

BETHE CHANGE

**TAKE BACK
THE FEDERAL BUDGET**

**NATIONAL
PRIORITIES
PROJECT**

30th
ANNIVERSARY

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Democracy is a life that must be nurtured.” — Bill Moyers



Greetings Friends,

In a video tribute to National Priorities Project celebrating our 30th Anniversary, Bill Moyers told us that our nation's "democracy is a life that must be nurtured." In 2013, NPP provided the sustenance this precious life demands: hard-hitting, clarifying, ground-breaking facts about the U.S. federal budget.

Our federal budget is our nation's crossroads. It is the absolute intersection between government and everything Americans cherish. The annual budget blueprint should embody our nation's collective values and priorities, making it the most powerful vehicle we have to reclaim and revive our languishing democracy.

In a nation held hostage by rhetoric, facts matter. They are the engine of effective social movements and should be the currency of our media. Facts make activists bolder and more resilient. They make educators sharper and more effective. Facts bridge divisive political ideology and spur action.

NPP's work puts Americans at the very center of our democracy. This year, we helped end a government shutdown and gained ground in the fight for open data and accountability. Our team initiated citizen petitions, generated letters to the editor, and delivered recommendations to targeted members of Congress.

We invested in the future of our nation, building the capacity of young people, women, and people of color to ensure that the U.S. federal budget represents the priorities of all Americans. NPP supported partner organizations and millions of individuals who use our data and resources as the foundation of their advocacy efforts.

New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof cited NPP's one-of-a-kind analysis about the staggering cost of Homeland Security. USA Today ran an exclusive using NPP's pioneering tax break data. Our team leveraged NPP's high-impact blogs and growing social media presence to move public opinion and Congressional action surrounding sequestration.

Bill Moyers also said, "The tide is turning. The spirit is rising." It's true. At NPP, we feel the ground rumbling.

In January, I received word that National Priorities Project was nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize in honor of our 30 years of unparalleled, innovative, and steadfast work. Not only did this deeply humbling nomination underscore the importance and impact of NPP's current work, but it raised the stakes for our continued success.

The only way to break through Congressional gridlock is to bolster an informed, passionate, diverse, and unyielding electorate fighting for a federal budget that works for all of us.

Onward to a high-stakes year and our collective work to nurture democracy and take back the federal budget!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jo Comerford". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jo Comerford
Executive Director



BE THE CHANGE TAKE BACK THE FEDERAL BUDGET

NPP founders
Greg Speeter,
Brenda Loew,
Ricky Fogel,
and Alwin
Schmidt.



National Priorities Project is the only nonprofit, non-partisan research organization in the nation with the mission to make the U.S. federal budget accessible to the broadest possible American public. We believe a healthy and robust 21st century democracy demands that everyone can and should understand and influence critical debates about federal spending and revenue.

In 1983, four friends from Springfield, MA, dug into dusty federal budget tomes at a local university library on a quest to understand why so many vital social programs were closing.

What the friends found stunned them. They unearthed data showing that during the first two Cold War-focused years of the Reagan Administration, federal funds for cities like Springfield plummeted – and local economies, jobs, schools, and public health suffered as a result.

Armed with irrefutable numbers – directly from our nation’s budget – the friends, led by Greg Speeter, convinced their U.S. Representative, Silvio Conte (R), then the ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee, to change his stance on federal spending.

Greg founded National Priorities Project with a radical vision: a federal budget that reflects the priorities of all Americans. NPP still operates under the very same moral imperative that inspired Greg, with a healthy mixture of urgency, impatience, and unwavering faith in the absolute necessity of our efforts.

In 2013, we honored our 30-year legacy with a gala celebration in our hometown of Northampton, MA, recognizing 30 Democracy Champions – vital NPP allies.

Our 2013 Democracy Champions embody the spirit of NPP’s 30-year legacy and vision. See a full list at nationalpriorities.org.

“I greatly value NPP’s work and use it regularly in my own work.”

– BILL MOYERS

“NPP is a vital resource – the progressive movement depends on you!”

–ANNA GALLAND,
MOVEON

“I’ve found NPP’s work to be an extraordinarily valuable source of insight and analysis with regard to what’s at stake for the nation, what our priorities ought to be, and how far we’ve drifted from those widely-shared goals.”

– ROBERT REICH

FIGHTING FOR A FEDERAL BUDGET THAT WORKS FOR ALL OF US

NPP IS THE PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE FEDERAL BUDGET.

We believe all Americans should understand and influence budget priorities focused on health care, jobs, the Pentagon, climate change, immigration, Social Security, tax breaks and beyond.

