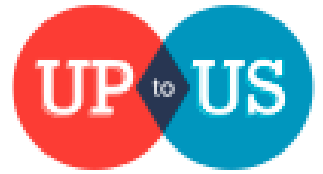




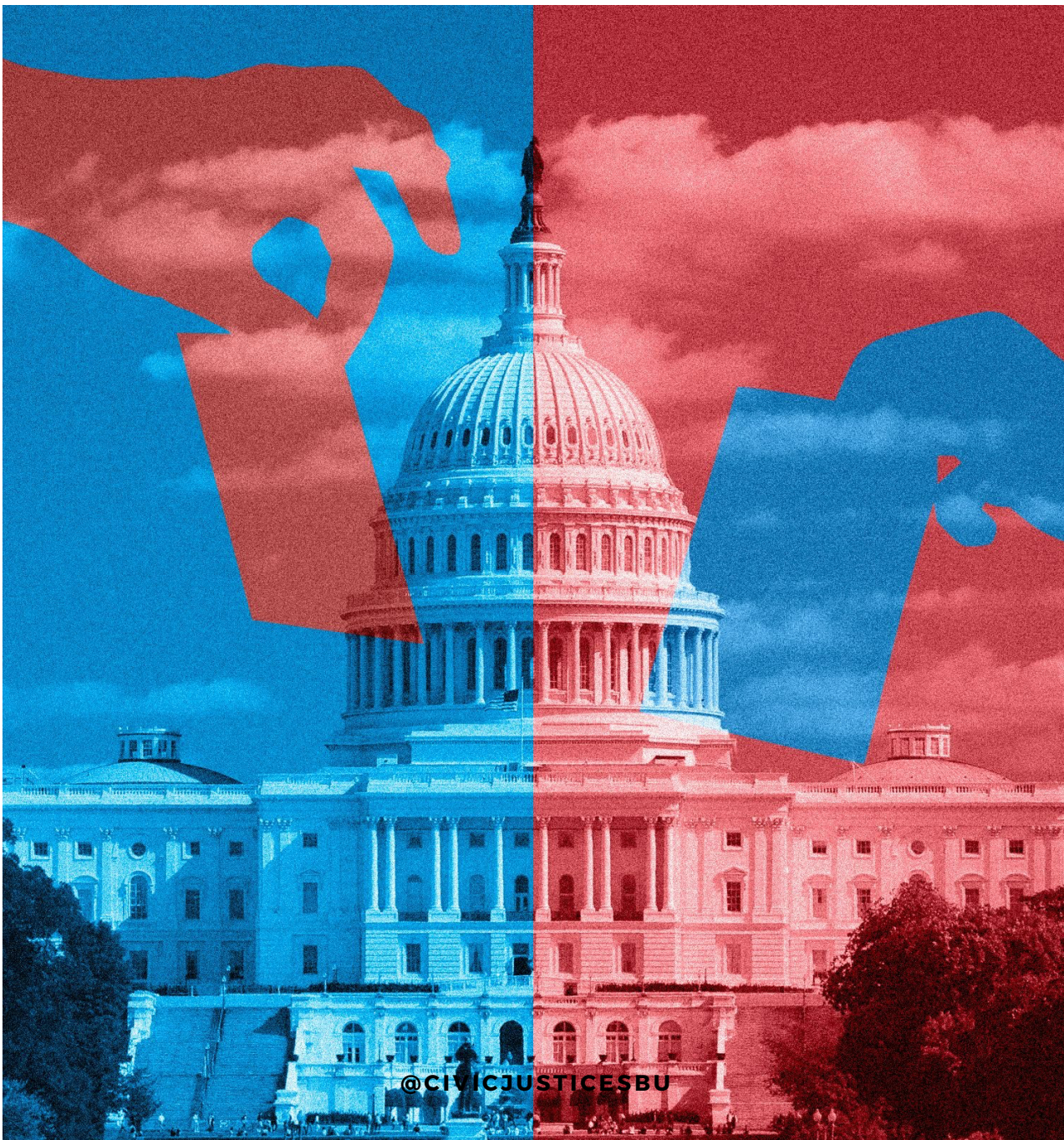
Stony Brook  
University

Center for Civic Justice



# MIDTERM ELECTIONS AND THEIR LONG TERM EFFECTS:

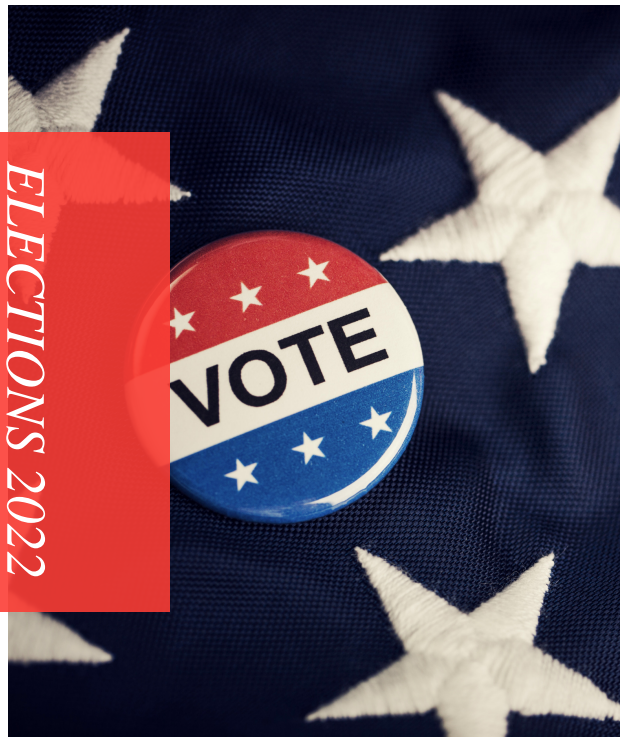
UNDERSTANDING YOUR VOTE AND ITS IMPACT ON FISCAL POLICY  
COMMUNITY DIALOGUE BACKGROUND GUIDE FALL 2022



# INTRODUCTION

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## THE 2022 MIDTERMS ARE MORE CONSEQUENTIAL THAN EVER.

What once held insignificant interest, media coverage, and low turnout with voters, midterm elections now see coverage on par with presidential elections. As of 2018, just over 50% of the voter-eligible population (VEP) participated in the midterm, a historical high for the infamously overlooked election cycle. This has corresponded with increased voter turnout amongst all elections, with the 2020 General Election seeing turnout unprecedented in the past century: nearly 67% of the VEP cast their ballots during the height of the pandemic.

## WHAT COMES FROM THE MIDTERMS? YOUR FISCAL FUTURE.

The increased voter participation could be attributed to each election cycle's higher stakes, and one looming issue becoming more existential for ordinary Americans' fiscal woes: The National Debt.

Often overlooked by many across the country, the rising debt the country owes will implode into economic instability and slowdown in our not-so-distant future.

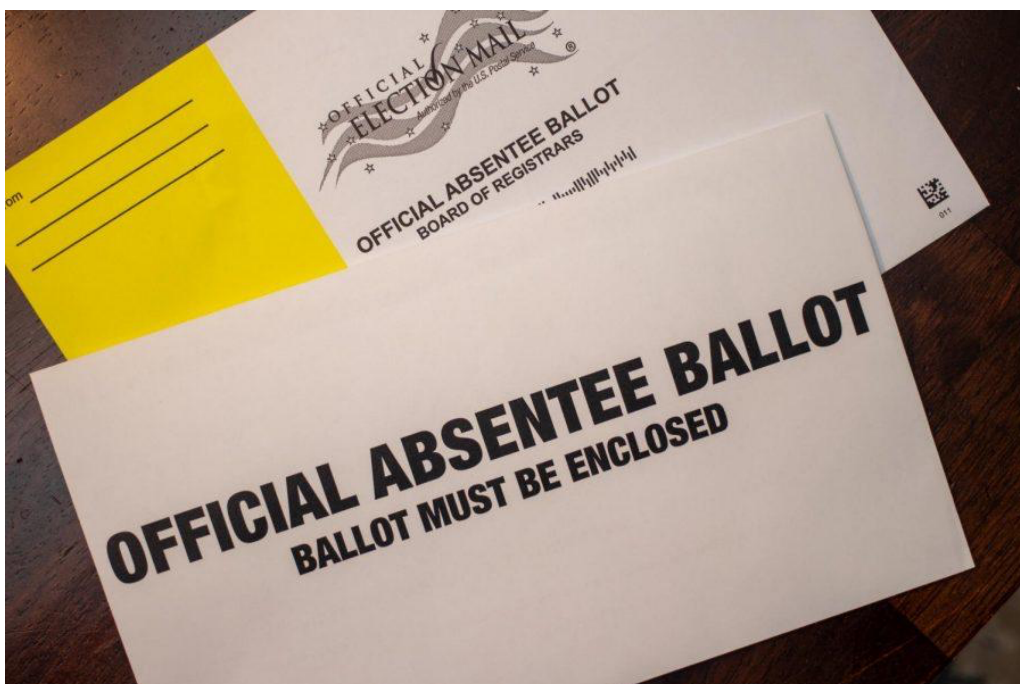
We will be going over how these midterms are just one step in providing financial relief for thousands of Americans.



# INFORMED VOTING

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## PREPARING TO CAST A VOTE THAT REPRESENTS YOUR INTERESTS



# KEY TERMS

## POLITICAL PARTY

An organization that coordinates candidates to compete in a particular country's elections. US citizens can register as party members, but you do not need to vote for your party's candidates in the general elections.

## POLLING PLACE

A building where voting takes place during an election. Your polling place is assigned based on your registered address, and you can only vote at this location on Election Day.

## EARLY VOTING

A convenient voting process by which voters in a public election can vote before a scheduled election day. You can vote early at any of the early voting locations in your county.

## ABSENTEE BALLOT

A ballot completed and typically mailed in advance of an election by a voter who cannot be present at the polls. In NYS, if you request and receive an absentee ballot you must vote by this method, you cannot change your mind and vote in person.

## CANDIDATES

A person who is nominated for an elected position. On the ballot, each party will have a nominated candidate for every position. The positions (like Governor or County Legislator) will be listed along the top of the ballot, and the party's nominees will run horizontal under each category.

## BALLOT MEASURES

A law, issue, or question that appears on a statewide or local ballot for voters of the jurisdiction to decide. This could result in the adoption of new policies or laws, or it could be an advisory measure.

# HOW WE VOTE

## SINGLE ISSUE VOTING

Single-issue politics involves political campaigning or political support based on one essential policy area or idea. These voters are inclined to choose candidates based on their stances on their chosen issue, even if they do not agree with them on other policies.

Popular issues can change from election year to election year. For this November, voters on both sides of the aisle are citing the economy and abortion as some of their top issues. In previous years, issue voting has been focused on topics like COVID-19 (2020 election) and foreign policy/war (2004 election).

## IDENTITY POLITICS

A political approach wherein people of a particular race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social background, social class, or other identifying factors develop political agendas that are based upon these identities. They gravitate towards candidates that share or otherwise advocate for their identity groups.

When parties form their platforms around identity appeals, voters who value those identities will tend to gravitate towards their aligning party. Many of these voters will then vote down a **party line**, assuming that the candidates chosen by their party are members of or will accurately represent their identity groups.

## BOYCOTTING AND ABSTENTION

Abstention is a term in election procedure for when a participant in a vote does not go to vote on election day. An abstention may be used to indicate the individual's ambivalence about the measure, or mild disapproval that does not rise to the level of active opposition. Abstention can also be used when someone has a certain position about an issue, but since the popular sentiment supports the opposite, it might not be politically expedient to vote according to their conscience.

who's on your ballot?

# GOVERNOR

## Kathy Hochul

Democratic Party  
Working Families Party



**Antonio Delgado**  
Lt. Governor

### Economy

- Accelerating \$1.2 billion in middle-class tax cuts for 6 million NYers
- Providing \$100 million in relief for nearly 200,000 small businesses
- Making affordable child care accessible to 100,000 more working families

### Education

- Invested \$2.1 billion in New York public schools.
- Increased funding for SUNY schools by \$113 million.

