

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12), Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-39), and 74 Democrats sent a letter to House and Senate leaders demanding that working families not bear the unjust burden of spending cuts called for in the Budget Control Act. Currently, most of the debate in Washington has been centered on defense sequestration. However, a projected 8 percent overall cut to domestic spending in 2013 would have a disastrous effect on the current economic recovery.

“Kicking kids out of Head Start classrooms will not help our economy grow, and we won’t create more jobs by sending NIH researchers home,” said Congressman Holt. “We need to increase our investments in these important domestic programs not slash them across the board.”

“Reckless cuts to vital domestic programs could jeopardize the current economic recovery,” said Congresswoman Sánchez. “It is crucial we take a balanced approach to reduce our deficit. Protecting our national security should always be the priority of this Congress. However, we cannot afford to cut investments in programs that are critical to our country’s long-term economic growth. This Congress can’t turn its back on hard working Americans while our economic recovery hangs in the balance.”

The full text of the letter is below.

July 19, 2012

Speaker John A. Boehner
Office of the Speaker
H-232 US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Democratic Leader
H-204, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Holt Leads Call to Protect Domestic Programs

Friday, 20 July 2012 10:39

Majority Leader Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Minority Leader Pelosi, Majority Leader Reid, and Minority Leader McConnell:

We are writing to express our concern over the automatic reductions in spending due to take effect in January 2013 because of the deficit-reduction goal set in the 2011 Budget Control Act. We are very worried about how draconian cuts to important domestic programs will affect our current economic recovery.

As you know, the Budget Control Act calls for a minimum of \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction in both national security and domestic federal spending. We have read reports that our colleagues in the Senate have been working on solutions to protect the defense budget from the sequester. Clearly, our first priority is protecting our national security and ensuring that our warfighters have everything they need to protect our freedoms.

However, we are concerned that the “unofficial” Budget Control Act discussions in the Senate are ignoring the very real economic consequences of domestic spending reductions. It is distressing that so much attention is being paid to protecting the defense industry at the expense of investing in the American people.

We cannot support any budget compromise that only deals with defense sequestration. We encourage you to work in a bi-partisan manner to ensure we responsibly reduce the deficit in a way that will protect our national security and also invest in America’s future.

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Currently, we do not know which specific domestic programs will see these massive cuts. However, the Congressional Budget Office expects an 8% overall cut to domestic spending in 2013. This is totally unacceptable and would have disastrous effects on our still fragile economic recovery.

At a time when the American people are asking Congress, "Where are the jobs", we cannot afford to cut investments in programs that are critical to our country's long-term economic growth. According to Office of Management & Budget (OMB) Director Jeffrey Zients, an 8% cut would be devastating to the economy. As many as 700,000 children and mothers could lose nutrition assistance. An additional 100,000 kids would be kicked out of Head Start, one of our most successful early education programs. More than 25,000 teachers and school aides would lose their jobs as a direct result of these cuts.

These cuts would also seriously damage our nation's investment into research and development (R&D). As you know, R&D is critical to economic growth. For every job we create in research and development, four additional jobs are created in other industries. R&D drives our technology, pharmaceutical, and health care economies. OMB says these cuts would mean that the National Institutes of Health would issue about 700 fewer grants to medical researchers and the National Science Foundation would be forced to eliminate up to 1,500 grants.

The effect of these austerity measures would exponentially devastate our economy when we need more investment in education, innovation, and infrastructure. Our country needs long term solutions to our national debt. However, we cannot keep slashing domestic spending at a time when appropriated spending is already at its lowest level as a share of the economy since the Eisenhower administration.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that we prioritize working families and growing American jobs while Congress begins to address the automatic deficit reduction trigger in the Budget Control Act.

Sincerely,

Linda Sánchez (CA-39)

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Rush Holt (NJ-12)
Gary Ackerman (NY-5)
Joe Baca (CA-43)
Karen Bass (CA-33)
Suzanne Bonamici (OR-1)
Madeleine Bordallo (GU-At Large)
Robert Brady (PA-1)
Michael Capuano (MA-9)
Russ Carnahan (MO-3)
Judy Chu (CA-32)
David Cicilline (RI-1)
Yvette Clarke (NY-11)
William Lacy Clay (MO-1)
Gerry Connolly (VA-11)
John Conyers (MI-14)
Mark Critz (PA-12)
Joseph Crowley (NY-7)
Peter DeFazio (OR-4)
Donna Edwards (MD-4)
Keith Ellison (MN-5)
Sam Farr (CA-17)
Bob Filner (CA-51)
Barney Frank (MA-4)
Marcia Fudge (OH-11)
Charles Gonzalez (TX-20)
Gene Green (TX-29)
Raúl Grijalva (AZ-7)
Alcee Hastings (FL-8)
Brian Higgins (NY-27)
Maurice Hinchey (NY-22)
Rubén Hinojosa (TX-15)
Mike Honda (CA-15)
Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18)
Hank Johnson (GA-4)
William Keating (MA-10)
Jim Langevin (RI-2)
Rick Larsen (WA-2)
John Larson (CT-1)
Barbara Lee (CA-9)
John Lewis (GA-5)
Zoe Lofgren (CA-16)
Ben Ray Luján (NM-3)
Ed Markey (MA-7)
Doris Matsui (CA-5)
Betty McCollum (MN-4)
Gregory Meeks (NY-6)

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George Miller (CA-7)
James Moran (VA-8)
Jerrold Nadler (NY-8)
Grace Napolitano (CA-38)
Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-At Large)
John Olver (MA-1)
Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-6)
Bill Pascrell (NJ-8)
Gary Peters (MI-9)
Pedro Pierluisi (PR-At Large)
David Price (NC-4)
Charles Rangel (NY-15)
Laura Richardson (CA-37)
Cedric Richmond (LA-2)
Lucille Roybal Allard (CA-34)
Bobby Rush (IL-1)
Loretta Sanchez (CA-47)
John Sarbanes (MD-3)
Jan Schakowsky (IL-7)
David Scott (GA-13)
Robert "Bobby" Scott (VA-3)
José Serrano (NY-16)
Jackie Speier (CA-12)
Bennie Thompson (MS-2)
John Tierney (MA-6)
Paul Tonko (NY-21)
Edolphus Towns (NY-10)
Henry Waxman (CA-30)
Peter Welch (VT-At Large)
Frederica Wilson (FL-5)
Lynn Woolsey (CA-6)
John Yarmuth (KY-3)