

"I urge my colleagues to put our country before any ideology, and come together to solve an urgent and serious crisis that we are facing today."

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today said that the time has passed for political point scoring and again expressed urgency for bipartisan action.

Being debated today, four days before the nation defaults for the first time in its history, is a more extreme version of the Boehner resolution that was pulled from consideration last night.

"Bringing our nation to the brink of collapse has been a conscious decision of the Majority Party," Slaughter said on the House floor today. "Placing ideology before country, they are demanding controversial and unacceptable cuts or else they are willing to let our nation default.

"We have been warned by the United States Senate and the President of the United States that the proposed legislation will not be passed into law. They have said it repeatedly; they have said it clearly. Yet the Majority continues to believe this bill can actually avert the danger of default. They are playing a dangerous game of chicken, asking the nation to give into their demands if we want the American economy to live to see another day."

She said of the debt ceiling

"The debt ceiling was created, ironically, to avoid forcing Congress to approve every new issue of debt. It was originally introduced to pay for World War One, and was designed to be a formality that would help our country and economy operate smoothly and without interruption. All these years later, the debt ceiling appears to have outlived its usefulness. In fact, I believe we should abolish the debt limit altogether and never face a crisis like this again. Of whether we will be a responsible country that pays our bills. Only one other country has the debt limit and that is Demark. I think we really need to look at this as an anachronism from 1917.

"Regardless, throughout the life of the debt ceiling, raising the ceiling has never been questioned. Since 1960 the debt ceiling has been raised 78 times. Throughout this time, there has been no quid-pro-quo demanded to raise the debt ceiling- no ransom demanded in exchange for raising our debt ceiling and preventing default. That is until today."

Her full remarks are included below.

[Video of her statement is available here.](#)

Slaughter's Remarks

M./ Speaker,

Today we face a self-inflicted crisis, and the Majority's proposed solution is no solution at all.

The debt ceiling was created, ironically, to avoid forcing Congress to approve every new issue of debt. It was originally introduced to pay for World War One, and was designed to be a formality that would help our country and economy operate smoothly and without interruption. All these years later, the debt ceiling appears to have outlived its usefulness. In fact, I believe we should abolish the debt limit altogether and never face a crisis like this again. Of whether we will be a responsible country that pays our bills. Only one other country has the debt limit and that is Demark. I think we really need to look at this as an anachronism from 1917.

Regardless, throughout the life of the debt ceiling, raising the ceiling has never been questioned. Since 1960 the debt ceiling has been raised 78 times. Throughout this time, there has been no quid-pro-quo demanded to raise the debt ceiling- no ransom demanded in exchange for raising our debt ceiling and preventing default.

That is, until today. Bringing our nation to the brink of collapse has been a conscious decision of the Majority Party. Placing ideology before country, they are demanding controversial and unacceptable cuts or else they are willing to let our nation default.

We have been warned by the United States Senate and the President of the United States that the proposed legislation will not be passed into law. They have said it repeatedly; they have said it clearly. Yet the Majority continues to believe this bill can actually avert the danger of default. They are playing a dangerous game of chicken, asking the nation to give into their demands if we want the American economy to live to see another day.

I can simply not agree to the extreme demands being put forth by the Majority today. After pulling yesterday's legislation from the Floor, the Majority has introduced a piece of legislation that demands the impossible. Today's bill doesn't just require a vote on a constitutional amendment, it demands that before 6 months when we face default again, that we vote on a constitutional amendment be approved by both chambers of Congress this fall. If the amendment doesn't pass, then we not only will face the prospect of default again 6 months from now, but we have even fewer options to avoid default.

If previous proposals are any guide, the constitutional amendment would place the burden of debt reduction squarely upon the middle class, threatening Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Members of Congress would be given Sophie's choice- do we vote against this amendment and protect Medicare or do we vote for the amendment to avoid economic default?

This is totally unnecessary.

In effect, this legislation releases one hostage and takes another. Six months from now, we would be forced to choose between a constitutional amendment, and putting our nation back on the brink of default.

I refuse to trade hostages with the Majority, and prolong this crisis for another 6 months.

I urge my colleagues to put our country before any ideology, and come together to solve an urgent and serious crisis that we are facing today. It is our duty to put the welfare of our country above all else. That is why we were elected by the people who expect us to do just that.

It is time we answer the call.

I urge my colleagues to vote 'no' on today's bill, and urgently get back to serving the American people.

We're spent far too much time on this useless bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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