

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) yesterday voted against increasing the U.S. debt limit. The measure was unanimously opposed by Republicans and nearly half of the Democratic caucus.

"Looking at the size of our debt and, more importantly, our federal deficits, it is clear that we cannot allow spending to continue at a reckless pace. Authorizing the issuance of further U.S. debt must be made conditional on finding cuts and savings to assure our debt doesn't continue to grow in the long term," Emerson said.

The bill offered in the U.S. House of Representatives would have enabled the U.S. Treasury to borrow another \$2.4 trillion. It failed by a vote of 97-318.

"The vote was a clear rejection of the idea that we can continue on our nation's present fiscal course. We are doing enormous harm to the American dream by burying our children and grandchildren beneath this mountain of debt," Emerson said.

U.S. national debt stands at more than \$13 trillion – double the figure reported in 2003.

"If the national debt were a pile of one dollar bills, it would cover the distance from the earth to the moon three times. We have a massive debt problem that will require tough choices to fix. The catch is this: the longer we wait to make those choices and to rein in the size of government, the more difficult those choices will be," Emerson said. "It's time to have that discussion. Future generations of Americans deserve our best effort to control America's burgeoning debt crisis."