

[Rep. Pence Aims to Keep Republicans on Track on Their 'Pledge to America'](#)

By The Hill Editors - 02/15/11 06:14 AM ET

Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) will play a major role in the House GOP's effort to cut government spending.

The cordial former member of GOP leadership has pointed out that in their 2010 "Pledge to America," House Republicans promised to cut \$100 billion.

The spending-reduction plan unveiled last week by GOP leaders calls for \$61 billion in actual cuts - not \$100 billion. Leaders have said they will allow amendments to their base bill, which some on the right view as insufficient.

Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) has said the number of cuts adds up to \$100 billion if you compare it to President Obama's budget request last year. Yet that blueprint did not become law.

The Republicans' pledge does not refer to "Obama's budget request." It simply commits to saving "at least \$100 billion in the first year alone."

Pence has said Republicans "must keep our word."

In an interview on Fox News, Pence said, "You never get a second chance at a first impression ... I think it's very important the Republican majority start out with the American people by keeping our word to reduce spending to pre-stimulus, pre-bailout levels and save at least \$100 billion in this first round."

The Indiana Republican locked horns with GOP leaders during George W. Bush's administration, causing them major headaches.

Many conservatives listen to Pence, and will follow his lead. That is why Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) must work closely with him.

The two men have a good working relationship. After Pence unsuccessfully challenged Boehner to be the top House Republican following the 2006 elections, Boehner urged him to become one of his top deputies.

Mulling over whether to launch a presidential or gubernatorial bid, Pence announced he was leaving his leadership spot last year. The 51-year-old has since ruled out a 2012 White House campaign, and is now expected to run for governor.

But before that happens, Pence will be putting his imprint on the intensifying debate over spending.