



AFL-CIO

October 11, 2013



To President Obama and Members of Congress:

As leaders of business, labor, and the nonprofit sector, we are writing to urge you to end the federal government shutdown immediately.

Our country is navigating the most challenging economic times in a generation. While we may disagree on priorities for federal policies and we even have conflicting views about many issues, we are in complete agreement that the current shutdown is harmful and the risk of default is potentially catastrophic for our fragile economy.

Large and small businesses, the workforce (especially federal workers), people who rely on public and privately-funded social services, and communities at-large, are being harmed by the shutdown. The federal government is our nation's largest consumer of goods and services, our largest employer, and the single largest source of financial support for state and local governments and for private social services. Several hundred thousand public servants are at home without pay. The longer the shutdown continues, the more people and communities' economic security will be damaged. Ultimately, our economy could be driven back into a recession.

As we often have in our history, our country benefits from strong differences of opinion on many important issues affecting both federal legislation and the federal government. We believe it is important that we turn to the normal processes our government has for resolving these issues. We cannot afford to have either our government closed or our nation's creditworthiness called into question as part of the way we resolve these important issues.

Our three disparate sectors share a common view-- no one benefits from the current shut-down and everyone will be harmed if the government defaults. It is in the interest of our nation that Congress restore the normal functioning of our political process, fund the government immediately and quickly move to resolve the impasse over the debt ceiling limit. We urge all of our leaders in Washington to set aside the many issues we disagree about, reach across the aisle and end the shutdown and the threat of a national default.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Donohue
President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Richard L. Trumka
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Stacey D. Stewart
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