

Opinion: Washington needs to learn bipartisanship

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The No. 1 domestic priority in Washington should be job creation, although one wouldn't know it by the way House Republicans are pandering to their party's hard-core base. By approving a draconian measure Saturday to slash more than \$60 billion from the federal budget, the majority led by House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio demonstrated it is more willing to waste time on legislation that everyone knows will not pass the Democrat-led Senate than it is prepared to focus on sound economic policies.

Approving deep budget cuts simply to appease Tea Party adherents who don't care much for federal government isn't the magical answer that will suddenly help drive down Nevada's double-digit unemployment rate to healthier pre-recession levels. Employers aren't going to create jobs simply because a group of lawmakers wants to shred the budget. The formula it takes to cure the sluggish economy is far more complex than the one-dimensional solution Boehner and his adherents have proposed.

The first step that is necessary is a willingness to forge bipartisan compromise on major legislation that can have an effect on the economy. As Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., told The New York Times: "The first thing you have got to realize is that real bipartisanship has to be a verb, not a noun, and it means getting people talking about specifics. I do interpret this election as one where people were saying: 'Knock it off! We're tired of this food fight.' "

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada senses the need

for bipartisanship on the budget, noting that fellow Democrats have proposed \$41 billion in cuts. That plan recognizes the need to cut wasteful spending without going overboard. A key difference is that the Democratic proposal would spare the jobs of 65,000 educators, the very resource needed to produce a better-trained workforce to help America compete with other nations in the 21st century. House Republicans want to eliminate those jobs, which is one of the worst things that can happen while this nation's economic recovery remains fragile.

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