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Key Vote NO on Clean Debt Ceiling Increase, H.R. 325

Dear FreedomWorks member,

As one of our millions of FreedomWorks members nationwide, I urge you to contact your U.S. Senators and urge them to vote NO on H.R. 325, a bill which would lift the U.S. debt limit without a dollar cap for four months (until May 19, 2013) with no accompanying spending reforms or reductions.

The Constitution grants to Congress the "power of the purse," specifically, the power to "lay and collect taxes," to "pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States," to "coin money and regulate the value thereof," and to "borrow money on the credit of the United States." (Article I, section 8.) The same Founding generation that granted these important powers also took it for granted that, as a rule, government spending should be frugal and budgets balanced. They abhorred excessive debt as much as they abhorred a standing army or an unarmed citizenry, and for the same reason: because it paves a path for tyrants.

They also considered excessive debt immoral. As Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity, under the name of funding, is but swindling futurity on a large scale."

Our government has swindled futurity to the tune of over \$16,000,000,000,000 (sixteen trillion dollars), a staggering amount that exceeds the entire annual output of the U.S. economy and equals more than \$52,000 for every U.S. citizen. And these enormous figures don't even include the government's more than \$100,000,000,000,000 (one hundred trillion dollars) in unfunded entitlement promises.

The statutory debt limit is a tool created by Congress to help it "manage" its finances. In theory, the periodic need to raise the limit serves as an occasion to reassess spending priorities and secure needed economies. In practice, Congress always just raises the limit "clean."

Once again, Congress is preparing to grant itself a "clean" debt limit increase -- no strings attached. House leaders misleadingly speak as if the proposed bill is conditioned on Congress doing its job and passing a budget, and they claim Congress needs more time to pass a balanced budget plan through each chamber. But in fact, this bill is a "clean" debt ceiling increase. It would simply continue the current pattern -- ask for more money now for promised spending reforms later. If this pattern continues, the major credit agencies have threatened once again to downgrade our nation's credit, which will make paying down the debt even more difficult.

Congress must stop swindling futurity. We must put an end to "borrow-and-spend." No more "clean" debt limit increases. Instead, Washington should do its job and pass a budget -- a

specific, immediate plan for balancing the budget within a reasonable period of time, without raising taxes. It's been four years since the Senate fulfilled its legal duty and passed a budget. During this time, Washington politicians have enjoyed unbridled, haphazard spending sprees, while America's families and businesses are left paying the tab. Until the American people see a plan for the spending, there should be no debt ceiling increase. We aren't asking for the moon. We're just asking for a return to regular order and common sense. Our message to Washington is simple: "No budget plan, no debt hike. No more debt until you do your jobs."

Also, the bill includes language claiming to be "No Budget No Pay," a commonsense reform FreedomWorks has been urging Congress to adopt since 2011 -- but the actual language in the bill merely postpones Members' pay for two years rather than eliminating it; and the reform is temporary rather than permanent (applying only to this year). This limp approach is too lukewarm to be taken seriously.

I urge you to call your U.S. Senators and ask them to vote NO on H.R. 325, in order to to stop a clean increase in the debt ceiling. We will count the vote on H.R. 325 as a KEY VOTE when calculating the FreedomWorks Economic Freedom Scorecard for 2013. The Economic Freedom Scorecard is used to determine eligibility for the FreedomFighter Award, which recognizes Members of Congress with voting records that support economic freedom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "MK", is centered on a light beige rectangular background.

Matt Kibbe

President and CEO, FreedomWorks