

January 28, 2013

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned organizations represent persons of color, women, children, low- to moderate-income workers, labor unions, people with disabilities, consumers, older people, people of faith, English language learners, LGBT people, educators, environmentalists, and many other communities with a tremendous stake in the outcome of the ongoing budget process. As Congress moves toward a debate over the federal debt limit, our organizations urge you to insist on policies that create jobs; oppose benefit cuts for Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid; protect our nation's safety net; and ensure adequate revenues to preserve the basic functions of government.

Despite some important steps, the economy still has a long way to go to achieve a full recovery. More than 20 million people are in need of full-time work, and unemployment continues to hover around 8 percent. Given the current state of the economy, we are deeply troubled that some in Congress are continuing to demand substantial reductions in federal investments, removing even more money from the economy, and burdening many of the same working families that have already borne the brunt of our nation's deficit reduction efforts – and that many of them appear willing to push the federal government into default if their demands are not met.

Our organizations and the millions of Americans we represent are relying heavily on you to stand up to this radical and irresponsible approach. We urge you to support the following principles, and to ensure that your colleagues stand for them as well:

1. **We need jobs, not more cuts to the programs that help the bottom 98 percent.** Cutting Social Security does not create a single job. In fact, cutting programs like student financial aid, Medicaid, Medicare, education spending, and Head Start doesn't create jobs, it eliminates them. The best thing we can do to cut our deficit long term is create more decent paying jobs by investing in our people's education and health, and by rebuilding our country's infrastructure. We oppose any cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security benefits, or cost-shifting to beneficiaries or the states; and we oppose any cuts to safety net and vital services for low-income people.
2. **We back you 100 percent on not negotiating the debt ceiling with those who have threatened to crash our economy.** The Republican leadership's new plan to suspend enforcement of the debt ceiling until May only buys them more time to continue their efforts to radically downsize the government. They have repeatedly threatened to take us to the brink of economic catastrophe, all so they can slash Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, education, and other programs that help the bottom 98 percent of Americans.

You have drawn a line in the sand, and we stand with you and back you to the hilt on this pledge.

3. **We need more tax revenue from the top 2 percent and the big corporate special interests.** The recent tax increase on those making more than \$450,000 was only a first step. It does not generate anywhere near enough revenue to allow for investment in the middle class and to deal with the deficit. But there are hundreds of billions of dollars in tax loopholes used by big business and the wealthy to allow them to avoid taxes that could give us more revenue. America is not broke; we just need to re-establish tax fairness and create more good jobs, and we can solve our fiscal problems.
4. **Across-the-board cuts in education, child nutrition, environmental protection, housing, and many more vital services should be canceled,** and additional deficit reduction should not come from forcing low- and middle-income Americans to bear the burden yet again by cutting programs they depend upon. Middle- and low-income Americans bear most of the burden when it comes to reducing the deficit. So far, for every dollar of revenue increases, \$2.50 in spending from services protecting our families and creating jobs has been chopped – totaling \$1.5 trillion. Instead, tax loopholes that benefit the highest income individuals and corporate special interests should be closed. Cuts that hurt our ability to increase economic security, invest in the future, and protect the vulnerable will only push us back into recession.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rob Randhava, Senior Counsel at The Leadership Conference, at 202-466-6058.

9to5

AFGE Women's and Fair Practices Departments

AFL-CIO

African American Health Alliance

AFSCME

AIDS United

American Association for Affirmative Action

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

American Family Voices

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)

Asian American Justice Center, member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance

Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living

Bazon Center for Mental Health Law

Campaign for America's Future

Campaign for Community Change

Caring Across Generations

Catholics United  
Center for Effective Government  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Children's Defense Fund  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Communications Workers of America (CWA)  
Community Action Partnership  
Compassion & Choices  
Courage Campaign  
CURE-Women Incarcerated  
Democrats for Education Reform  
Dēmos  
Disability Policy Consortium  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Education Reform Now Advocacy  
Every Child Matters Education Fund  
Federally Employed Women  
Feminist Majority  
Friends of the Earth  
Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network  
Green For All  
Health Care for America Now  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of  
America (UAW)  
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)  
Jobs with Justice/American Rights at Work  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
Leadership Center for the Common Good Action Fund  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
MALDEF  
Ms. Foundation for Women  
NAACP  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD)  
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.  
National Association of Human Rights Workers  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD)  
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare  
National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)  
National Council of La Raza Action Fund, Inc.  
National Council on Aging  
National Council on Independent Living  
National Education Association  
National Employment Law Project

National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA)  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
National Health Law Program  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National People's Action  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
National Women's Law Center  
The Partnership for Working Families  
Peace Action  
People For the American Way  
PHI – Quality Care through Quality Jobs  
PolicyLink  
Poverty & Race Research Action Council  
Public Advocates Inc.  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition  
Rebuild the Dream  
RESULTS  
SEIU  
Sierra Club  
Social Security Works  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center  
Strengthen Social Security Coalition  
UFCW International Union  
United Steelworkers (USW)  
USAction  
Voices for Progress  
VOTE MOB  
Wider Opportunities for Women