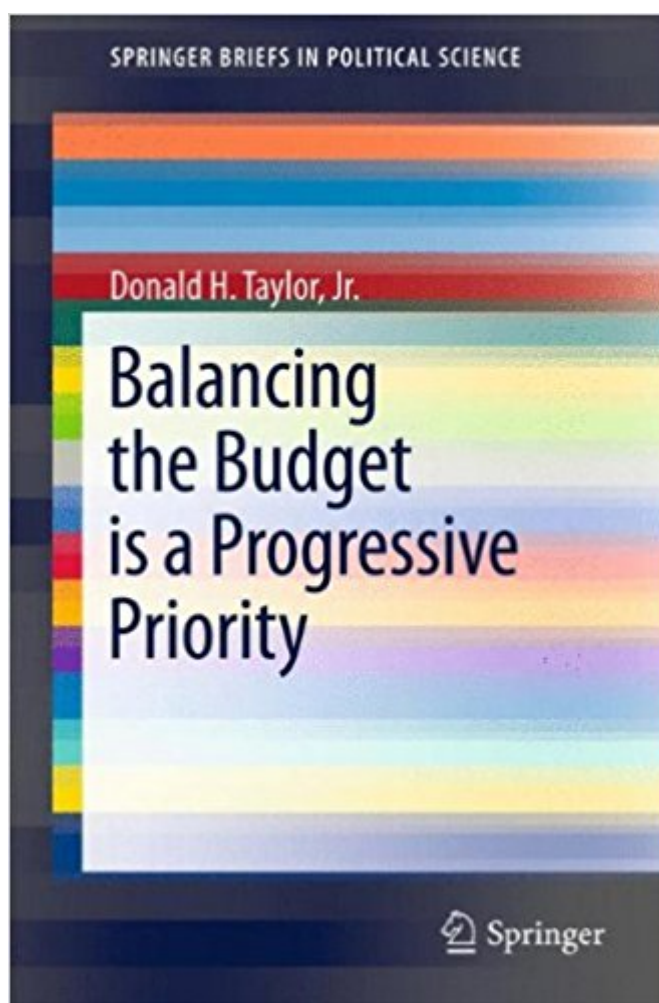


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Balancing The Budget Is A Progressive Priority (SpringerBriefs In Political Science)



Synopsis

Progressives need a balanced federal budget more than Conservatives, because they believe that government has an important role to play in modern life. Lack of a long term plan to move toward a sustainable budget crowds out short term Progressive priorities: infrastructure spending, green technology, education and needed governmental interventions in the short term to support and improve our weak economy. The federal budget is unsustainable. For all the bluster of the debt ceiling debate, the plan passed so far does not address the changes most obviously needed if we are to ever have a balanced budget again: an increase in taxes and the next steps on health reform to address the biggest driver of our long term budget deficit, health care costs. Slowing the rate at which health care costs are growing is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to developing a long range balanced budget. You should ask any politician saying they think a balanced budget is a priority one question: what is your health reform plan? Without one, they have no hope of achieving their goal. This book offers progressives solutions to health care reform and a balanced budget, and will be of interest to academics, students and educated readers interested in politics, public policy and government finance.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Donald H. Taylor is an Associate Professor of Public Policy, Center for Health Policy at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University and is an Associate Professor of Community and Family

Medicine and Nursing, Duke Medical Center.

Don Taylor has written an approachable and clear-headed book on the ills of our entitlement programs--Medicare and Social Security. His approach, while leaning left ("progressive"), is also bipartisan in tone and he continually reminds the reader that his positions are starting points and any negotiation requires greater compromise. His idealized safety net system is one that has a well-circumscribed fiscal floor and ceiling that cares for our neediest. Everything is up for negotiation within the boundaries of reason and sound policy. Market based approaches, along with revenue cuts, increases and redistribution, as well as program pruning are all there. He speaks in a conversational tone and offers an accessible primer for readers new to the nuance of policy and politics--the interface at which we move beyond chatter and actually accomplish something. His ideas on reforming Medicaid--a three-headed hydra given the different population of folks it has gradually ensnared--are very interesting and worthy of careful consideration. They are also practical and eminently doable--if the will is there. Absent however, are the operational elements of his plan, particularly the cost and coverage gains his proposal would generate--as compared to other ideas floating in the policy sphere. However, I don't believe his text was meant to conquer that beast. His intention was to generate ideas and create a starting point--not to solve systems ills in one fell swoop, but to take that first step. I recommend the book highly. It was a solid read and serves as a nice compendium to his blog site and always enjoyable commentary ([...]). The text is also current and my hope is he will continue to update and modify his work as the reform landscape evolves.

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