

Partners for Global Change

Toolkit

The Super Committee,
International Affairs Funding & You

November-December
2011

Nationwide Teleconference
Saturday, November 12, 2011

1:00 p.m. Eastern

Dial: 888-299-4099

Verbal Passcode: VJ24766



Citizens for
Global Solutions

Call Tips

- Participants should dial in 5-10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- When dialing in, the host and participants should hold the line for an operator.
- Participants will verbally give their pass code to the operator.
- Operators will take the city, state, and number of people in the room and place them into the Main Conference.
- Hit “*1” during Q&A sessions to queue up if you have a question. The Operator will allow questions in the order they are received.

Call Details

Moderator:

- Anu Joshi, Director of Outreach, Citizens for Global Solutions

Speakers:

- Meghan Simonds, U.S. Global Leadership Coalition

Call Agenda:

- Introduction & opening remarks from Anu Joshi
- Question and Answer session with Meghan Simmonds
- Citizens for Global Solutions Partners Project
- Question & Answer Session Regarding the Partners Project

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Speaker: Meghan Simonds, U.S. Global Leadership Coalition



Meghan is the Deputy Director of Government Relations at the USGLC. She most recently served as a Legislative Assistant for Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), advising the Senator on foreign affairs, transportation, and housing issues. Prior to her Legislative Assistant position, Meghan served as Senator Collins' Legislative Correspondent for foreign affairs, defense, and veterans affairs. She graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Maine in Orono.

The U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC) is a broad-based influential network of 400 businesses and NGOs; national security and foreign policy experts; and business, faith-based, academic and community leaders in all 50 states who support a smart power approach of elevating diplomacy and development alongside defense in order to build a better, safer world.

Citizens for Global Solutions Partners Project

November - December 2011:

Prioritize International Affairs Funding for 2013 and Beyond

What is the Joint Select Committee on Debt Reduction (aka the Super Committee)?

The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (JSC) is a unique organization created by the Budget Control Act of 2011 – a compromise bill between Congressional Republicans and Democrats and President Obama to raise the debt ceiling. As part of the compromise to raise the debt ceiling both parties agreed to create the Joint Select Committee and charged it to issue a formal recommendation on how to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years. The Congressional "super-committee" is comprised of six Democrats and six Republicans (three from each Chamber of Congress). The JSC is co-chaired by Democratic Senator Patty Murray (WA) and Republican Representative Jeb Hensarling (TX). The Committee's bipartisan recommendation will receive an up-or-down vote in Congress before December 23, 2011.

If the Committee fails to act, or if Congress refuses to adopt its proposals by Dec. 23rd, an array of prearranged cuts would kick in. The nature of that backup package of cuts, or "trigger," was among the biggest sticking points. Negotiators settled on \$1.2 trillion in cuts, of which half would be in defense spending and half in nondefense spending, including the payments to providers under Medicare. The cuts wouldn't affect programs for low-income households, Social Security or Medicaid. None of the cuts would go into effect until 2013.

What Role Does International Affairs Funding Play?

The Super Committee has the authority to explore any and all methods of reducing the deficit, including spending cuts to specific government accounts. This means that they could target international affairs. They could set allocations for following years that are significantly lower than current and past appropriations for foreign assistance. This is especially important because appropriations for Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) are still being finalized, and the Super Committee might see this allocation as a precedent for larger cuts to be made in the future.

If the Super Committee does not produce a report or if the report does not become law – a likely outcome considering the political polarization that characterizes this Congress – then spending will be lowered by \$1.2 trillion, with \$109.3 billion in cuts per year (beginning in FY 2013), half of which, \$54.7 billion, comes from the Defense Department and the other half from the rest of the budget. These cuts affect both mandatory and discretionary spending with proportionate cuts to both, but Social Security and Medicaid are protected while Medicare providers would see, at most, a two percent reduction in payments

The Budget Control Act makes a distinction between “security” and “non-security” spending. The BCA uses “security” and “non-security” spending categories to set discretionary spending caps. The security spending category includes the Department of Defense the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the National Nuclear Security Administration, “intelligence community management,” and international affairs. But these definitions can change based on whether a Super Committee plan is enacted.

