

# Dayton Daily News

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## Sequestration: Everything you need to know

What is the [sequester](#)?

A [sequester](#) is defined as a general cut in government spending. The [sequestration](#) that is being buzzed about in current news is scheduled to go into effect March 1, unless further congressional action is taken.

Why is this happening?

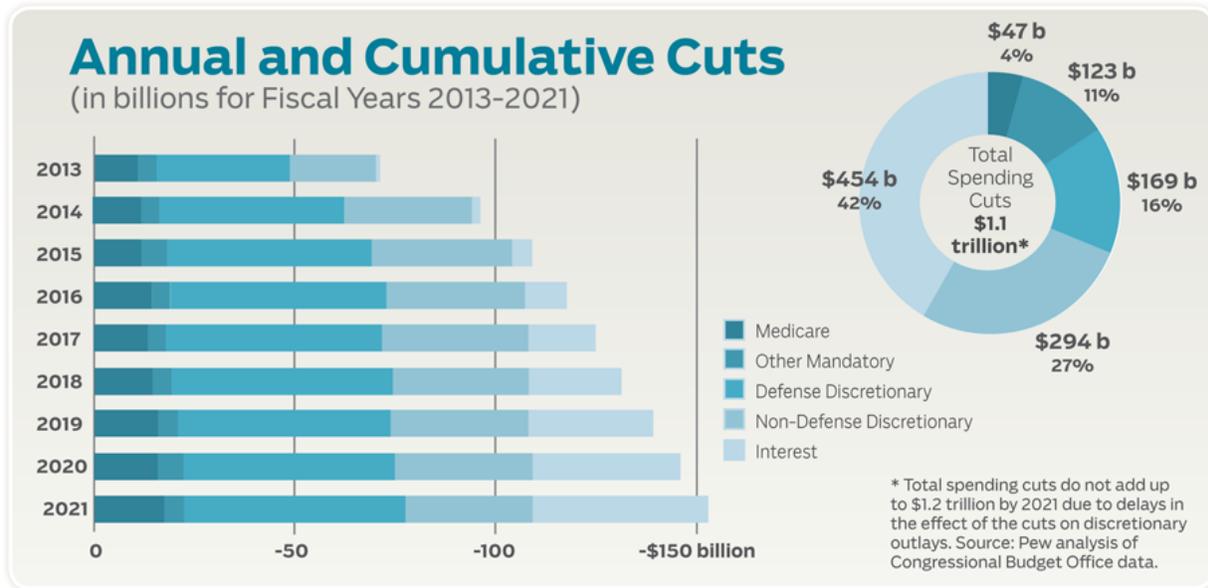
In 2011 President Obama signed the [Budget Control Act of 2011 \(BCA\)](#), better known as the debt ceiling compromise. The act was a deal made in government to cut more than \$1 trillion in spending over a period of ten years. To do so, Congress created a joint congressional committee, which included Sen. Rob



Portman, tasked with finding the cuts. But the committee could not reach an agreement, as a result, the federal government will now [enact the \\$1 trillion in cuts through mandatory](#), across-the-board cuts to discretionary spending programs, with half of those cuts being absorbed by the Defense Department. Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid benefits are exempt and will not be cut.

Hence, we have the [sequestration](#) in talks now. The decision was delayed until March 1, 2013.

Below shows how government will cut their spending with the new budget:

