



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Ralph S. Northam
Governor

April 30, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

President Trump, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

I write today urging you to work together to raise the discretionary spending caps for Fiscal Year 2020 and to increase our nation's statutory debt limit. If these two fiscal challenges are not resolved, the results for Virginia's economy – and our nation as a whole – will be catastrophic.

When Congress passed the Budget Control Act of 2011, the across-the-board spending cuts – often called “sequestration” – were never intended to occur. These draconian cuts were supposed to be so severe that they would force Congress and the President to come to an agreement on deficit reduction. Thanks to the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, our nation is currently operating with increased spending limits for the current fiscal year. However, if an agreement is not reached to raise the spending limits for FY 2020, both defense and non-defense discretionary spending will be slashed indiscriminately. In addition to the harmful consequences of cuts to non-defense spending, Virginia's economy would suffer immensely from cuts to defense spending, as our Commonwealth is the state with the largest share of its economy tied to such funding.

Our nation's fiscal stability faces an additional challenge as we approach the statutory debt limit. Current estimates project that the current debt limit will be reached sometime in September. A default, or even the potential of a default, could “roil global financial markets and create chaos,”

according to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. The world depends on the economic stability of the United States, and a default on our debt would shatter the confidence of domestic and international markets. We simply cannot allow a default to occur.

While I understand the complex nature of these problems, I implore you not to allow partisan politics to jeopardize the economic stability of our country and the Commonwealth of Virginia. I urge you to consider the impact that sequestration or default would have on the citizens we all serve. Thank you for your time and service to our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph S. Northam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ralph S. Northam

CC: Senator Mark Warner
Senator Tim Kaine
Representative Rob Wittman
Representative Elaine Luria
Representative Bobby Scott
Representative Donald McEachin
Representative Denver Riggleman
Representative Ben Cline
Representative Abigail Spanberger
Representative Don Beyer
Representative Morgan Griffith
Representative Jennifer Wexton
Representative Gerry Connolly