



Thomas A. Schatz
President

May 19, 2011

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative,

Washington has put Americans at risk by repeatedly violating a Budgeting 101 rule of thumb: Don't spend more money than you take in. This week, taxpayers faced the consequence of Congress' irresponsible budget policies when the nation finally hit its statutory \$14.294 trillion debt limit. The Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW) applauds Republican Study Committee (RSC) Chairman Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) for demanding that any debt limit increase be coupled with provisions to ensure that Congress fundamentally and permanently changes the way it spends money. I strongly urge you to sign onto Rep. Jordan's "Cut, Cap and Balance" plan and refuse to take a "clean" debt ceiling vote.

First, Rep. Jordan has asked lawmakers to support discretionary and mandatory spending reductions that would cut the deficit in half next year. There is no shortage of places to cut waste and prioritize federal expenditures. CAGW's *Prime Cuts 2010* provides 763 recommendations that would save taxpayers \$350 billion in the first year and \$2.2 trillion over five years.

Second, Rep. Jordan highlights the need for statutory, enforceable spending caps to reduce federal spending to 18 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the Congressional Budget Office, recession-depleted tax revenues are scheduled to rebound to their historical average of 18 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2018 and reach 18.4 percent by 2021. Federal spending, which has historically been 20.3 percent of GDP, however, is projected to reach 26.4 percent of GDP by 2021.

Finally, Rep. Jordan has called for the passage of a balanced budget amendment (BBA) with strong protections against tax increases. Rep. Joe Walsh (R-Ill.) recently introduced H. J. Res. 56, a BBA that would restrict total outlays from exceeding 18 percent of the GDP of each fiscal year, require the president to submit a balanced budget to Congress that reflects the 18 percent cap, and prohibit judges from raising revenue if they are called upon to enforce the amendment.

The federal government has a moral and fiscal responsibility to Americans that it has simply been shirking. Congress cannot continue on a spending rampage while ignoring the nation's balance sheets. Rep. Jordan's "Cut, Cap and Balance" plan will safeguard taxpayers, force Congress to balance the budget, and make significant spending cuts that will put the country back on a path toward fiscal sanity. All votes on the debt ceiling will be among those considered in CCAGW's *2011 Congressional Ratings*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Schatz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.