### Climate/Environment

- Awarded \$7.9 million to New York farmers in order to assist their sustainability efforts
- Kickstarted Climate Smart Communities initiative.

### Social

- Pro-choice stance on abortion
- Established the Patient Bill of Rights teaching residents their legal protections and guarantees.

### Pandemic/Healthcare

- Expanded vaccination campaigns for essential workers
- 

## Lee Zeldin

Republican Party  
Conservative Party



**Alison Esposito**  
Lt. Governor

### Economy

- Lower taxes for NYS residents
- Repealed MTA Payroll tax for 80 percent of employers.

### Education

- Invested in a \$2 billion electron ion collider for Brookhaven National Lab.

### Environment

- Secured \$20 million annually for the cleanup of the Long Island Sound
- Helped secure funds for the National Estuary Program
- Provided \$513 million towards the Sea Grant program, assisting in sustainable fishery and marine-life cultivation.

### Public Safety

- Repeal Cashless Bail
- Appoint a new NTS DOCCS Commissioner
- Rebuild correctional facilities
- Overhaul Board of Parole/parole Hearing Process
- Invested \$8.3 billion towards treatment, enforcement, and prevention of heroin and opioid abuse.

who's on your ballot?

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# U.S. SENATE

Class 3



## Charles E. Schumer

Democratic Party  
Working Families Party

- Current Senate Majority Leader
- Has been a Senator since 1998.
- Helped pass the American Rescue Plan, providing \$100 billion in New York and aid and recovery from the pandemic.
- Pushing the For the People and John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Acts.
- End federal prohibition on marijuana
- Cancel student debt
- Pass the Equality Act
- Strengthen and Boost Social Security and Medicare



## Joe Pinion

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- Former Political Journalist
- Wants to form a coalition of Republicans and disenfranchised Democrats and minorities to tackle everyday issues that established candidates have been neglecting.
- He is the first Black American nominated for a major party senate position in New York.
- His main focuses are on crime, inflation, and child literacy rates.

who's on your ballot?

# U.S HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

District 1



**Bridget M. Fleming**

Democratic Party  
Working Families Party

- Current Suffolk County Legislator
- Former member of the Southampton Town Council
- Strengthen the Affordable Care Act to make healthcare universally accessible
- Pro-Choice; wishes to codify Roe v. Wade ruling into law
- Alleviate taxes on the middle class, and eliminate the cap on State and Local Taxes
- Fight Climate Change and ensure clean water.
- Invest in public safety



**Nicholas J. LaLota**

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- NAVY Veteran
- Opposes NYS Policy keeping children's healthcare private from their parents.
- Opposes abortions past the first trimester, except in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the mother's life.
- Wants to lower costs for prescription medications, and wants to force insurance companies to better cover 'pre-existing conditions'
- Pro-Gun ownership
- Fix Long Island infrastructure without raising taxes



who's on your ballot?

# U.S HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

District 2



**Jackie Gordon**

Democratic Party  
Working Families Party

- First Black woman elected to the Babylon Town Board.
- Chair of the Veterans Advisory Council.
- Work to codify Roe v. Wade
- Implement universal background checks, banning assault weapons, and enforcing Red Flag laws.
- Tax relief for the middle class.
- Preserve tribal communities and uplift their local economies.
- Preserve clean water and combat carbon pollution.



**Andrew Garbarino**

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- Incumbent
- Supports the continuation of Title 42 for border security.
- Member of the GOP Job and Economy Task Force.
- Member of the Conservative Climate Caucus; Protection of the Great South Bay.
- Clean up the Bethpage Plume from Grumman contamination.
- Enforce gun rights and keep guns away from criminals.

# DEFINING THE POSITIONS ON YOUR BALLOT

## STATE SENATOR

State senators are elected by voters to represent them in the State Senate, where their primary duties are creating, debating, and voting on legislation that either makes new laws or modifies existing ones.

