

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 19, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

On Tuesday, July 19, 2011, the so-called "Gang of Six" released their long-awaited bipartisan plan to reduce our long-term debt by \$3.7 trillion over the next ten years. We applaud this effort and ask that you provide the opportunity to vote on this proposal as part of any request for an increase in the debt ceiling before the August 2nd debt ceiling deadline.

The U.S. budget is on an unsustainable path and our nation's financial health is worsening every day. Every day that we fail to rein in wasteful spending, stop playing favorites with the tax code, and put everything on the table for review, is another day we have failed to lessen the debt burden of future generations of Americans. All three major credit rating agencies have issued warnings that they will downgrade the U.S. ratings outlook if we fail to raise the debt ceiling and don't find solutions to our long-term fiscal outlook. We should be able to reduce spending and raise the debt ceiling, without defaulting on our debt. The consequences of failure are unacceptable.

The Gang of Six plan is bitter medicine and, while not perfect, could restore our fiscal health. There is never a convenient time to make tough decisions, but the longer we put off fixing the problem, the worse the medicine will be.

We believe this approach deserves the full and immediate attention of the House of Representatives. It is time to stop using the deficit and debt as political weapons and come together to support bipartisan solutions. We are willing to do our part to advance this comprehensive, bipartisan debt reduction plan. We respectfully ask you to do the same.

Sincerely,



Jim Cooper
Member of Congress



Frank Wolf
Member of Congress