On May 18, this space was devoted to a state budget worksheet that invited Globe readers to choose among dozens of recommended program cuts and revenue increases to close a projected $3 billion budget gap. This is your space.

The project was difficult to complete, and we were gratified to receive 172 thoughtful responses. Many attached letters or additional comments, which you can read below. Of the 172, only 54 (or 31 percent) actually found the $3 billion. “This was tough work,” wrote one Salem reader. “Let’s get the Mass. economy rolling again.”

One striking feature was how intrinsically fair most respondents were -- skillfully highlighting the differences between some program cuts and some tax increases. At least 70 percent claimed something from state government, and 83 percent chose raising some taxes.

The most popular area to cut was the so-called Quinn bill, which costs the state and municipalities $300 million a year in salary premiums for police officers who earn education credits. This was followed by cuts in early education for adults who may be disabled but are not disabled enough to work. Education is critical to education for adults who may be disabled but are not disabled enough to work.

38 percent of respondents who would cut health programs and prescription drugs for the elderly, and the least popular tax increase was applying the 5 percent sales tax to groceries. The chart below aggregates the replies for each of the program areas and revenue raisers that were on the worksheet. It shows the percentage of respondents overall who chose to cut that program or raise that revenue and the average amount to be cut or raised. For example, 33 percent of respondents would cut health care programs and prescription drugs for the elderly, and the least popular tax increase was applying the 5 percent sales tax to groceries.

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