



This chart uses the most [recent](#) Congressional Budget Office figures to show the effects of the sequester, or automatic spending reductions, on federal spending over the next ten years.

While the sequester is widely advertised as cutting spending over a ten year period, there is no actual reduction in overall spending levels. Rather, the sequester slows the overall growth in spending slightly between 2013 and 2023, with spending increasing by \$2.40 trillion during that time period. Spending grows 51 percent, or \$1.81 trillion, with sequestration between 2013 and 2021, the period when automatic spending procedures are to be enforced.

As we can see, federal spending would go up under sequestration. That’s mainly because the spending cuts heavily target the discretionary side of the budget, leaving programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid (the main drivers of our future debt) almost untouched. As a result, the impact of sequestration on overall federal spending represents a small reduction in the growth of spending rather than an actual spending cut.

Veronique de Rugy puts the sequester cuts in perspective at NRO’s [The Corner](#).

To contact Dr. de Rugy, call 202.550.9246 or email rlandaue@gmu.edu