

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2023

Chief Administrative Officer Catherine Szpindor
Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
U.S. House of Representatives
HB 28, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chief Administrative Officer Szpindor:

I write today to express my deep concern about the potential for the United States to default on its debt. As we quickly approach a default, Congress is failing to protect seniors, servicemembers, Veterans, and all Americans who would be impacted by a default. As such, I request that you prepare to withhold U.S. Member of Congress pay until Congress has lifted the debt ceiling.

If the American people and the American economy are suffering as a result of congressional inaction, then Members of Congress should not be rewarded with their pay. At this moment, hyper-partisanship in Congress is jeopardizing the economic strength and security of our country, the stability of global markets, and the world's faith in the credit of the United States of America. And rather than fulfill our most basic obligations, U.S. House Republican leadership has instead championed a bad-faith proposal that has no chance of moving forward in the U.S. Senate. Market volatility has already impacted Americans' retirement accounts — and this institution must not wait until the last possible moment to deliver on one of its most fundamental responsibilities.

Since January 19, 2023, the U.S. Treasury Department has been employing extraordinary measures to prevent our nation from defaulting on our debt.¹ In recent days, there has been increasingly distressing reporting that the United States is potentially days to weeks away from defaulting on our debt.² Last month, Moody's Analytics predicted that a default would trigger a loss of seven million jobs, push the unemployment rate over eight percent, eliminate approximately \$10 trillion in household wealth, and reduce America's real GDP by almost four percent.³ Beyond these catastrophic economic impacts, seniors, servicemembers, and Veterans would be at risk of missing the benefits they've earned and that are critical for paying basic living expenses and affording healthcare.

America's working families understand the basic principles of fairness — if you don't do your job, you don't get paid. While I recognize you are constrained by congressional rules, the 27th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and other applicable laws and rules, I request that you prepare to withhold Members of Congress' pay until Congress passes, and the President signs, legislation to raise the debt ceiling and pay our country's bills.

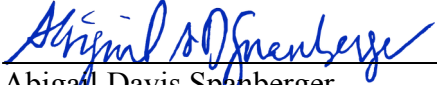
Thank you for your assistance with this request.

Sincerely,

¹ https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Description_Extraordinary_Measures-2023_01_19.pdf

² <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/09/politics/debt-ceiling-default-early-june/index.html>

³ <https://www.moodyanalytics.com/-/media/article/2023/going-down-the-debt-limit-rabbit-hole.pdf>


Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress