



I, like many Americans, have grown increasingly frustrated by the lack of action by our elected “leaders” in Washington. On every issue, both sides do a lot of talking, both about how great their own ideas are and how terrible the ideas on the other side are, but take almost no action. Our problems are real, but Washington is content to punt on every issue that is at all divisive, preferring to win elections instead of find solutions. That would never work in business—if you avoid your problems, soon you’ll find you no longer have a business!

There are certainly a lot of people out there who don’t like Wisconsin Representative [Paul Ryan’s new budget plan](#), released yesterday. The chairman of the House Budget Committee was blasted from both sides after last year’s budget proposal, and he’s back with more of the same. Entitlement reform, tax code simplification, and budget cutting. But what I admire most about him and his proposal is the courage he has to actually offer a solution to our problems.

Everyone knows that our national debt is too high. Everyone knows that our tax code is mind-numbingly complex, and particularly tough on small businesses. Everyone knows our health care costs are spiraling out of control, with, for just one example, Medicare growing exponentially.

But even though everyone on both sides of the aisle knows about these problems, almost no one actually is willing to even discuss a plan to tackle some of these issues. The Senate has not passed a budget proposal since 2009, and there is no plan to even come up with one for this year, either. When President Obama offered a tax reform plan, it was widely acknowledged even by his supporters as strictly a campaign document, not an actual governing proposal. And anyone who even whispers the words “entitlement reform” is demonized as hating the poor, elderly, and otherwise disadvantaged.

Last year, Mr. Ryan came up with his own version of a budget plan that would tackle these problems, and it actually passed the House before being voted down in the Senate. For his trouble, he was vilified, most notably in a [notorious ad](#) showing him literally pushing grandma

off a cliff. Even fellow Republicans, such as presidential candidate

[Newt Gingrich](#)

, denounced the plan, apparently preferring the status quo. For most politicians, that would be enough to convince them never to propose anything controversial again!

But Mr. Ryan is either exceedingly stubborn or genuinely believes that we need to find solutions to our problems. His new budget once again tackles these tough issues. In a nod to the partisan bickering over the previous year's proposal, he teamed up with Democratic Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon for Medicare reform (not that I imagine it will help him when the proposal goes to a vote). I don't think he hates the poor or elderly; he's trying to find an answer to a tough problem, creating a sustainable system requires tough choices, and the new and unknown is often frightening—even when we know that the old and familiar is broken, too!

Already, the new plan is drawing fire from critics, including at the [New York Times](#) and [Huffington Post](#)

. More is sure to come his way, and there's almost no chance of the budget passing through the Senate.

But right now, Mr. Ryan is the only one offering a real plan for the future. For those who don't like his solutions, it's their responsibility to come up with an alternative. We know that we cannot keep doing what we're doing; we have to find an answer. If you're not proposing or endorsing another plan, then you're endorsing a broken, bankrupt status quo. We would never tolerate that in the business world, and we shouldn't tolerate it in the halls of power, either.