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## Leading Economist: Ryan Plan 'Absurd'

by Joe Feuerherd

NCR Today

A few commentators on the NCR website thought **I was a bit harsh** in saying that **Rep. Paul Ryan's (R-I) budget plan** was not serious.

At least I'm in good company. Last night on **CNN's In the Arena**, former Reagan budget director David Stockman said the plan "whiffs entirely." For those unfamiliar with baseball metaphors, that means that Ryan struck out, that his plan is a failure.

Even tougher was Jeffrey Sachs, one of the world's leading economists. "There's not a clever idea in the whole thing and it absolutely going to go nowhere as a result," he said. It can't be that bad, right? "I think it's absurd," said Sachs, who called the Ryan plan an excuse for "cutting Medicaid, slashing programs for the poor" and gutting environmental efforts.

Here's the hope: that people like Stockman and Sachs, over time, have more influence on the budget debates than the Tea Party does.

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