



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

March 6, 2015

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Leader:

As you know, in February 2014, Congress passed the Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act, suspending the statutory debt limit through March 15, 2015. Beginning on Monday, March 16, the outstanding debt of the United States will be at the statutory limit.

Absent an increase in the debt limit, the Treasury Department will have to take extraordinary measures to continue to finance the government on a temporary basis. On Friday, March 13, Treasury will suspend, until further notice, the issuance of State and Local Government Series (SLGS) securities. SLGS are special-purpose Treasury securities issued to states and municipalities to assist them in conforming to certain tax rules. When Treasury issues SLGS, they count against the debt limit.

Increasing the debt limit does not authorize new spending commitments. It simply allows the government to pay for expenditures Congress has already approved, thereby protecting the full faith and credit of the United States. Only Congress is empowered to increase the nation's borrowing authority, and I hope that Congress will address this matter without controversy or brinksmanship.

Accordingly, I respectfully ask Congress to raise the debt limit as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Jacob J. Lew

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Harry Reid, Senate Democratic Leader

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan, Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Sander M. Levin, Ranking Member, House Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch, Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Finance
All other Members of the 114th Congress