

[By Jenna Pizzi](#)

With the government threatening to shut down today if Republicans and Democrats in Congress cannot compromise on a budget for what remains of the fiscal year, Vermont's delegation is calling to attention the negative impacts.

Rep. Peter Welch said late Thursday that his greatest concern is the impact it would have on the United States' image to the rest of the world.

"What I worry about most is the signal this sends to the whole world that our political system is broken," Welch said.

Welch said if foreign governments lose confidence in America it might mean increased interest rates and threaten the country's fragile economy.

Welch noted that in the short term a shutdown would put 5,000 Vermonters employed by the federal government out of work.

Sen. Patrick Leahy had a different perspective, saying Thursday that if the Congress cannot come up with a compromise it would force the troops, National Guard and Army Reserve forces to go on fighting without being paid.

"At a time when we ask them to fight two wars, to help stay the slaughter in Libya, and to keep peace around the world, another burden would be added to their shoulders: They would be asked to do it without a paycheck," Leahy said.

On Wednesday Sen. Bernard Sanders argued Republican proposed budget cuts would hurt those dependent on government programs, including social security, Head Start and Pell

grants. Sanders continued his push to increase taxes for the wealthiest Americans to help close the budget gap.