Our team takes a complex and opaque federal budgeting process and cracks it open – providing the information, tools, and motivation necessary to catalyze strategic civic engagement around budget issues that affect us all. In doing so, National Priorities Project fights side-by-side with our constituents to overcome and transform political dysfunction and gridlock, building a federal budget that works for all of us.

NPP RAISES AWARENESS AND DISTILLS COMPLEX DATA

NPP's researchers unearth, analyze, and tell the very personal story of federal spending and taxes.

We release in-depth publications focused on taxes, the annual budget request, and issue areas such as the military, education, environment, health care, and earned benefits.

Our localized online tools track federal money flowing into and out of states, cities, and congressional districts. We produce accessible infographics, videos, blogs, and reports that make federal budget data relevant and accessible to average Americans.

5,227 LINES OF DATA

WE PARSED 1,201 PAGES OF PDFS AND TURNED THEM INTO 5,227 LINES OF OPEN-SOURCE TAX BREAK DATA

229 WEB PUBLICATIONS



WE POSTED 210 BLOGS AND 19 IN-DEPTH ANALYSES

937 YEARS OF DATA



OUR FEDERAL PRIORITIES DATABASE BROUGHT YOU A COMBINED 937 YEARS' WORTH OF LOCAL SPENDING DATA AND SOCIAL INDICATORS

1.3 MILLION



OUR MOBILE-FRIENDLY WEBSITE HAD 1.3 MILLION VISITORS, VIEWING OUR WEBPAGES A TOTAL OF 2.1 MILLION TIMES

430,000 TIMES



OUR FEDERAL BUDGET 101 RESOURCES WERE ACCESSED 430,000 TIMES – THAT'S 1,100 TIMES A DAY!

9 MIL. RECORDS



WE SCRUBBED 9 MILLION FEDERAL SPENDING RECORDS FOR OUR SEARCHABLE DATABASE



Faces of the Federal Budget collects stories about Americans' very personal experiences with the federal budget. Here are a few excerpts from the 76 stories people told us in 2013:

"I receive both a Pell Grant and Stafford Loan each year. At the time of entering school, neither of my parents would have been capable of paying for my education without financial aid." – Mia, California

"Food stamps (SNAP) help me ensure that my children eat healthy, well-balanced meals without me having to worry about how I will afford food and what my boys will eat." – Charlotte, Florida

NPP INFLUENCES NATIONAL DIALOGUE

Our team uses creative communication strategies to scale and diversify the reach of our information and tools, through social, new, and traditional media.

In 2013, NPP's research and analysis appeared in major national news outlets including USA TODAY, the New York Times, the Washington Post, MSNBC, the Guardian, the Christian Science Monitor, Reuters, Associated Press, Bill Moyers, National Public Radio, Politico, Pacifica, CNN, the Boston Globe, PBS, Democracy Now, and more.

Our state-based op-eds ran in outlets coast to coast including The Washington Spectator, The Columbia Missourian, The Jackson County Banner (IN), The Alliance Review (OH), and The Logan Banner (WV).

Our national op-eds appeared in The Hill, Salon, Mother Jones, The Nation, Huffington Post, and beyond. We create social media graphics to popularize federal budget topics for a younger and more socially-connected audience.

MEDIA OUTLETS CITED NPP'S RESEARCH

907 TIMES

OUR SOCIAL MEDIA & EMAIL FOLLOWERS GREW

25% OVER LAST YEAR

WE REACHED

3,700,000 NEW
FACEBOOK USERS

THROUGH 93,000 FOLLOWER ACTIONS, INCLUDING AN IMAGE
FOR TAX DAY THAT ON ITS OWN GENERATED

209,000 VIEWS AND
16,500 CLICKS

ONE SEQUESTRATION OP-ED AUTHORED BY JO COMERFORD
AND MATTEA KRAMER FOR TOM DISPATCH, "CONGRESS TWEETED
WHILE AMERICA BURNED," WAS PUBLISHED IN 63 OUTLETS
NATIONWIDE, READ BY MORE THAN

6 MILLION PEOPLE

AND GENERATED ONLINE COMMENTS FROM 28,000 PEOPLE

NPP AMPLIFIES AND STRENGTHENS PARTNER CAMPAIGNS

Collaborating with national groups across multiple sectors and issue-areas allows NPP to scale the impact of our material while supporting important, highly-effective national, state, and local efforts.

Our national partners include: Roosevelt Campus Network, U.S. Student Association, MomsRising, USAction, Jobs with Justice, National People's Action, Coalition on Human Needs, Institute for Policy Studies, National Women's Law Center, Young Invincibles, American Friends Service Committee, Women's Action for New Directions/Women's Legislative Lobby, Center for Effective Government, Free Press, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and many more.

