



## THE NEW AND IMPROVED GOP?

"And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." --The Signers

Republican congressional leaders have issued their 21-page "[Pledge to America](#)" with the objective of convincing "the American people we have learned our lesson and we are ready to govern," as one of them claimed. Have they?



This Pledge amounts to "Trust Us, Version 2.0," and reads like a punch list for all the things establishment Republicans did *not* do when they held the House, Senate and the White House, just a few short years ago. (As you may recall, Republicans controlled the House for the first six years of George W. Bush's presidency, and the House sets the budget.) It notes that its objective is to "stem the relentless growth in government that has occurred over the past decade," a large measure of which occurred under Republican rule.

The new Pledge is modeled after Newt Gingrich's successful "Contract with America," which was issued six weeks before the 1994 midterm election in the first term of another charismatic charlatan, Bill Clinton. That pledge propelled the GOP into a House majority for the first time in four decades.

The current slate of Republican leaders are hoping that enough of Barack Hussein Obama's supporters have awakened to the error of their ways, and will propel Republicans into the majority again. (It remains to be seen if enough Republicans have awakened to the error of their ways, and if so, can they follow up with a presidential nominee in 2012 with a bit more gravitas than Bob Dole, who, as Bush 41 did in 1992, gave Clinton the presidency.)

The Pledge spells out a few elements of the [Reagan model](#) for economic restoration, which Republicans promise to enact if they achieve a congressional majority after the November elections. To that end, it serves as a benchmark for accountability.

It vows to stop any tax increase scheduled after 1 January 2011.

It promises to end the much-maligned Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), revokes any unspent "stimulus" dollars, and commits to "roll back government spending to pre-stimulus, pre-bailout levels," which would reduce the budget by \$120 billion in 2011 -- only about 10 percent of the deficit, but that's a start. It also pledges to end government intervention in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the massive mortgage entities that seeded the [current economic decline](#).

It obligates Republicans to pass legislation requiring congressional approval for any government regulation that would have more than a \$100 million impact on the economy (cap-and-trade legislation), effectively holding legislators accountable for the labyrinth of regulations which have greatly stifled job growth and productivity, and which cost consumers hundreds of billions of dollars annually.

While failing to address non-discretionary spending such as entitlements and debt service, which constitute most of the \$3.8 trillion budget, the Pledge does promise a vote to "repeal and replace the government takeover of health care." This, of course, leads us to ask: Replace it with what?

The Pledge commits to put a cap on non-military government hiring and spending, but it lacks earmark reform (especially attached to military spending bills) and fails to mention the line-item veto, much less a Balanced Budget Amendment. It requires a "sunset clause" for any new federal program, which would require legislators to renew funding periodically -- and face the consequences of those votes.

The Pledge affirms, "Foreign terrorists do not have the same rights as American citizens," which is to say that acts of terrorism will not be watered down into mere criminal acts. It also "reaffirms the authority of state and local law enforcement to assist in the enforcement of all federal immigration laws," and the immediate need to secure our southern border.

However, the most important element of the Pledge is this: It assures that Republicans will pass legislation requiring "the specific constitutional authority upon which the bill is justified" for any and all legislation ... which will most assuredly put the contest between [Rule of Law](#) and the so-called "[living constitution](#)" front and center, where it belongs.

The Republicans' current Pledge is clearly a stepchild of the "[Contract from America](#)," a grassroots effort by the [Tea Party movement](#) to restore constitutional integrity. The Tea Party has thus rung the bell of wayward Republicans, *most* of whom are now promising to reform their ways.

Will the Pledge succeed?

The short answer is, yes, because among the diminished ranks of Republicans left in the House and Senate there are about [120 members](#) who have been steadfast in their commitment to the conservative principles outlined in the [Republican Platform](#), as

their voting records attest. In other words, there is still a powerful core contingent of *conservative* Republicans in Congress.

But, the real chance of success lies in the influx of an outstanding slate of new candidates running on conservative principles, those who did not need a Pledge to America to run. And keep your eye on those outspoken Republican women among them -- they are leading the charge in defense of our Constitution.

Unfortunately, plenty of pantywaist RINOs, Republicans who have most certainly *not* voted consistently in support of [conservative principles](#), will still hold congressional seats after November, and they will certainly derail some of the Pledge's commitments.

The bottom line, however, is not whether Republicans stick to their Pledge to America, but whether they will honor their sacred oath to "[support and defend](#)" our Constitution, as specified in Article VI, clause 3. It is *that pledge* which should, first and foremost, guide every elected official.

Finally, allow me a few words about the language in the preamble to the Republican Pledge: "America is an inspiration to those who yearn to be free and have the ability and the dignity to determine their own destiny. Whenever the agenda of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to institute a new governing agenda and set a different course."

The language above is a Beltway-processed knockoff of the real thing from our [Declaration of Independence](#) which set forth as follows: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness [and] whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government."

The latter is not about replacing "government agendas" when they become destructive to liberty, it is about replacing government.

Politicians of every stripe should take note: The defense of [Essential Liberty](#) was the foundation of the first Tea Party back in 1773, and it remains so in

today's Tea Party movement. Millions of Patriots once again avow, "with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

That is how Republicans *should* close their Pledge.