

February 10, 2023

Congressional Leadership
United States Congress
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of 140 organizations representing millions of Americans across the country, we strongly urge you to pass a clean bill to raise the debt limit without hesitation, to protect American families and our economy from a catastrophe that is both wholly manufactured and devastatingly real in its consequences.

As you know, raising the debt limit in no way creates additional federal spending, nor does it create new obligations for the federal government. It simply allows the government to meet previous obligations made over time by congressional majorities and presidents of both parties. It ensures that the sanctity of our fiscal word is never questioned or compromised; failure to do so would cause tremendous economic harm. That is why Congress has a long history of working in a bipartisan manner to raise the debt limit with no strings attached, as was done three times most recently under the Trump administration.

The full faith and credit of the U.S. government—the expectation that the United States will pay its bills—is the underpinning that protects and supports our entire economy and the millions of livelihoods that depend on this stability. Social Security recipients and veterans count on receiving their earned benefits. Doctors and hospitals who treat Medicaid and Medicare patients depend on receiving the reimbursements they've been promised. Federal employees—dedicated public servants who help ensure that our food is safe to eat and our bridges are safe to drive on—have faith that they will be paid for their work. State and local governments rely on collecting the funding for schools that Congress has pledged to them. And the financial sector, which extends credit to individuals and businesses while also investing in our economy, can continue to do so knowing they can trust that the U.S. government will pay its bills on time and in full.

Doing otherwise could result in default—or the threat of default—which would have a devastating impact on all Americans. If the government cannot pay its bills, families and businesses may not be able to pay their own bills as they await money they've earned. Interest rates on products that people across the country use every day, from cars to mortgages to credit cards to student loans, will skyrocket, resulting in thousands of dollars in burdensome and unexpected costs. For example, owning a home would cost an additional \$130,000 in lifetime fees in the case of default. Americans who've put away for retirement plans would see their 401(k)s nosedive and lose their value.

As always, Congress has the authority and opportunity to modify and alter our fiscal path by enacting prospective adjustments to our tax and spending policies. To this

end, we welcome a robust, thoughtful debate about the value of creating a fairer tax code, strengthening Social Security and Medicare, and making additional investments in our nation via discretionary spending programs through the annual appropriations bills. But those conversations should not be tied to making good on the obligations that previous Congresses and presidents have already passed into law, and they should not be tied to threatening the financial health of families, communities and the global economy. Doing so would be fiscally imprudent and shortsighted.

Again, we urge you to pass a clean bill raising the debt limit as soon as possible and avoid unnecessarily jeopardizing our economy.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Teachers	Center for Biological Diversity
A Better Balance	Center for Justice & Democracy
A+ Schools - Pittsburgh Learning Collaborative Member	Center for Popular Democracy
A+ Schools, Pittsburgh	Clean Elections Texas
AASA, The School Superintendents Association	Clean Water Action
Accountable.US	Coalition on Human Needs
Actors' Equity Association	Community Change Action
AFL-CIO	Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
All4Ed	Council of the Great City Schools
Alliance for Retired Americans	Courage For America
American Federation of Government Employees	Democrats.com
American Federation of Musicians	Earthjustice
American Federation of School Administrators	Economic Policy Institute
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)	Economic Security Project Action
American Psychological Association	EDGE Consulting Partners
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)	Education Reform Now
Americans for Tax Fairness	EduColor
APWU	Families USA
Association of Education Service Agencies (AESA)	First Focus Campaign for Children
Association of Educational Service Agencies	FL National Organization for Women (NOW)
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA	Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)
Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO)	For Our Future Action Fund
Association of University Centers on Disabilities	Friends of the Earth U.S.
Autism Society of America	Futures Without Violence
Be A Hero	Generations United
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action	GLSEN
Broward for Progress	Greater Orlando National Organization for Women (NOW)
California Alliance for Retired Americans	Groundwork Collaborative
CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE	Health Care Voices
Caring Across Generations	Higher Education Consortium for Special Education (HECSE)
Center for American Progress	Hispanic Federation

House Accountability War Room
Impact Fund
Indivisible
Indivisible East Bay
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots
International Union of Painters and Allied Trades
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Jewish Women International
Justice in Aging
League of Conservation Voters
Main Street Alliance
Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.
MENTOR
MomsRising
MoveOn
NASSP
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Association for Music Education
National Association for Pupil Transportation
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Immigration Law Center
National Nurses United (NNU)
National Organization for Women
National Postal Mail Handlers Union
National Respite Coalition
National Rural Education Advocacy Consortium
National Rural Education Association
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Jersey Association on Correction
New Jersey Citizen Action
NextGen America
Oregonizers

ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED ABOUT RURAL EDUCATION
Our Revolution
P Street
PAI
Patriotic Millionaires
People's Action
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists, AFL-CIO
Protect Our Care
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Citizen
Public Justice Center
Rebuild America's Schools (RAS)
Rachel Carson Council
SAG-AFTRA
Seafarers International Union
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Social Security Works
Sojourners
Tahirih Justice Center
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children (TED)
The 99% Pennsylvania campaign
The Arc of the US
The Education Trust
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
The United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union (USW)
The Young Invincibles
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO
UltraViolet Action
UNITE HERE
United Teachers Los Angeles
United We Dream Network
Voices for Progress
VoteVets
Working Families Party