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Sen. Carper Comments on President Obama's 2012 Budget Proposal

WASHINGTON – *Today, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) released the following statement in response to President Obama's 2012 budget proposal:*

"Restoring fiscal discipline is a top priority not just for me, but for all Americans. Unfortunately over last several years, the federal deficit has exploded due to the Great Recession and the need for the federal government to increase spending to address this economic crisis. Now that we have emerged from the worst of the recession and our economy is slowly, but surely, recovering, we must turn our attention to reducing our massive federal deficit.

"Bringing balance to our federal budget will be difficult, requiring a shared sacrifice from many of us. The President's budget is an important step forward to reduce the deficit, but more can and must be done. The President's bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform provided us with a valuable roadmap, and while all of us can find in it elements with which we strongly disagreed, its basic approach is sound. We need to take a hard look at all of the options available to us – both in terms of revenue raisers and spending reductions – and we all must share in the sacrifices required to rein in the deficit. Over the coming days and weeks, my colleagues and I will go over the President's proposal in greater detail and work to find additional savings where possible.

"The President has called for a number of sensible proposals to reduce spending and curb the deficit. For example, he's requiring the federal government to do more with less by calling for a five-year freeze on non-defense discretionary spending, saving \$400 billion over 10 years. He's also included language that I've championed in the Senate – the [Reduce Unnecessary Spending Act \(S.102\)](#) – which would give the President a Constitutional line-item veto authority to reduce waste by singling out unnecessary earmarks and other non-entitlement spending. These are positive steps.

"In addition to making strategic cuts, the President's budget has found room to invest in major priorities designed to strengthen America's economy. Specifically, the President's investments in education and health care reform, infrastructure, research and development, and energy

are thoughtful down payments on our nation's future. They will also help create much-needed jobs for Delawareans and Americans across the country.

"Beyond creating jobs and furthering economic growth, the budget supports the well-being of all Americans. One of my top priorities in the health care reform law was encouraging programs that delivered better health outcomes for less money. The President's budget recognizes the importance of those efforts and protects funding for key preventive health care initiatives that will deliver the best return for the taxpayer dollar. In addition, it also sets aside \$250 million to provide incentives for states to develop, implement and expand medical malpractice reforms. Reducing defensive medicine and improving patient safety by encouraging best practices for medical malpractice reform is an effort the President and I both championed in the health reform bill and I'm encouraged to see that the Administration is committed to providing resources for this important effort.

"As we work through the budgeting process, I will continue to look for input from Delawareans about how the federal government should rein in our deficit while continuing to invest in key priorities for the First State and the nation. Our nation needs to shift from a 'culture of spendthrift' to a 'culture of thrift,' where we endeavor to look in every nook and cranny of the federal government for ways in which we can save and recovery money. Everything I do I know I can do better, similarly the federal government can do better by making its operations more efficient and effective, saving scare taxpayer dollars. Clearly there's more work to be done, but today's proposal is a sound place to start."

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