



Lawmakers must focus on solving problems

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“In the months leading up to the session, there has been much political finger-pointing and posturing as each side of the aisle and various factions blame each other for the predicament the state faces,” the Daily News noted in an editorial Sunday about the dire economic circumstances facing our representatives in Frankfort.

“As they undertake that challenge, they should remember that Kentuckians are less interested in how the mess came to be than in what legislators will now do to fix it.”

I could not agree more. If our politicians would spend more time problem-solving and less time trying to absolve themselves of the responsibility they all share for our portentous financial woes, perhaps they would be able to make some much-needed progress.

Look, this is not rocket surgery. How about basing the budget on conservative revenue estimates instead of an optimistic, best-case scenario? I know those who depend on allocations from the general fund would rather be pleasantly surprised when they have more money to spend than having to perpetually cut expenditures when projections inevitably prove deficient.

It is important to recognize that fiscal responsibility involves both sides of the equation: income and spending. The idea that we can balance the budget by simply "cutting the waste" is unrealistic, naive and based on flawed assumptions about the efficacy of governmental programs.

It is also imperative that the commonwealth honor its obligation to those who are counting on their state pensions as they retire from public service. Employees who have devoted their lives to keeping Kentucky moving forward should receive exactly what they were promised decades ago.

Ultimately, overcoming the daunting circumstances in which we find ourselves will involve enhancing revenues, cutting expenditures, compromise and putting the needs of the many ahead of the wants of the few.

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