Federal Budget
Sequestration 101
Perspectives through the County Lens
What is Sequestration?

**Sequestration:** Process of applying automatic, across-the-board spending reductions evenly divided between **security** (defense) and **non-security** (mandatory/entitlement funds + annual discretionary funds) functions

- *Because the Super Committee failed to reach an agreement, sequestration is now scheduled to occur beginning on January 2, 2013*

- Sequestration was first enacted in 1985 as part of the *balanced budget and emergency deficit control act* (commonly known as the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act)

- Serves as the model for the process to be used during implementation of the Federal Budget Control Act of 2011
What is Sequestration?

“However, the report leaves no question that sequestration would be deeply destructive to national security, domestic investments, and core government functions.”

- OMB Report Pursuant to the Sequestration Transparency Act of 2012 (P. L. 112-155), President’s Office of Management and Budget, September 14, 2012
Context for Federal Debt and Deficit Discussion and Actions
Nearly One-Third of Our Spending is Borrowed

Fiscal Year 2012 Outlays: $3.63 Trillion

Source: Congressional Budget Office (January 2012)
FY2012 Federal Budget Snapshot

- Medicare and Medicaid: 21%
- Social Security: 21%
- Other Mandatory: 15%
- Interest: 7%
- Defense Discretionary: 19%
- Non-Defense Discretionary: 17%
Federal Budget Picture

Absent reforms, U.S. debt is set to skyrocket in the coming decades

Sources: Congressional Budget Office (January 2012) and Bipartisan Policy Center
HEALTH CARE COSTS ARE THE PRIMARY DRIVER OF THE DEBT

Health Care Spending

Social Security

Discretionary Spending (Defense and Non-Defense)

Other Mandatory Programs

Sources: Congressional Budget Office’s Alternative Fiscal Scenario (January 2012), additionally assuming that troops overseas decline to 45,000 by 2015; Bipartisan Policy Center extrapolations

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NACO | VIRTUAL LEARNING COMMUNITY
Federal Debt Approaches Debt Ceiling

Source: U.S. Treasury - as of August 15, 2012
How Did We Get Here?
How Did We Get Here?

Reached *Old* Federal Debt Ceiling

- Budget Control Act of 2011 (S. 365) Enacted
- Failure of Super Committee to Find Savings
- Sequester Required by Law
How Did We Get Here?

Budget Control Act of 2011 (S. 365)

- Set stage for $2.4 Trillion increase in Federal debt ceiling
  
  **BUT** with offsetting reductions in two phases

  ✓ $900 Billion in savings over next 10 years, including new spending caps for 12 annual appropriations bills

  ✓ Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (“Super Committee”) set up to identify at least $1.5 Trillion in extra savings over 10 years

  ➢ HOWEVER, if committee fails, automatic trigger of across-the-board cuts in both defense and non-defense accounts each year over the next nine years (thru FY2021)

Basics of the Federal Budget Sequestration Process and Impact
Understanding the Breakdown of Funding Levels Under Sequestration

Total “triggered” cut $1.2 trillion

Subtract 18 percent in debt service savings $216 Billion

Distribute remaining $984 billion evenly among fiscal years 2013 to 2021

$109.3 Billion in Automatic Cuts per Year

Evenly split each year’s cut between defense and non-defense accounts

Defense $54.6 billion
Non-defense $54.6 billion
Translating FY2013 Sequestration Cuts

- 9.4 percent to non-exempt defense discretionary spending
- 8.2 percent to non-exempt domestic discretionary spending
- 2.0 percent to Medicare, 7.6 percent to non-exempt nondefense mandatory programs, and 10.0 percent to non-exempt defense mandatory programs

Understanding Sequestration

- **What is unique about FY2013**
  - Cuts occur at start of 2nd quarter of the fiscal year (Jan. 2, 2013)
  - Discretionary cuts occur no matter what Congress appropriates
  - Sequester cuts happen at “program-project activity” (PPA) level

- **Across-the-board cuts difficult for many PPAs:**
  - Accounts that are nearly all personnel costs, like those for Border Patrol Agents
  - Large procurement of construction projects
What is Exempt from Sequestration?

Here is a snapshot of 149 exempt programs:

- Medicaid
- Social Security
- Medicare Part D - Low-income Subsidies
- Medicare Payments to States for Qualified Individual Premiums
- Food Stamps (SNAP)*
- Children’s Health Insurance Funds
- Transit Formula Grants
- Grants in Aid to Airports
- Childcare Entitlement
- Veteran’s Affairs Programs
- Commodity Loans and Conservation Reserve Program
- Crop Insurance
- Military Personnel Funding
- Pell grants
- * Salary and benefits for Members of Congress and the President

* SNAP receives $8 million annual cut

For a complete list of exempt programs, download the OMB Report
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/legislative_reports/stareport.pdf
DOMESTIC DISCRETIONARY SPENDING WOULD BE CUT TO THE BONE

Non-Defense Discretionary Spending

- Historical Average (1972-2011)
- Lowest Level since 1970
- CBO Baseline Non-Defense (Jan 2011)
- Original BCA Caps
- BCA + Full Sequester

% of GDP


Source: Congressional Budget Office

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FY2013 Projected Cuts:
8.2% Domestic Discretionary Reduction = $38 Billion Total

Examples of FY2013 Cuts by Program

- HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) = $242 Million
- HUD HOME Investment Program = $81 Million
- HUD Section 8 Housing = $1.5 Billion
- HUD Homeless Assistance = $156 Million
- U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) = $34 Million
- USDA Rural Development = $203 Million
- EPA State and Local Grants = $93 Million
- EPA Hazardous Substance / Superfund = $119 Million
- DOE Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy = $54 Million
- FEMA State & Local Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Programs = $183 Million
- FEMA Disaster Relief = $580 Million
FY2013 Projected Cuts:  
8.2% Domestic Discretionary Reduction = $38 Billion Total