If a Super Committee plan is not enacted, “security” and “non-security” are redefined. In this case, the security spending category will include mostly Defense Department spending, although a few smaller programs, such as nuclear weapons programs and some FBI spending, are also included. The non-security spending category will include all other discretionary spending, including Department of Homeland Security, Veterans Affairs, **and** international affairs. The redefinition of these categories means that spending cuts will fall more heavily on Defense Department programs.

If sequestration (automatic cuts) occurs, the International Affairs account would be re-categorized as non-security spending, and could face a 7.8% funding cut in 2013. This scenario would hinder the United States’ ability to provide lifesaving humanitarian assistance and food aid during emergencies. As many as 2.5 million people worldwide would lose access to emergency food aid.

Super Committee Timeline

September 8th - First Formal Meeting of the Select Committee

October 14th - House and Senate Committees Submit Recommendations

November 23rd - Deadline for the Super Committee to Vote on a Plan for Deficit Reduction

December 23rd - Deadline for Congress to Vote on a Super Committee Deficit Reduction Bill

What Happens If They Reach A Deal?

The committee's recommendations would then be put to a simple up or down vote by Congress by December 23, 2011. This vote is not subject to amendments, House "majority of the majority" blocks, or Senate filibusters, thus guaranteeing a pure majority vote in both chambers. Commentators note that a single instance of one member deviating from their party's economic program would lead to a seven-member majority and cause the plan to advance.

What Happens If They Don't Reach A Deal?

If reduction measures totaling at least \$1.2 trillion are not enacted by January 2012, automatic cuts will be triggered across all government spending taking effect in 2013 for the following nine years, until 2021 which is known as sequestration. If this occurs, several programs are exempted: Social Security, Medicaid and several low-income entitlement programs. (Medicare benefits could not be cut either, but provider payments could be reduced by up to 2 percent.)

A second debt ceiling increase of \$500 billion is slated to go into effect regardless of whether Congress passes the joint committee's proposal, but subject to a congressional resolution of disapproval if the proposal is not passed.

For more information visit the Joint Select Committee on Debt Reduction website:
<http://www.deficitreduction.gov/public/index.cfm/>

Why Is It Important To Call The Super Committee Members?

The International Affairs (IA) budget includes federal government funding for the activities of the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other agencies which carry out international work. This includes funding for the United Nations (U.N.). The entire IA budget amounts to approximately 1% of the U.S. annual budget, but this relatively small amount of funding is critical; it provides funding for, among other things, America's dues to the United Nations and other international organizations, and for peacekeeping missions around the world.

Calling the Committee Members - What to Say?

"As your committee considers spending cuts, I ask that you take into consideration the consequences of slashing the International Affairs Budget down further. As of last April, the \$8 billion cut to the State Department and foreign operations appropriations was the single largest cut to any one department. Many of the calls for cuts in international programs are based on the belief that the United States spends far more in this area than it actually does. I ask that it is taken into consideration that limiting our financial international affairs ability further would also limit the effectiveness of our critical role of diplomacy and development, alongside defense, in keeping Americans safe and protecting our national security.

I urge the committee to take special care to ensure that international affairs spending is not singled out to bear the brunt of further reductions, which would be dangerous and counterproductive."

Write the Super Committee: <http://www.deficitreduction.gov/public/index.cfm/contact>

Joint Select Committee Members DC Office Numbers

Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Co-Chair	(202) 224-2621
Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas), Co-Chair	(202) 225-3484
Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.)	(202) 224-2651
Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.)	(202) 225-6235
Rep. Dave Camp (R-Mich.)	(202) 225-3561
Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.)	(202) 225-3315
Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.)	(202) 224-2742
Sen. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.)	(202) 224-4521
Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio)	(202) 224-3353
Sen. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.)	(202) 224-4254
Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.)	(202) 225-3761
Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.)	(202) 225-0375

-OR-

Find the Members' contact information here:

Capitol Hill Switchboard: 212.224.3121

Please call the Super Committee Members with one clear message:

“Help keep America safe by protecting the international affairs budget from disproportionate cuts.”

Email us: outreach@globalsolutions.org to tell us how your phone call went!

Please email me if you have any questions getting started on the project or have any feedback to report! ~ Anu Joshi, ajoshi@globalsolutions.org