



May 19, 2011

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
 United States Senate  
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the millions of limited government activists we represent, we would urge you and all Senators to declare net tax increases “off the table” in any budget or debt limit negotiations. Speaker Boehner and the House Republican leadership have already done so, and they have the firm backing of their Conference. Only when tax increases are off the table can the serious work of spending cuts and entitlement reforms begin in earnest.

It’s clear that Washington, DC has an over-spending problem, not an under-taxing problem. Over the next decade, federal tax revenues are estimated by the Congressional Budget Office to pour in at levels at or above the historical norm. However, spending is expected to be well above the historical norm each and every year of this decade, before exploding in the out years as the Baby Boomers retire in force. Precisely none of the reasons for large and persistent budget deficits have to do with taxes—all of the reasons come from the spending side of the equation. Spending needs to be brought down to the level of taxation, not the other way

around. Raising taxes to pay for Obama-sized government is a recipe for economic and fiscal disaster.

**Grand budget compromises should be avoided unless tax increases are truly off the table.**

The experience taxpayers have with this is well-documented. In 1982, President Reagan was promised \$3 in spending cuts for every \$1 in tax hikes. The tax increases happened, but the spending cuts never materialized. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush was persuaded to break his “Read My Lips” promise at Andrews Air Force Base, agreeing to \$2 in spending cuts for every \$1 in tax hikes. The tax increases all went through, but spending was higher after the deal than it was projected to be before the deal—in other words, no spending cuts actually occurred.

**The limited government movement is united around the unavoidable fact that Washington spends too much money, and that’s what has put our nation in debt.** Higher taxes will simply fuel yet more spending, as it has in the past. Only when tax increases are no longer part of the conversation can the debate in Washington turn to where it squarely belongs—the Beltway’s addiction to spending.

We urge all Members of Congress and Senators to take tax increases off the table in any budget or debt limit legislation.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist, Americans for Tax Reform  
Tim Phillips, Americans for Prosperity  
Dick Patten, American Family Business Institute  
Al Regnery, The American Spectator  
Duane Parde, National Taxpayers Union  
Tom Giovanetti, Institute for Policy Innovation  
Michael Needham, Heritage Action for America  
Amy Kremer, Tea Party Patriots  
Mattie Corrao, Center for Fiscal Accountability  
Jim Martin, 60 Plus Association  
Richard Vigeurie, ConservativeHQ.com  
Morton Blackwell, The Weyrich Lunch  
Colin Hanna, Let Freedom Ring  
Gary Bauer, American Values  
Karen Kerrigan, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council  
David Williams, Taxpayers Protection Alliance  
George Landrith, Frontiers of Freedom  
Bill Pascoe, Citizens for the Republic  
Andrew Langer, Institute for Liberty  
Dino Teppara, Indian American Conservative Council  
Mario Lopez, Hispanic Leadership Fund  
Brad O’Leary, The O’Leary Report  
Ken Hagarty, ReAL Action  
Brian Burch, Catholic Vote.org  
Sam Slom, Smart Business Hawaii  
Chuck Muth, Citizen Outreach  
Rick Watson, Rick Watson and Associates  
Seton Motley, Less Government  
Jennifer Hulse, American Grassroots Coalition