterans, but it treats most of the rest of the government as fair game.

Student loan subsidies, home heating assistance and Great Lakes cleanup would be on the chopping block as the departments of education, environment, energy and State take hits.

"In the America of President Trump's budget, children, working families, seniors and people with disabilities will be 'fined,' while the wealthiest Americans will get a 'bonus.' What's so 'great' about that America?" asked Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois.

The budget does feature a handful of domestic initiatives, including a six-week paid parental leave program championed by Trump's daughter Ivanka that would be designed and financed by the states through cuts to unemployment insurance. Some \$200 billion in federal infrastructure investments are promised to leverage another \$800 billion in private investment, though the idea has yet to get much traction.

During the campaign, Trump attacked the weak economic growth of the Barack Obama years, and pledged that his economic program would boost growth from the lackluster 2 percent rates seen since recovery began in mid-2009. Trump's new budget assumes sustained growth above 3 percent, sharply higher than the expectations of most private economists. Without more than \$2 trillion in such "economic feedback" over the coming decade, the nation's budget would never reach balance and would run a deficit of almost \$500 billion.

Trump's balanced-budget goal depends not only on the growth projections but also a variety of accounting gimmicks, including an almost \$600 billion peace dividend from winding down overseas military operations and "double counting" \$2.1 trillion in revenue from economic growth — using it to both pay for tax cuts and bring down the deficit.

## Donald Trump's budget at a glance

### AGRICULTURE

Up or down? Down 5 percent  
Highlight: The proposed budget would limit subsidies to farmers, including a cut in government help for purchasing crop insurance. Crop insurance is an overwhelmingly popular program with farm-state senators in both parties, and previous farm bills have only increased spending. The budget would also limit spending on environmentally friendly conservation programs and some rural development dollars that help small towns build infrastructure.

Trump isn't the first president to try to limit farm subsidies. Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush also proposed major reductions, but farm-state lawmakers have always kept them going. The Republican chairmen of the Senate and House agriculture committees both said Tuesday they oppose Trump's proposed cuts.

Total spending: \$132.3 billion.  
Spending that needs Congress' annual approval: \$18 billion.

### DEFENSE

Up or down? Up 3.3 percent  
Highlight: The Pentagon's proposed 2018 budget would fund increases of almost 43,000 in the size of the active duty military and 13,000 in the Reserves. It provides troops a 2.1 percent pay raise, adds F/A-18 fighter jets and seeks a new round of base closures, which Congress routinely rejects. It also increases the amount of money used for training Afghan forces and conducting counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan. The budget includes \$64.6 billion for military operations in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Africa.

Total spending: \$647 billion.  
Spending that needs Congress' annual approval: \$639.1 billion.

### EDUCATION

Up or down? Down 46.9 percent  
Highlight: Eliminates after-school and teacher training programs, ends subsidized federal student loans and loan forgiveness programs for public servants, funds year-round Pell grants and expands funding for school choice for low-income students.

Total spending: \$61 billion  
Spending that needs Congress' annual approval: \$59 billion

### EPA

Up or down? Down 31 percent.  
Highlight: The budget cuts EPA by nearly one-third, eliminating more than 3,800 jobs while

imposing dramatic cuts to clean air and water programs. Adjusted for inflation, the proposed budget would represent the nation's lowest funding for environmental protection since the mid-1970s. The Superfund pollution cleanup program would be cut by \$330 million, to \$762 million.

Total spending: \$5.7 billion.  
Spending that needs Congress' annual approval: \$5.7 billion.

### HOMELAND SECURITY

Up or down? Down 3.2 percent  
Highlight: The budget asks Congress for \$2.6 billion for border security that would include a down payment for Trump's long-promised wall and increased technology along the U.S.-Mexican border. The budget calls for \$314 million to hire 500 new Border Patrol agents and 1,000 agents for Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It also requests a \$1.5 billion increase for ICE to arrest, detain and deport immigrants in the country illegally. The plan also proposes cutting about \$667 million in grants administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. That includes proposed cuts to the Urban Area Security Initiative and eliminating the Transportation Security Administration's law enforcement grants.

Total spending: \$49.4 billion  
Spending that needs Congress' annual approval: \$44.1 billion

### INTERIOR

Up or Down? Down 9.2 percent  
Highlight: The budget calls for opening Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling, where it is now prohibited, while eliminating offshore oil revenues used by Gulf Coast states to restore disappearing shorelines. Arctic drilling, a contentious issue that would require congressional approval, would generate an estimated \$400 million a year in tax revenues by 2022, according to the White House.

The budget would cut \$10 million from a program to manage wild horses and burros in the West and allow the Bureau of Land Management to sell or euthanize thousands of horses that now roam in Nevada, Oregon and other western states. More than 70,000 wild horses and burros roam federal lands across the West, a number that officials call unsustainable.

Total spending: \$12.5 billion  
Spending that needs Congress' annual approval: \$11.7 billion

## BRIEFLY

### Russia-Trump campaign contacts a concern, ex-CIA chief says

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former CIA Director John Brennan told Congress Tuesday he personally warned Russia last summer against interfering in the U.S. presidential election and was so concerned about Russian contacts with people involved in the Trump campaign that he convened top counterintelligence officials to focus on it.

Brennan's testimony to the House intelligence committee was the clearest public description yet of the significance these contacts play in counterintelligence investigations that continue to hang over the White House.

Brennan, who was President Barack Obama's CIA director, said he couldn't say whether there was collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign, an issue being investigated by the FBI and congressional committees.

"I don't have sufficient information to make a determination about whether or not such cooperation or complicity or collusion was taking place," Brennan said. "But I know there was a basis to have individuals pull those threads."

President Donald Trump has predicted the investigations won't find collusion, and his efforts to cast doubt and curb the probes have led to the appointment of a special counsel at the Justice Department.

News reports that Trump asked his national intelligence director and National Security Agency chief to state publicly there was no evidence of collusion have heightened criticism.

### Warning of 'imminent' attack, Britain raises threat level

MANCHESTER, England (AP) — As officials hunted for accomplices of a suicide bomber and Britain's prime minister warned another attack could be "imminent," thousands of people poured into the streets of Manchester in a defiant vigil Tuesday for victims of a blast at a pop concert — the latest apparent target of Islamic extremists seeking to rattle life in the West.

The attack left at least 22 dead, including an 8-year-old girl, shattering the revelry at a show by American singer Ariana Grande, where strains of electric pop and the sways of innocent young fans quickly gave way to an explosion, a flood of screams and a stampede of panicked concert-goers, many clutching pink balloons and wearing the kitten-ear headbands popularized by Grande.

May said Britain's terror threat level had been raised to critical — meaning another attack may be imminent. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the blood bath Monday, though a top American intelligence official said that could not be verified.

### Fox removes report about murdered DNC staffer

NEW YORK (AP) — Fox News says it has removed from its website a speculative story about the 2016 murder of Democratic National Committee employee Seth Rich because it "was not initially subjected to the high degree of editorial scrutiny we require for all our reporting."

The report, published a week earlier, quoted a private investigator suggesting that Rich had some connection to Wikileaks and its leaks of Democratic National Committee emails during the last campaign.

Rich's family has said they don't believe their son, who was shot in July 2016 in Washington, gave any information to WikiLeaks. The investigator has since recanted his claim, and the independent researcher Politifact.com has said the notion that Rich was involved in the leak was flimsy and illogical.

No arrests have been made in the shooting, but conspiracy theories have emerged about his death.

The network made no mention of Fox News Channel star Sean Hannity, who has done stories about the case on his show.

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