

“Thank you Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to add my voice to those calling for agreement on funding this government for the remainder of this year—and avoid the consequences of a government shutdown. I don’t want the government to shut down. Our conference does not want the government to shut down. No one I’ve talked with wants the government to shut down. And talk of such a shutdown is weighing heavily on consumer confidence in our already fragile economy—not to mention its confidence in this body. We can do better. We should do better. We must do better.

Yesterday, on this floor, we took yet another action that keeps our government afloat and guarantees that in the event of a shutdown, troops and their families get paid. That’s the least we can do.

And Mr. Speaker, yesterday I sat in a hearing with the CEO of Amtrak. During the hearing, it was suggested by a colleague that the carrier examine the feasibility of shutting down routes that are losing—hemorrhaging money. The answer he received was that because of legal agreements mandating payments on labor and benefits and other guarantees, it would still cost them billions. I find it incredible that we have these federally-subsidized guarantees in place...but we can’t guarantee the same for those men and women downrange willing to take a bullet for their country! Shame on us!

Jobs continue to be our highest priority and it should surprise no one that fundamental to this objective is dealing with a balance sheet full of red ink. It’s fundamental to business. It’s fundamental to households. And, it’s fundamental to government. No reputable organization behaves—financially—the way this government behaves.

The message from the electorate is simple: Live within your means.

The reason we’re facing a potential government shutdown is simple; No budget for 2011 and Democrats don’t see our spending issues with the same degree of urgency as we do.

I said it just a few days ago on this same floor and it’s worth repeating. We have kicked this can down the road so long, so often and so far that America and this Congress has a chronic case of turf toe.

Message to America: If you want to remove uncertainty and create jobs, fix the balance sheet. Cut spending. It’s as simple as that.

This Republican-led House has done its job. We’ve attempted, time and again, to fund government in a responsible way, prevent a government shutdown, and restore fiscal integrity. I join my colleagues in urging the Senate to act and to act now—so that we can turn our attention to the far more important and substantive work that lies ahead.”