Examples of FY2013 Cuts by Program

- DOJ State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) = $17 Million
- DOT Essential Air Service* = $12 Million (*Discretionary funds only*)
- Education Dept’s Elementary & Secondary Education = $1.3 Billion
- FTA Transit Capital Grants = $163 Million
- HHS Substance Abuse & Mental Health = $275 Million
- HHS Child Care Discretionary = $187 Million
- HHS Older American / Aging Services = $121 Million
- DOJ State & Local Law Enforcement = $92 Million
- DOJ Juvenile Justice = $21 Million
- DOL WIA Title I Formula Grants to States = $262 Million
FY2013 Projected Cuts: Mandatory/Direct Allocation = $5 Billion Total

Programs Cut by 7.6%

- Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) = $30 Million
- HHS Social Service Block Grant (SSBG) = $136 Million
- DOT Essential Air Services* = $4 Million *(Mandatory funds only)*
- HHS Prevention & Public Health Fund = $76 Million
- NTIA State & Local Implementation Program = $5 Million

Programs Cut Less Than 7.6%

- FHWA Federal-Aid Highways = $56 Million
- HHS TANF = $2 Million
- SNAP = $8 Million
- Child Nutrition = $4 Million
FY2013 Projected Cuts: Medicare - Total $11 billion (2.0%)

- Limited to 2% cut from provider payments under parts A & B
- Medicare Advantage (Part C)
- Drug Plan Contracts (Part D)
Elections and Fiscal Cliff Scenarios
Lame Duck Makes Sequestration Negotiations More Tense

Concurrent Fiscal Pressures Cause Legislative Bottleneck

Nov 6, 2012
Election Day

Nov 13, 2012
Lame Duck Session Begins

Jan 1, 2013
Lame Duck Ends

Dec 31, 2012
☑ Bush-era tax cuts expire
☑ Emergency unemployment benefits end
☑ Payroll Tax Holiday ends
☑ Alternative Minimum Tax exemptions end

Jan 2, 2013
If no action, sequester takes effect
☑ $54.6B in defense cuts
☑ $54.6B in non-defense cuts

Key Factors to Avoid Sequester?

• **Lame Duck Session:** Congress returns November 13 for organizational efforts, but will adjourn for Thanksgiving week and return first week of December for possible Lame Duck session

• **Market Reactions:** In post-election environment, Wall Street expects Congress and the White House to address fiscal cliff issues, including tax extensions and potential tax and entitlement reforms, delay of sequestration, and raising of federal debt ceiling

• **Election Outcomes:** Will we have a change in the White House, and one or both chambers of Congress? Who will be the key players in the budget deliberations? How will the 2014 Senate campaigns for Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) come into play?
Can Sequestration be Avoided?

- YES! However...

  ✓ Congress must pass legislation and President Obama would need to sign before January 2, 2013

  ✓ Congress could pass legislation to postpone cuts—and buy time for a grand bargain on the federal debt and deficit

  ✓ Moody’s Investors Services warned it would lower the U.S. credit rating if negotiations do not produce a plan to stabilize and reduce the national debt. So, there is still real pressure to address our nation’s long-term debt
Beyond Sequestration, What Else is on the Table for Fiscal Cliff Discussions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bush Tax Cuts + AMT</td>
<td>$235 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension of Payroll Tax Cut</td>
<td>$90 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
<td>$25 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Extenders and Business Depreciation</td>
<td>$80 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sequester</td>
<td>$60 Billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affordable Care Act Taxes</td>
<td>$25 Billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare “Doc” Fix</td>
<td>$10 Billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Federal Debt Ceiling                                   | ????
| **Total**                                              | **$525 Billion Minimum** |
Pennsylvania Impact

- Sequestration could cost PA between 7-8% of its federal funding (PA Office of the Budget)

- Potential loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in areas such as special education, social services and economic development (PA Office of the Budget)

- Pennsylvania’s operating budget includes $19.76 billion in federal money (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

- Tens of millions of dollars could be lost to special education for students K-12 and tens of millions more for Title I programs serving schools with high numbers of poor children (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

- Combination of tax increases and spending cuts would slash 7.6% of money paid to PA from Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Safety trust funds (PA Fish & Boat Commission)

- Fish & Boat Commission says sequestration may cost the department $859,000 (PA Fish & Boat Commission)

- Cuts to Medicare will fall on health care providers, not beneficiaries (NY Times)

- Significant cuts to agencies- DPW, Education

- GMU study reports federal budget cuts could cost PA 78,000 jobs, indirectly and directly (Patriot News)
NACo Position

NACo is advocating for a \textit{balanced approach} to deficit reduction negotiations. Our general principles include:

- It is nearly impossible to address the federal debt and deficit crisis by severely cutting domestic, non-military discretionary programs.
- Federal assistance to state and local governments will help mitigate further layoffs; A new round of cuts will most likely result from sequester.
- Federal investments and matching funds in state and local infrastructure projects helps produce private sector jobs and improve our competitiveness.
- Deficit reduction should \textit{NOT} be accomplished by shifting costs to counties, imposing unfunded mandates, or pre-empting county programs and taxing authority.
- Special care should be taken to ensure that reforms to Medicaid, in particular, are not simply a shift of health care costs to counties.
Call to Action

Communicate with your Congressional delegation
the following message:

“As a fellow elected official responsible for our citizens’ well-being, I urge you to work in a bipartisan fashion to seek a balanced compromise on reductions and revenue raising in order to defuse the budget crisis this nation faces. Use a balanced fiscal approach in seeking solutions.”
Contact Us!

For questions or more information, feel free to contact us below

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