



FEDERATION OF AMERICAN CONSUMERS AND TRAVELERS - NEWS RELEASE -

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How Does the National Debt Impact YOU?

EDWARDSVILLE, IL, December 9, 2009 - Should the average citizen worry about the soaring national debt? Does this debt really trickle down to have a negative impact at the consumer level? If so, why do the powers in Washington continue to grow that debt on an almost dizzying pace?

According to Vicki Rolens, managing director of the Federation of American Consumers and Travelers (FACT), these are questions which members of that not-for-profit association are asking.

“When the media and the politicians talk about national debt,” Rolens says, “it rarely is translated into real money. The full impact on consumers is rarely mentioned, so many people have the mistaken belief that national debt does not affect them as they go about the business of earning a living and trying to build a secure and enjoyable lifestyle.”

She adds: “The truth, of course, is that the national debt affects us all.”

Rolens points out that there are only so many ways a nation can attempt to control or offset its debt, and all those ways diminish the individual citizen’s ability to fulfill his or her needs and goals.

“Experts can get highly technical in explaining the dangers which necessarily accompany an exploding national debt,” say Rolens, “but the basic explanation is pretty simple. Bottom line, a nation can do two things to cut debt: the first is to raise taxes, and the second is to cut services. The higher the debt, the greater the tax hikes and the more severe the service cuts. In other words, you have fewer tax dollars and you get less for each dollar that you do have ... everything, from schools and the highway system to environmental programs and national security, suffers.”

What can the individual consumer do to help control the national debt? “The citizen’s greatest weapon is his or her vote,” Rolens says. “If your representatives in Washington have a history of voting for bills that add to the national debt, then you can fire them by voting in representatives who have a greater sense of fiscal responsibility.”

She emphasizes, “This isn’t a matter of Democrat or Republican. We probably need to look beyond party affiliation and seek out those candidates who seem to care about the national debt and are determined to keep it from getting farther out of control.” Rolens says that a citizen can also write to his or her political representatives telling them to resist policies which raise the national debt unnecessarily, but she says that “politicians seem not to be paying much attention to public opinion these days.”

The Federation of American Consumers and Travelers (FACT) is a consumer organization, formed under the not-for-profit corporation laws of the District of Columbia in 1984. It serves more than 1 million consumers nationwide. Additional information on FACT may be found in the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, and by visiting the association's Web site (www.usafact.org). Informative, unbiased news bulletins are regularly disseminated by FACT to help its members remain current on matters which might seriously impact their lives. The association does not offer support to -- and does not receive support from -- any political party or movement. In addition to publishing consumer-related reports, the association provides more than 30 benefits for its members, ranging from [medical insurance](#) and [dental discounts](#) to [prescription drug savings](#) and [scholarships](#). FACT’s administrative office is located at 318 Hillsboro Avenue, Edwardsville, IL 62025.

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