

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks on Congressional Passage of a Continuing Resolution To Fund Federal Government Operations and an Exchange With Reporters

October 1, 2023

The President. Good morning, folks. How are you?

Q. Good morning.

Q. Good morning.

The President. Well, I guess we're actually technically afternoon. [*Laughter*]

Last night Congress passed a spending bill that's going to keep the Government open. And it's good news for the American people because the Government will not shut down and a needless crisis will have been averted, saving millions—millions of Americans needless pain.

And that means more than one million three hundred thousand of our troops will continue to get paid and their families will be cared for.

Tens of thousands—tens of thousands—of air traffic controllers and transportation security officers are going to stay on the job, get paid—preventing unnecessary delays at airports all across America.

And millions of families will continue to have access to critical food and nutrition assistance, especially programs for women and infant children, and so many other programs.

And the vital work in science and health—from cancer research to food safety—is going to continue, as will long-term disaster recovery monies for communities devastated by wildfires, superstorms, and droughts.

The Social Security Administration will be fully funded, which means it will be able to fully serve the needs of the American people and the elderly.

But, folks, the truth is, we shouldn't be here in the first place. We shouldn't have gotten here in the first place. It's time to end governing by crisis and keep your word when you give it in the Congress.

A few months ago, after a long negotiation between myself and the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, we came to agree on a budget agreement precisely to avoid a manufactured crisis that we just witnessed.

But the last few days and weeks, extreme MAGA Republicans tried to walk away from that deal, voting for deep, drastic spending cuts from 30 to 80 percent that would have been devastating for millions of Americans.

They failed again. They failed again, and we stopped them. But I'm under no illusions that they'll be back again.

You know, where I come from, when you make a deal, you give your word, you keep it. You give your word—you say, "I'm going to do what I said I'm going to do," and you do it. You keep it. You keep your word.

And I expect the Republican Speaker and Republicans in Congress to honor their word and keep the deal they made months ago when they tried to threaten us with—to almost international bankruptcy by not paying our debts.

That includes comments made for fully funded services for our veterans and fully fund the needs of defense of our Nation, you know, protect the—we have transformational investments we're already making to deal with the climate crisis. We are—you know, protect Medicare's ability and power to negotiate lower prescription drug prices—we pay the highest prescription drug prices in the world. We're finally making progress.

Although the Speaker and an overwhelming majority of the Congress have steadfastly supported Ukraine to defend itself against the aggression and brutality of the Russians' attack on women and children—in addition to the military in Ukraine—there's no Ukraine funding in this agreement.

Despite that, I did not believe we could let millions of Americans go through the pain of a Government shutdown.

But let's be clear: I hope my friends on the other side keep their word about support for Ukraine. They said they were going to support Ukraine in a separate vote. We cannot under any circumstance allow America's support for Ukraine to be interrupted.

I fully expect the Speaker to keep his commitment to secure the passage and support needed to help Ukraine as they defend themselves against aggression and brutality. And, folks, you know, overwhelmingly—there's overwhelming number of Republicans and Democrats in both the House and the Senate who support Ukraine. Let's vote on it.

And I want to assure our American allies and the American people and the people of Ukraine that you can count on our support. We will not walk away. The vast majority of both parties—I'll say it again: Democrats and Republicans, Senate and House—support helping Ukraine in the brutal aggression that is being thrust upon them by Russia.

Stop playing games. Get this done.

This agreement today, while averting an immediate crisis, ends in—I guess it's 45 days now, and it's already moving down—[laughter]—just before Thanksgiving. Quite frankly, I'm sick and tired. I'm sick and tired of the brinksmanship, and so are the American people. I've been doing this—you all have pointed out to me a lot—a long time. I've never quite seen a Republican Congress or any Congress act like this.

This spring, MAGA Republicans brought us to the brink, threatening to default on America's debt for the first time in over 200 years. And it would have caused a gigantic world crisis, both at home and abroad. But we reached an agreement. We shook hands and said, "Here's the deal."

Well, now, this fall, the MAGA extremists once again have brought us to the brink—this time, to a Government shutdown—in going back on the deal they made months ago, not keeping their word. Enough is enough is enough. This is not that complicated. The brinksmanship has to end.

And there should be another—there shouldn't be another crisis. There's no excuse for another crisis.

Consequently, I strongly urge my Republican friends in Congress not to wait. Don't waste time as you did all summer. Pass a yearlong budget agreement. Honor the deal we made a few months ago.

We have the strongest economy in the world today—the strongest economy in the world today. We have more to do, but we are the indispensable nation in the world, internationally and domestically, in terms of our economy. Let's act like it. Let's act like it.

Stop the games. Get to work. Make sure the American people and our allies and friends around the world know what we're doing.

Thank you.

Speaker of the House of Representatives Kevin O. McCarthy

Q. Mr. President, Speaker McCarthy's speakership is now at risk. Should Democrats vote to help him keep that job?

The President. I don't have a vote on that matter. I'll leave that to the leadership of the House and the Senate.

U.S. Assistance to Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, what are your words to U.S. allies and, in particular, Zelenskyy on continued funding for Ukraine? How can you reassure them?

The President. I can reassure them—look at me—we're going to get it done. I can't believe those who voted for supporting Ukraine—overwhelming majority in the House and Senate, Democrat and Republican—will, for pure political reasons, let more people die needlessly in Ukraine.

Ukraine

Q. And, Mr. President, a follow-up on Ukraine. What is your sense of when the current U.S. funding might run out? And what—how much urgency is there? What's the timeline in the next couple weeks or months?

The President. We have time. Not much time. And there's an overwhelming sense of urgency.

Q. Mr.——

White House aide. Last question.

Q. Mr. President, are you going to be able to trust Speaker McCarthy when the next deal comes around?

The President. We just made one about Ukraine. So we'll find out.

Speaker of the House of Representatives Kevin O. McCarthy

Q. But are you worried that he is going to be forced by fellow Republicans to back away from any deal he cuts with you?

The President. I hope this experience for the Speaker has been one of a personal revelation. I'm not being facetious. I—anyway——

U.S. Credibility on the Global Stage

Q. Are you concerned about America's reputation on the world stage given the level of brinksmanship we've seen this year?

The President. Based on the MAGA Republicans'—[inaudible]—yes. Based on what my administration is doing, no.

Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:27 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H.R. 5860, the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other

Extensions Act, which was approved September 30 and assigned Public Law No. 118–15. A reporter referred to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Federal Government operations, continuing resolution to fund, congressional passage; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

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