NPP conducts national trainings and presentations to educate individuals and partners nationwide. Our educational curriculum now includes a "Move the Money" training program developed in partnership with Peace Action and a classroom toolkit for our acclaimed book, *A People's Guide to the Federal Budget*.

We offer webinars, create videos, and speak at conferences and teach-ins across the nation to help Americans understand and weigh in on decisions about how their tax dollars are spent.

WE REACHED MORE THAN
1,850 INDIVIDUALS

WHO ATTENDED WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS,
AND TALKS BY NPP STAFF

WE PARTNERED WITH
67 ORGANIZATIONS

ON ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS AROUND
FEDERAL BUDGET ISSUES

WE RESPONDED TO
**136 RESEARCH
REQUESTS**

FROM ORGANIZATIONS
NATION-WIDE, IN ADDITION TO
CAMPAIGN-RELATED WORK



In October, Research Director Mattea Kramer led a workshop for youth members of the "SmartGirls" program at the Bronx Boys & Girls Club.

NPP TURNS DATA INTO ACTION

NPP's team believes it's our job to make sure our information is used in citizen actions to strengthen our democracy.

On the eve of the government shutdown, we partnered with the Sunlight Foundation and Center for Effective Government to send a letter to Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Reid urging them to recommit to a transparent appropriations process.

We tracked the daily cost of the shutdown, down to the millisecond, with an online embeddable counter.

Leading up to the Budget Conference Committee's December 13 deadline, we mobilized citizens to make their priorities heard through campaigns with national partners, action toolkits, and easy-to-use facts about budget decisions.

WE WERE PART OF THE NATIONAL PUSH TO END THE SHUTDOWN BY SENDING

1,000 CITIZEN LETTERS

TO CONGRESS

7,500 NPP CONSTITUENTS

SIGNED A PETITION TO SENATOR PATTY MURRAY AND REPRESENTATIVE PAUL RYAN DEMANDING A BUDGET COMMITTEE DEAL THAT LISTENED TO AMERICANS' PRIORITIES

PEOPLE TAKING ACTION THROUGH NPP'S WEBSITE INCREASED

72% OVER LAST YEAR

"NPP's work has demonstrated that another way is possible, and that we could start building it right now with a shift in spending and policy priorities. Whenever we're faced with a doubter telling us that health care or education or pretty much any social good is just too expensive and we can't afford it, we pull out numbers from NPP to show them the hard data that we can afford a better future. What we can't afford is ignoring this data and continuing business as usual." - **ANNIE LEONARD**,

STORY OF STUFF



Through a partnership with NETWORK, we illustrated the choices between key spending priorities and moved people to action in response to the Budget Conference Committee's work.

EXPERT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION



Mattea Kramer,
Director of Research

MATTEA'S 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- » Appeared on Up with Chris Hayes (MSNBC) with other thought leaders to discuss military spending and Americans' belief that U.S. military spending should be reduced substantially
- » Collaborated with Migration Policy Institute to untangle the complicated strands of federal funding for migration and refugee programs
- » Led the launch of NPP's Cost of National Security tools to show how much every state, congressional district, and city or town pays toward an array of security programs
- » Brokered NPP's comprehensive analysis of the "Fiscal Cliff" deal—a resource that was widely used and cited by partner organizations and members of the media

MATTEA'S PICK: MY FAVORITE STORY FROM THE FIELD: FUELING UP AND COMING NATIONAL LEADERS

The Roosevelt Institute Campus Network is a national network of college students who are training to influence how federal policy is crafted. At their annual August gathering at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, rising young leaders tackle a variety of complex subjects and build the skills they'll need to make a difference on the federal level.

In 2013, I joined the Hyde Park conference to speak to a large and enthusiastic group of young people about the federal budget. I walked them through the ways in which the federal budget matters for every single issue they're working to influence—whether access to higher education, environmental protection, enforcement of worker rights, immigration reform, health care, or a host of others. Our conversation debunked the myths about federal spending that are popularized in the news and revealed that the resources truly are available to realize our collective national priorities.

These young leaders told me they walked away better able to do their advocacy work on federal policy because they now know how our government raises and spends our tax dollars. In a nutshell, that's exactly why I do this work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mattea'.