## STATE ASSEMBLYMEN

Legislative authority and responsibilities of the New York State Assembly include passing bills on public policy matters, setting levels for state spending, raising and lowering taxes, and voting to uphold or override gubernatorial vetoes.

## STATE COMPTROLLER

The New York State Comptroller is the State's chief fiscal officer who ensures that State and local governments use taxpayer money effectively and efficiently to promote the common good.

## ATTORNEY GENERAL

As head of the Department of Law, the Attorney General is both the “People's Lawyer” and the State's chief legal officer. As the “People's Lawyer,” the Attorney General serves as the guardian of the legal rights of the citizens of New York, its organizations and its natural resources.

who's on your ballot?

# STATE SENATE

District 1



**Skyler Johnson**

Democratic Party  
Working Families Party

- Recent Stony Brook alumni
- Protect abortion throughout New York.
- Clean Long Island's drinking water and infrastructure.
- Move New York away from fossil fuels.
- Repair and maintain road in Suffolk County.
- Introduce a civic engagement curriculum and encourage creativity in schools.
- Universal Pre-K program.
- Lower drug prices and cut Medicare/Medicaid costs for New Yorkers.
- Supports the New York Health Act



**Anthony Palumbo**

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- Incumbent
- Ranking of the Senate Codes Committee and the Ethics and Internal Governance Committee.
- Strong proponent of law enforcement and first responders.
- Proposes to repeal bail reform laws.
- Wishes to focus his efforts on small-business relief post-pandemic.

who's on your ballot?

# OTHER CANDIDATES

## State Assembly District 4



**Steven Englebright**

Democratic Party  
Working Families  
Party

- Incumbent
- In office 1992 as District 4 Assemblymen



**Edward Flood**

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- Challenger
- Proposed strengthening addiction treatment programs and mental health services.

## New York Comptroller



**Thomas P. DiNapoli**

Democratic Party  
Working Families  
Party

- Incumbent
- In office since February 2007
- Served as an aide to Assemblywoman May Newburger



**Paul Rodriguez**

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- Challenger
- Currently, he is a nonprofit development professional at a major New York City religious institution.

## Attorney General



**Letitia James**

Democratic Party  
Working Families  
Party

- Incumbent
- Previously on the New York City Council (2004-2013) and was then a Public Advocate (2013-2017)



**Michael Henry**

Republican Party  
Conservative Party

- Challenger
- He vows to stand with law enforcement, local prosecutors and communities to increase public safety.

# how do I cast my ballot?

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## OPTIONS FOR REGISTERED VOTERS



Whether your voting location is in a different state, or you simply cannot make it to a polling location near you for whatever the circumstances might be, if you've requested an absentee ballot, voting has not been easier!

Simply fill out your ballot and mail it with the instructions on your absentee ballot.

Based on your polling location, (if you are registered to vote on campus that could either be the SAC or the Union), simply just go in and vote!

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**\*\* Note:** If you did not submit a form of identification while registering to vote (Drivers ID/SSN), make sure to bring one as you will be required to present identification the first time you vote.



