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May 22, 1995

Congressman Newt Gingrich
2428 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Newt,

I know that you are now engaged in a very important legislative effort to balance the budget. It appears to me that very little has changed since we debated this issue when I served in Congress in the 1980s. At that time, the debate culminated in a compromise called Gramm-Rudman but, as you know, this "solution" was ultimately discarded in 1990 and deficits have been out of control ever since.

It was that debate and the failure of the Gramm-Rudman deficit control plan that led to my writing the enclosed book, *Unaccountable Congress: It Doesn't Add Up*, after I left Congress in 1989. I concluded that it was time the public was told the truth about our government's almost casual disregard for fiscal responsibility and the real numbers affecting our lives. I also felt that it was important that a former member who had spent twenty-two years in the private sector dealing with accounting, financial reports, budgets, and numbers as a practicing Certified Public Accountant weigh in on the public discussion through the vehicle of a book.

I feel no less motivated now in writing to you and in enclosing the updated version of the results of misusing the "most expensive credit card in the world." (As many members will recall, I frequently held up my congressional credit card on the floor of the House to bring attention to our fiscal crisis, and subsequently the card became the cover illustration for my book.) To convey the results in a way that any taxpayer can understand, I put the entire \$1.5 trillion budget of the United States of America in the form of a "U.S. Taxpayer Personal Credit Card Statement." Certainly members of Congress should be aware of how their budget decisions have and will affect each and every taxpayer, and I believe that the attached statement vividly presents the ultimate test of accountability that every elected official now faces.

I am taking the contents of my book public via a new Truth In Government coalition that I have begun to build with the two thousand chairpersons of accounting departments in colleges and universities across America. This effort will give you and other elected officials the support that you need at the grassroots level from those who the taxpayers most trust when it come to numbers--the accounting professionals.

To the extent that I can help you in your deliberations concerning a fair approach to balancing the budget, I am ready and willing to do so. I would be pleased to meet with you and your staff to discuss the "real" numbers and issues affecting the budget debate. In any case, feel free to contact me at Truth In Government with any comments and questions.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. DioGuardi

P.S. *Unaccountable Congress*, the "U.S. Taxpayer Personal Credit Card Statement," and the symbol of the congressional voting card as a credit card are copyrighted by Joseph J. DioGuardi, 1992, and are the property of the Truth In Government Foundation. If you would like to use these materials in your work, please contact TIG at 2 Croton Avenue, Ossining, NY 10562, (914) 762-5530.