BECKY'S 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- » Organized a hackathon for the National Day of Civic Hacking and was invited to White House event recognizing those efforts, including a project tying federal spending data to usaspending.gov. One of the hackathon projects was to tie federal spending data from USASpending back to the federal budget
- » Scrubbed and categorized USASpending.gov data for aggregation into NPP's searchable, downloadable, and mappable online database
- » Participated in Transparency Camp with 500 government transparency advocates from around the U.S. and the world to learn and to share NPP's contributions to this work
- » Updated NPP's well-known trade-offs tool with localized federal spending numbers for nearly 10,000 cities



Becky Sweger,
Director of Information
& Technology

BECKY'S PICK: MY FAVORITE STORY FROM THE FIELD: BRINGING INFORMATION TO LIGHT SO IT CAN BE USED

Tax breaks cost the U.S. Treasury over \$1 trillion in 2013 alone. Yet unlike other parts of the U.S. budget, these costs are not debated by our lawmakers annually and are difficult to undo once implemented.

In 2013, NPP uncovered this hidden money by creating a one-of-a-kind dataset that contains the estimated cost of every U.S. tax break back to 1974. With the help of a student researcher, I examined data buried in old government documents, made it machine-readable, scrubbed it, standardized it, and added a few useful calculations. Then we open-sourced it, making it available to all.

I worked with a data visualizer to create an interactive tool highlighting the high costs of tax breaks over time while simultaneously examining who benefits from that money – disproportionately the wealthy and corporations.

Our project made a clear case for tax reform in this country. Using data to understand critical social and political issues like tax breaks is what NPP is best at – and that's why I love what I do..

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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Jasmine Tucker, Research Analyst

30th Anniversary Planning Committee

Lisa Baskin	Jessica Saalfeld
Sarah Bittenwieser	Preston Smith
Lori Divine-Hudson	Cate Woolner
Jim Levey	

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED:



JOIN US ONLINE

Sign up for our email list at nationalpriorities.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

We'll keep you updated about timely information, tools, and advocacy resources for a more participatory federal budget.



USE & SHARE OUR TOOLS

The first step towards change is knowledge. **Get informed and spread the word about NPP** by using NPP's interactive tools and sharing them with your friends and family!



SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

We rely on individual donors and private foundations to fund our one-of-a-kind research, analysis, and outreach. Become part of the fight for a better federal budget by making a donation to support National Priorities Project.

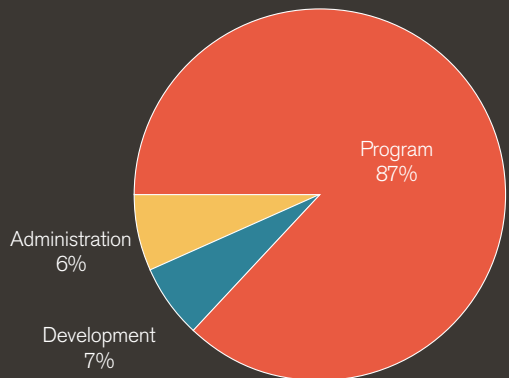
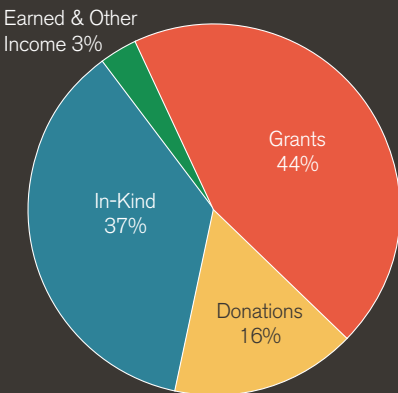
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

“The Coalition on Human Needs has greatly benefited from the work of the National Priorities Project. NPP shows the choices that are embodied in federal budget decisions. We are very glad to take advantage of the very clear and compelling way NPP tells the truth about our national choices, and to work with them to build support for a shift to more commonsense priorities.” – **DEBORAH WEINSTEIN, COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS**

NATIONAL PRIORITIES PROJECT IS LEADING A MOVEMENT BY AND FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

Expenses and Revenue for the short fiscal year January 1, 2013 to September 30, 2013 with comparative totals for 2012.

	2013 9 MOS	2012 12 MOS
REVENUE & SUPPORT		
Grants	\$395,000	\$492,991
Donations	\$141,850	\$257,459
In-Kind	\$326,004	\$113,311
Earned Income	\$27,546	\$6,453
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	\$890,400	\$870,214
EXPENSES		
Program	\$776,442	\$673,678
Administration	\$56,117	\$72,981
Development	\$59,233	\$84,342
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$891,792	\$831,001
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$1,392)	\$39,213
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Beginning of the Year	\$410,395	\$368,358
End of the Year	\$398,399	\$410,395





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is mobile-friendly!

Visit our website from your mobile device to access local spending data, your tax receipt, budget trade-offs, and the rest of NPP's one-of-a-kind resources.