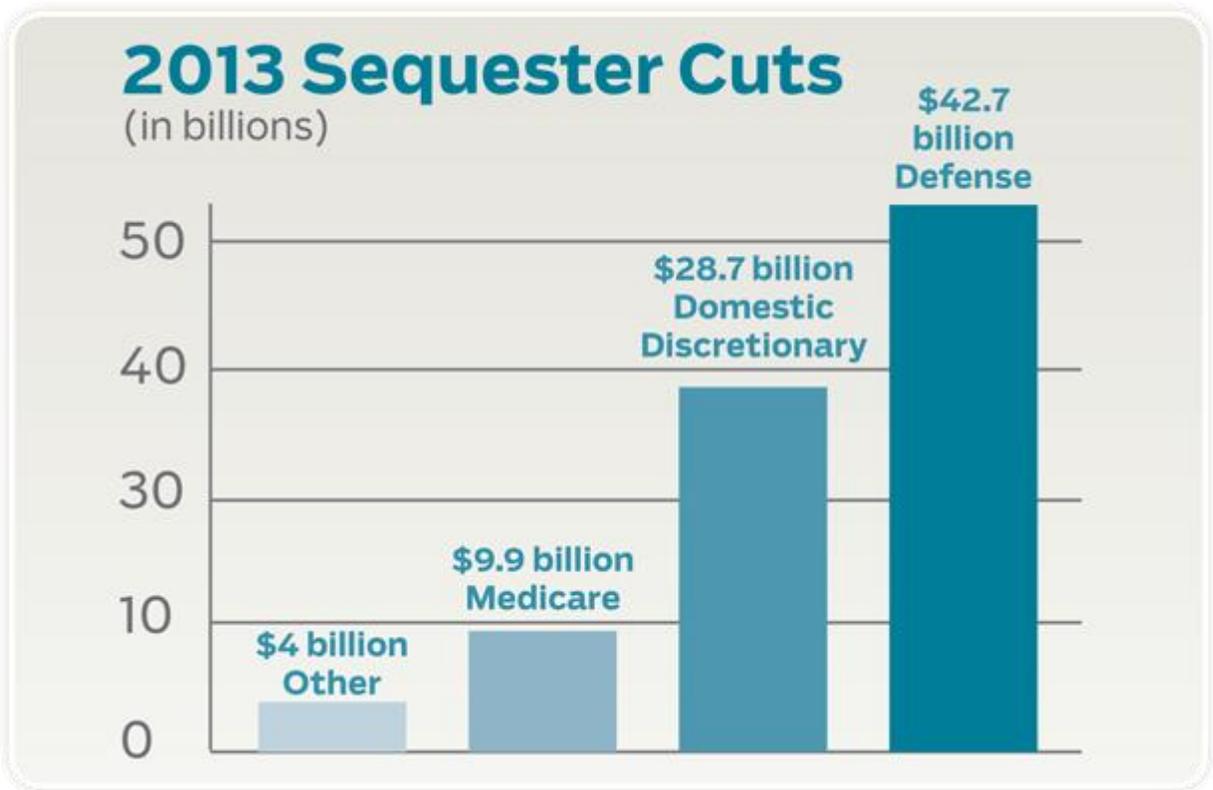


## What will get cut?

The cuts to the national budget *will be evenly divided between* domestic and defense programs.

**DEFENSE PROGRAMS:** Most defense cuts will affect spending (weapons purchases, base operations, construction, etc.) The Defense Department would absorb half of the \$85 billion in cuts expected to go through March 1, meaning reduced training hours, civilian furloughs and the possibility that they won't be able to pay for health insurance. Wright-Patterson Airforce Base in Fairborn could face [furloughs and budget cuts](#) with this deal. But not only will WPAFB be affected, but [companies and businesses around the base](#), also.

**DOMESTIC PROGRAMS:** Most cuts will not affect mandatory domestic spending (regular payouts like Social Security and Medicaid) but rather discretionary domestic spending. The Senate Appropriations Committee asked agencies to assess the impact of the cuts on their budgets for the remainder of this fiscal year.



Here are a few key government programs that will be cut and links to how we in Ohio and Greater Dayton area will be affected:

- **Education:**



Title I money – which goes to the neediest school districts – would decrease by \$726 million over the next year, potentially eliminating support to some 2,700 schools serving 1.2 million students. It could eliminate some 10,000 teacher and teacher aide jobs. [See which schools in our area receive Title I funding.](#)

- **U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

Customs would not be able to maintain the currently congressionally-required levels of staffing. Funding and staffing reduction will increase wait times at airports and slow screening and entry programs for those coming into the United States.

- **U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

The agency would not be able to sustain current operations and would roll back progress on the detention of undocumented immigrants. It would also reduce the agency's investigations into activities including human smuggling and commercial trade fraud. [What is U.S. Immigration Service's current budget? Where are the national immigration offices located throughout Ohio?](#)

- **Transportation Security Administration**



The TSA is charged with protecting air, land, and rail transportation systems within the United States to ensure the freedom of movement for people and goods. With cuts, TSA would have to reduce staffing, meaning passenger wait times at airport security would “substantially increase,” according to the Department of Homeland Security. Right now [you can see how much money TSA is currently spending](#), this includes TSA security at Dayton International Airport.

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency:**

The agency's disaster relief fund would be reduced by more than \$1 billion, meaning survivors of future severe weather events may see an impact. State and local homeland security grants would also be reduced, which could lead to layoff of emergency personnel and first responders. Since 2000, Ohio has received aid from FEMA for more than 16 natural disasters. [See all Ohio cases here.](#)

- **Housing and Urban Development:**

About 125,000 individuals and families – including elderly and the disabled – could lose benefits from the Housing Choice Voucher program, putting them at risk of becoming homeless. In the Greater Dayton area the organization of [Greater Dayton Premier Management](#) administers 3,500

vouchers to Montgomery County residents and serves approximately 8,000 people annually [through its Housing Choice Voucher program](#).

More than 100,000 formerly homeless people could be removed from current housing and returned to the streets. [According to state records, more than 13,000 people in Ohio are homeless](#). Public housing agencies would cut capital repairs and maintenance, meaning deteriorating conditions.

Read our report on how [homeless numbers in Montgomery County](#) are on the rise.

- **WIC**

Some 600,000 low-income women and children would no longer be able to access nutrition assistance through the Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children. Across Ohio there are multiple WIC access clinics, and [you can find them here](#). In June 2012 [a local WIC office closed in Springfield](#) due to budget cuts, and with more cuts, more local offices could be in jeopardy.

- **Social Security**

While benefits would not be cut, the agency would lose more than 5,000 employees during the next fiscal year. The agency estimates that visitors to Social Security field offices would wait almost 30 minutes to see a representative and callers to the 1-800 number would wait almost 10 minutes for an answer. The agency also predicts a backlog in pending claims. You can [see where the closest local office to you is](#) located here.

- **Federal Aviation Administration**



The agency estimates that furloughs of air traffic controllers and technicians will result in a reduction of air traffic. They predict that the [cuts could slow air traffic levels](#) in major cities, resulting in delays and disruptions across the country during the travel season.

- **Head Start**

Up to 70,000 children would lose access to [Head Start and Early Head Start services](#). In Montgomery County alone there are 46 Head Start centers, [to see all the centers in your county, click here](#).

- **Medicare**

While [Medicare benefits](#) will not be cut, payments to Medicare providers, health plans and drug plans will be reduced by two percent. Right now [these are the Medicare measures in Ohio](#), but with the cuts those groups will only be reimbursed at 98 cents to the dollar for their services to Medicare beneficiaries.