



Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader

May 2, 2023

Dear Colleague:

I write in connection with the extreme MAGA Republican effort to engineer a default on America's debt for the first time in our history. Yesterday, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen indicated that the United States Treasury may exhaust extraordinary measures as early as June 1. Congress must urgently pass legislation to raise the borrowing limit and avoid plunging our nation into a recession, driving up unemployment and crashing the stock market.

A dangerous default is not an option. Making sure that America pays its bills – and not the extreme ransom note demanded by Republicans – is the only responsible course of action. Since 1960, the debt ceiling has been extended or revised 78 separate times – 49 under Republican administrations and 29 under Democratic presidents.

Most recently, under former President Trump, Democrats voted three times to raise the debt ceiling without gamesmanship, brinksmanship or partisanship. For the good of the country, extreme MAGA Republicans must do the same.

House Democrats are working to make sure we have all options at our disposal to avoid a default. At the beginning of the 118th Congress, Rep. Mark DeSaulnier, working with leadership, introduced legislation that could be used as a vehicle to avert the Republican-manufactured default crisis. Given yesterday's announcement by the Treasury Department, Ranking Member Jim McGovern has just filed a special rule that would allow for Floor consideration of a bipartisan measure to avoid a dangerous default.

The filing of a debt ceiling measure to be brought up on the discharge calendar preserves an important option. It is now time for MAGA Republicans to act in a bipartisan manner to pay America's bills without extreme conditions. We will be in direct contact next week upon our return to Washington in connection with the discharge effort. Thank you for your continued leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hakeem Jeffries".

Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader