



May 17, 2023

An Open Letter to Congress:

I am writing on behalf of the NAACP's membership to make it clear that any resolution to the House-GOP's manufactured debt ceiling crisis must not harm America's Black communities.

Recent media reports have highlighted [deeply disturbing proposals](#) floated in negotiations between Congressional leadership and the Biden Administration that would cap federal discretionary spending on critical programs like Medicaid, Pell grants, SNAP, school lunch programs, income supports, and many more, all of which would disproportionately harm Black communities. Other proposals to change eligibility requirements such as adding new work requirements must be resoundingly rejected. These proposals are designed to play on racist stereotypes masquerading as sound policy.

Thanks to actions by the Biden Administration and historic investments made by the last Congress, we have come closer than ever as a nation to [closing the unacceptable gap between white and Black unemployment](#). We must not cede these hard fought gains to the economic drag of deep federal spending cuts. Independent analyses have shown, for example, that the recent House-passed legislation would actually [cut projected GDP growth in half](#) and **increase the likelihood of a recession**.

To our many allies and partners in Congress who have claimed to support Black Lives, we are grateful for your past support and need you to know: **this is a moment of choosing**. Do not accept the false choice between triggering an utterly avoidable economic catastrophe driven by politicians; or imposing costs and new harms on Black communities. We need deeper federal investments – not cuts – to ensure all Americans can thrive.

The nation, especially Black America, is watching.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Johnson', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Derrick Johnson
President and CEO