

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2012

STATEMENT BY SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KENT CONRAD (D-ND) ON RYAN BUDGET PROPOSAL

“Representative Ryan’s plan is the same partisan and ideological thinking we saw from House Republicans last year. He proposes large tax cuts for the wealthiest and corporations, financed by deep cuts in health care and other programs that help those most in need. His plan is unbalanced and unfair, and it is wrong for America.

“I am disappointed that Representative Ryan is walking away from the discretionary spending levels agreed to by Democrats and Republicans in last summer’s Budget Control Act. Instead, he calls for significant additional cuts in education, energy, infrastructure, and other areas vital to the country’s economic growth. His action is a breach of faith that will increase the likelihood of an unnecessary and harmful government shutdown later this year.

“And while we must find additional savings in health care, we need to do so by building on the existing health reform law. Representative Ryan instead takes an ideological approach, by proposing to repeal health reform. That would take us in the wrong direction.

“Representative Ryan’s proposed tax cuts for the wealthiest are particularly troubling, as they would simply shift the burden of deficit reduction away from the rich and onto everyone else.

“The fact is the budget for the next fiscal year is already in place. The Budget Control Act provided the key components of the budget for 2012 and 2013, including setting discretionary spending limits and providing the tools to enforce those limits. It is the law of the land. And today I filed a budget deeming resolution in the Senate that formally sets spending to match the levels agreed to in that law.

“What is still needed is for us to come together on a long-term deficit reduction plan. And that long-term plan must be comprehensive and balanced, addressing both spending and revenue. That is the only way we can truly put the nation back on a sound long-term fiscal course.”

Contact: Stu Nagurka (202) 224-7436

Steve Posner (202) 224-7925

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