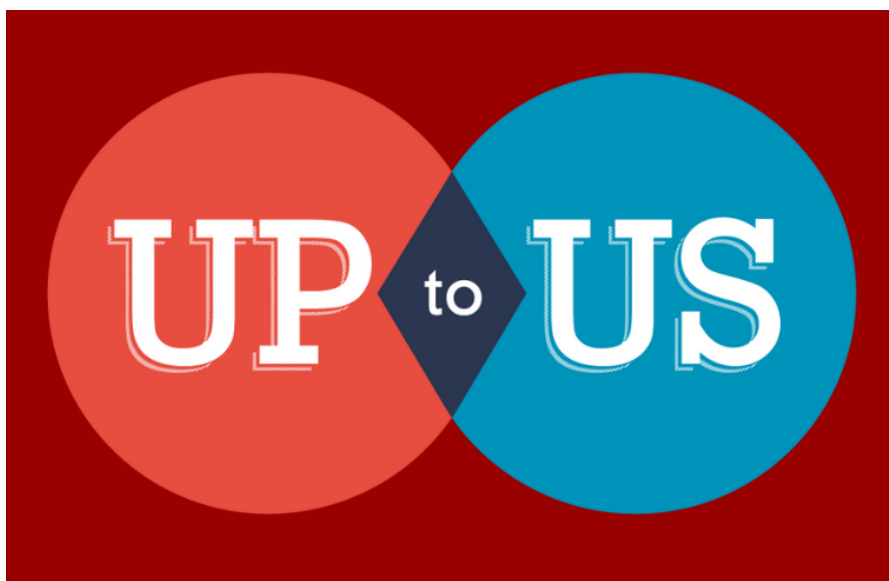
# Guided Questions: Midterm Elections

- 1- Do you feel like you have an adequate understanding of each of the candidates' platforms? Why or why not?
- 2- Do you think there will be a trend of single-issue voters in this election? What issues do you think will be hot topics, and what do you think more people should pay attention to?
- 3- Are there any significant roadblocks in your voting journey/do you have any concerns about your ability to cast a ballot? (This could include transportation issues, work schedule, or accessibility needs, for example)
- 4- Do you think voting should be a right or a privilege? Do you believe that citizens have a moral responsibility to exercise their right to vote, and if so, are there exceptions to this rule?
- 5- What qualities do you look for in a candidate, and which qualities do you avoid? (This does not necessarily mean partisan stances-- instead think of character traits like honesty or friendliness, as well as identity factors like gender, class, etc.)

# TACKLING THE NATIONAL DEBT

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## A GUIDE TO U.S. FISCAL POLICY



# NATIONAL DEBT FAST FACTS

## WHOSE DEBT IS IT?

In a given fiscal year (FY), when spending (ex. money for roadways) exceeds revenue (ex. money from federal income tax), a budget deficit results. To pay for this deficit, the federal government borrows money by selling marketable securities. The national debt is the amount of money the federal government has borrowed to cover the outstanding balance of expenses incurred over time.

## HOW LONG HAS THE NATIONAL DEBT EXISTED?

The U.S. has carried debt since its inception. Debts incurred during the American Revolutionary War amounted to \$75 million, primarily borrowed from domestic investors and the French Government for war materials.

## WHY DOES IT INCREASE?

As the federal government experiences reoccurring deficits, which is common, the national debt grows. The national debt is similar to a person using a credit card for purchases and not paying off the full balance each month. The cost of purchases exceeding the amount paid off represents a deficit, while accumulated deficits over time represents a person's overall debt.

## HOW DO WE GET RID OF IT?

As budget deficits are a contributing factor to the national debt, the U.S. can take measures to pay off its debt through budget surpluses, the last of which in the US was held in 2001. Governments around the world depends on U.S. bonds to fund their own countries. While it is unlikely that the U.S. will stop doing this, measures can be taken in other areas to decrease the national debt.

## IS IT A GOOD THING?

Consistent funding of programs and services is critical to residents' health, welfare, and security. However, as the government allocates more funds towards paying off interests, other investments could get crowded out. Areas such as education, research and development, and infrastructure may not progress at sufficient or adequate levels due to interest payments.



# KEY

## DEBT

The amount of accumulated expenses minus accumulated revenues at a given point in time. The majority of the government's debt is financed by borrowing from outside the federal government and is known as the debt held by the public.

## DEFICIT

The amount by which spending exceeds revenues over a given period (usually a 12-month fiscal year).  
The opposite is a surplus.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

A social insurance program that supplements retiree income through monthly cash payments. It is an important component of many Americans' retirement income.

## FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Fiscal sustainability is the ability of a government to maintain public finances at a credible and serviceable position over the long term.

## MANDATORY SPENDING

Spending on certain programs that is mandated by existing law without requiring Congress and the President to appropriate funds. Lawmakers do not provide specific funding levels for mandatory spending; rather, they specify who is eligible for benefits as well as the type and level of benefits that they can receive.

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## Acknowledgements:

ASHLEY MERCADO-ORTIZ  
JULIA BRANDENSTEIN  
ANASTASIA POULOS  
TIM GIORLANDO  
GRACE ARMANN  
MELISA KILIC  
CENTER FOR CIVIC JUSTICE