

Chairman Cowan,

I want to thank you for your leadership in the Newton County Republican Party. I appreciate what you've done to bring the party together after a tumultuous time caused by your predecessors. You're a good man who accomplished things that I didn't believe were possible in light of divisive actions of some party members.

After much thought and reflection, I've decided to resign my position on the county committee, as chairman of the Downs precinct. There are two primary reasons behind my decision. First, I simply don't have much time to engage my colleagues in the party and my community. As you know, my professional life keeps me incredibly busy, and I need to focus my efforts there.

Second, and most importantly, I cannot in good conscience support the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, Donald Trump, because I believe his views on most issues contradict my personal views on the role of government and the free market. Simply put, I will not cast my ballot for him.

I believe Trump's views on free trade are simply wrong,¹ and the protectionist proposals he has put forward would result in a trade war and hurt economic growth, if not contribute to a recession.² It's clear he's illiterate on trade and doesn't understand that it's mutually beneficial for exchanging economies,³ unless, of course, it's his own clothing line, which is made in China.⁴

His frequent public statements that entitlement reform, which is part of mandatory, or "baked in the cake," spending, is off the table demonstrate a lack of seriousness about the real long-term fiscal issues facing our country. Mandatory spending – including debt service, Medicare, and Social Security – are the biggest drivers of budget deficits. Any candidate, regardless of the office for which they're running, who is not offering specific ideas to address mandatory spending is not fit to serve.

Let me explain. According to the Congressional Budget Office,⁵ the federal government will spend almost \$3.9 trillion this year. Mandatory spending consumes roughly 72 percent of the federal budget. Entitlement programs, including Medicare and Social Security, represent nearly 63 percent of this spending and almost 9 percent is interest on the national debt. The rest of the budget, around 38 percent, is discretionary spending, roughly 16 percent of which is dedicated to national

¹ Scott Lincicome, "The Truth About Trade," National Review, April 4, 2016

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/433575/trade-american-economy-free-trade-costing-american-jobs>

² Jim Tankersly, "Donald Trump's trade war could kill millions of U.S. jobs," Washington Post, March 25, 2016

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/03/25/donald-trumps-trade-war-could-kill-millions-of-u-s-jobs/>

³ Scott Lincicome, "Almost Everything Donald Trump Says About Trade With China Is Wrong," The Federalist, January 20, 2016

<http://thefederalist.com/2016/01/20/almost-everything-donald-trump-says-about-trade-with-china-is-wrong/>

⁴ Heather Long, "Donald Trump suits and ties are made in China," CNN, March 8, 2016

<http://money.cnn.com/2016/03/08/news/economy/donald-trump-trade/>

⁵ Congressional Budget Office, "Updated Budget Projections: 2016 to 2026," March 24, 2016

<https://www.cbo.gov/publication/51384>

defense. The remaining 22 percent – \$857 billion – is nondefense discretionary spending.

By 2026, just ten years from now, the federal budget is projected to be more than \$6.4 trillion. Mandatory spending will be 64 percent of all federal outlays and debt service will rise to 13 percent. All discretionary spending – including defense – will consume the remaining 22 percent. The picture only grows more ominous in the future.

There are other issues with Trump, such as his support for and defense of socialized medicine.⁶ His contradictory statements on taxes are also a real concern, especially as the economy has struggled to gain momentum. In the past, when flirting with a bid for the Reform Party's presidential nomination, Trump backed a significant tax increase, not spending reform, to pay off the national debt.⁷ More recently, he has expressed openness to raising taxes,⁸ which would hurt the economy. He is open to raising the federal minimum wage,⁹ which would hurt people of color, young entry-level workers, and the poor.¹⁰

Separately, Trump's rhetoric on trade, immigration, and religion is xenophobic. While I wholeheartedly believe in free speech, even if it's unpopular or disgusting in nature, I can't support someone who targets people who may be different to promote his candidacy for any office, including the presidency.

Mr. Chairman, I hope you understand and respect my decision to resign. I believe in principle over party. What I'm writing reflects only my personal views. Others who I may be associated with, personally or professionally, may not necessarily agree with the contents of this letter. Nevertheless, I felt that I could no longer serve in an official capacity with the Newton County Republican Party with such strong personal opposition to the presumptive nominee.

I wish you the best and hope that you, regardless of this letter, will stay in touch.

In Liberty,

Jason Pye

⁶ Frank Camp, "5 Times Donald Trump Praised Socialized Healthcare," Independent Journal, February 13, 2016
<https://www.ijreview.com/2016/02/537107-5-times-donald-trump-praised-socialized-healthcare/>

⁷ Phil Hirschhorn, "Trump proposes massive one-time tax on the rich," CNN, November 9, 1999
<http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/stories/1999/11/09/trump.rich/index.html>

⁸ David Lawder and Lindsay Dunsmuir, "Trump changes tune on tax hikes for wealthy Americans," Reuters, May 9, 2016
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-trump-idUSKCN0XZ013>

⁹ Ben Kamisar, "In reversal, Trump expresses openness to raising minimum wage," The Hill, May 4, 2016
<http://thehill.com/policy/finance/278778-trump-expresses-openness-to-raising-minimum-wage>

¹⁰ Mark Wilson, "The Negative Effects of Minimum Wage Laws," Downsizing the Federal Government, September 1, 2012
<http://www.downsizinggovernment.org/labor/negative-effects-minimum-wage-laws>