

*Today, Rep. Mike Quigley (IL-05) called on his colleagues in the House of Representatives to embrace bipartisanship, and to move away from budgeting on a continuing resolution so that we can build a stronger economy.*

*Below is video and a transcription of this speech.*

"Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month we passed a bill that suspends the debt ceiling until May.

I voted for that bill because I didn't want the credit rating of this country ruined or the economy plunged into another recession.

But that vote was just a short-term fix, in what has been a series of short-term fixes.

And short-term fixes no longer cut it when it comes to running the world's biggest economy.

Instead of thoughtful, long-term planning, we've contented ourselves with political sideshows.

We've budgeted with Continuing Resolutions and held endless partisan committee hearings aimed at dismantling so-called "job killing" legislation like the Clean Air Act.

We voted 33 times to repeal all or part of the President's health care plan, and we attempted to balance the federal government's budget by zeroing out Planned Parenthood.

That's not careful planning. That's tired political dogma.

In a famous speech about the Vietnam War, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said, "We are confronted by the fierce urgency of now."

We again find ourselves in a conflict that threatens the political fabric of our nation, the integrity of our institutions.

We face a mountain of debt.

We lack a comprehensive approach to climate change, energy, transportation, Medicare, Social security, defense spending, immigration reform, gun violence and even our postal system.

We need to find that urgency to get started on creating a sensible energy policy that confronts climate change and reduces our reliance on foreign oil.

We need that urgency to formulate a transportation plan so that states can address their crumbling infrastructure and local businesses can get back to work.

We need that urgency of now to reconfigure our security policy, making sensible cuts and fashioning a force that prepares us for conflicts of the future and not the past.

We need the urgency of now to make sensible changes to Social Security and Medicare to ensure the vitality of those programs for generations to come.

That urgency of now will reward us with more than a sensible environmental policy, good roads, a smarter defense department and a sustainable social welfare system.

We will be rewarded with a stable economy and reduced market volatility.

We cannot wait to act. We are borrowing forty-two cents of every dollar we spend.

We have to take sensible steps to begin reducing our debt without stepping on fragile economic recovery.

We have to take steps that are big, bold and bipartisan.

That's why I signed on to the Cooper-LaTourette bipartisan budget agreement that would save \$4 trillion over 10 years.

And why my office has authored a comprehensive plan to reinvent government and save taxpayers two trillion dollars over the next ten years.

No, government is not perfect, but I believe we need to reinvent government not eliminate it—or, as Grover Norquist says, make "it small enough to drown in a bath tub."

Government is important. The heroes of 9/11 were government workers.

Government teaches our kids. It protects us—keeps us safe. It helps keep our air clean and protects the less fortunate.

The Tea Party has this wrong. The objective should not be to destroy government through reactive, draconian cuts.

Rather, we should collectively rethink and renew this institution that touches all of our lives.

I recognize that not everyone I serve with would agree on how to cut defense and adjust social programs to make them sustainable over time, but that's the whole point: you have to compromise.

Sadly, that's not en vogue these days.

My colleague from Chicago, Congressman Bobby Rush said it best when he observed: "In Congress, the view of compromise is that the other guy gives in."

It simply can't be that way.

Until we end the bickering, political preening and brinksmanship, the deadlock that has paralyzed our political process will continue.

As Lincoln said, "It is not 'can any of us imagine better?' but, 'can we do better?'"

And those words are true today... we have to abandon the dogmas of yesterday to fulfill the promise of tomorrow.

"We cannot escape history," he said. "We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves."

Despite this immense challenge that confronts us, I believe we will prevail.

If we can summon that "urgency of now" —if we can end the bitter partisanship and poor planning—we can solve our nation's problems and make a brighter day for ourselves and generations to come.

Thank you."

