

WASHINGTON, DC - House Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer (MD) delivered a morning hour speech today on the House Floor, calling on Republicans to compromise on a measure to fund the government for the remainder of the fiscal year. See below for a link to the video and his remarks as prepared for delivery:

Click [here](#) to watch the video.

“In 1998, as a Republican Congress was struggling to compromise with a Democratic president on a budget bill, a Member of the House rose to speak to what he called ‘the Perfectionist Caucus’—those Members who stood against compromise under any circumstances. Here’s what he said: ‘Now, my fine friends who are perfectionists, each in their own world, where they are petty dictators, could write a perfect bill....It would be about 2,200 of their particular projects and their particular interests and their particular goodies taking care of their particular states. But that is not the way life works in a free society....In a free society, where we are sharing power between the legislative and executive branch, [compromise] is precisely the outcome we should expect to get.’

“Those words were true when Newt Gingrich, the Speaker of the House, said them. And they're still true.

“In the last election, Americans voted for shared responsibility. Without both parties’ willingness to compromise—to take less than 100% of what they want—there will be no solution to our most pressing problems, including our debt. There will be no action on our budget. And the government will be in danger of shutting down—which, in the midst of a fragile economic recovery, would be disastrous.

“Democrats are willing to cut and compromise: we believe that smart, targeted cuts are part of the solution, and we have offered to meet Republicans more than halfway. While the Republican demanded \$100 billion in spending cuts, there are now reports that both parties have agreed on a total in the range of \$73 billion. But what is absolutely crucial is ensuring that

the cuts we do agree on do not undermine Americans' shared values and do not cripple our economic recovery. Unfortunately, many of Republicans' proposed cuts—kicking 200,000 children out of Head Start, slashing support to help young Americans afford college, cutting billions in the scientific research that can grow our economy—do stand against both our values and our prosperity.

“Nevertheless, with the parties close to agreeing on a number, Americans are surely thinking that there is clear room for the parties to negotiate, reach an agreement, and keep the world's largest enterprise funded in more than uncertain, week-by-week increments.

“So what is standing in the way? Read the news. *New York Times*, March 28th: ‘Tea Party supporters are coming to the Capitol this week to rally Republicans to...not compromise with Democrats on spending cuts.’

“*Politico*, March 27th: ‘Harsh rhetoric Friday night suggests GOP leaders still fear a tea party rebellion.’

“*The Hill*, March 29th: ‘Striking a deal with Democrats would set off a wave of revolt among the most conservative members of the caucus.’

“We are in a dangerous place when compromise—which is essentially the job description of a legislator in a free society—is enough to spark a revolt. We face partisan opposition to any compromise on spending levels, some Members' willingness to shut down the government unless they get their way on divisive social issues—even though the Republican Pledge to America promises to ‘end the practice of packaging unpopular bills with ‘must-pass’ legislation to circumvent the will of the American people.’

“Mr. Speaker, the Perfectionist Caucus is alive and well—it just has a new name. Just listen to its own words.

“One Republican Member said: if we can't defund health care reform in this spending bill, then ‘we have just got to dig in.’

“Another said: ‘I think we have to have a fight. I think this is the moment.’

“Another said: ‘I don’t see any room for compromise.’

“For the rest of us—members of both parties who understand that legislating means compromising—it’s time to find common ground and prevent a government shutdown.”

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