



September 28, 2012

The Honorable Daniel Webster  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1039 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Webster:

On behalf of the 362,000 members of the National Taxpayers Union (NTU), I write in support of H.R. 2402, your “Prioritize Spending Act.” In the event that Washington’s borrowing exceeds the federal debt ceiling, this legislation sets out common-sense spending priorities to prevent the U.S. government from defaulting on its debt obligations.

While sovereign financial obligations are serious matters that policymakers should not dismiss, some fear-mongers would pressure Congress to rubber-stamp ever more debt by issuing dire threats of default that would mar the full faith and credit of the United States. H.R. 2402 takes this risk off the table by ensuring that we meet our principal and interest on debt first, followed by other crucial spending needs comprised of troop salaries, vital national security programs, and finally, Social Security and Medicare payments.

What the fear-mongers conveniently ignore is that the federal government steadily collects revenue throughout the year (near or above \$200 billion in most months), more than enough to cover the necessities delineated in this bill. Any funds beyond this are left to the executive branch to allocate among less fundamental services.

Just like any family facing a budget crunch, the federal government needs to have a practical evaluation of spending priorities to ensure that whatever good credit still exists is not put in further jeopardy. Failing to repay debts isn’t just bad accounting, it’s a serious violation of what many consider to be a moral imperative. And just as families set budgets and make careful decisions to plan for future prosperity, H.R. 2402 provides an important reminder that the federal government needs to work within a similarly realistic framework for budgetary matters now, not just when things come down to the wire. That means reining in spending, passing the Balanced Budget Amendment, and paying down our massive debt.

Any credible financial advisor would warn that signing up for a new credit card to pay off mounting debt on the old is a recipe for fiscal catastrophe. It’s time for Washington to get a grip on the budgetary challenges ahead, and H.R. 2402 is an important place to start. NTU is pleased to endorse the “Prioritize Spending Act,” and we urge all Representatives to join you by co-sponsoring it.

Sincerely,

Nan Swift  
Federal Affairs Manager