

Don't Raise Debt Ceiling Without Repealing Obamacare

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If your shopaholic teenager maxed out on the credit card, your solution wouldn't be to increase the credit line. You'd stop the spending.

The same common sense applies to raising the nation's debt ceiling. America has a spendaholic president. Don't raise the debt ceiling without demanding an enforceable limit on future federal spending and repeal of President Barack Obama's massively costly health law.

A two-year Obama spending binge, largely on credit, has pushed the federal government up against its debt ceiling. Congress just raised that ceiling to \$14.3 trillion in February 2010, and now we're told it must be raised again by mid-May.

Congressman Peter Welch, D-Vermont, is lining up fellow Democrats to insist on a "no strings" vote to raise the debt ceiling without conditions. That would be dangerous to our nation's future and our liberties.

The more government spends, the less we have to spend on our families. And the less freedom we have to make our own choices. Washington, D.C., politicians, once called public servants, are making us into servants, toiling to support their spending.

In 2008, the last year of the George W. Bush presidency, federal government spending consumed 20 percent of everything produced in the United States (GDP), up from 18 percent in the Clinton presidency.

President Obama has pushed federal spending to as much as 25 percent of GDP. Add in state and local government spending, and all government programs are soaking up 42 percent of everything we all produce going to work every day.

Only once before in American history did government spending consume more than 40 percent of the nation's productivity, and that was during World War II, when America was fighting for its survival. Nothing today justifies government claiming 42 percent of the fruits of our labor.

At a Facebook town hall meeting, President Obama used the term "radical" to disparage Republican calls for lower spending. What's radical — and dangerous to our freedom — is the president's spending binge. It's off the chart.

On April 18, Standard & Poor's, a bond-rating agency, warned that for the first time in history it might

downgrade U.S. debt from its top AAA rating, if the nation doesn't get its radical spending increases under control. S & P said it was unlikely the Washington establishment would correct the perilous trend. S&P nailed that one.

Washington politicians like spending. It makes their jobs bigger and them more important. Ordinary Americans who generally are too busy working and raising families to get involved in politics need to demand a limit on spending. Congress isn't going to do it otherwise.

Though businesses and families have had to tighten their belts, the federal government has added 155,000 new workers in the last two years. The Department of Health and Human Services increased spending 15 percent in that period, staffing up to write and enforce new regulations under the Obama health law.

Federal employees earn on average \$101,628 in wages and benefits. It should make Congress blush. But it doesn't.

Don't count on the Gang of Six, the latest of many bipartisan committees of past and present Congress members, to protect your freedom. Like its predecessors, the Gang of Six will propose a middle way — and dub it “a compromise” or a “balanced approach.”

They will try to bamboozle you into thinking a combination of spending cuts and tax hikes is the best course. Not true. The danger to your freedom is the level of government spending, whether it is paid for with taxes today or borrowing today and taxes on your children.

Tax hikes and debt ceilings protect creditors. Spending limits protect you.

The federal government should not be allowed to spend more than 20 percent of the fruits of your labor. That is not a “radical” demand. The federal government operated on less than that three years ago. If members of Congress can't remember that number — 20 percent of GDP — they should write it on their palms.