

[By Kirk Carapezza](#)

Congressman Peter Welch says he believes it's unlikely that lawmakers and President Obama will avert the so-called fiscal cliff, blaming House Speaker John Boehner.

Welch says the president has offered significant savings in the Medicare program for the elderly, but he says the Republicans haven't.

"The President has been specific," Welch argues. "He said \$1.6 trillion in revenues and \$400 billion in Medicare savings. The Speaker has rejected that but has not had a counter offer so the next move is up to them."

Welch is not directly involved in fiscal cliff negotiations, but he's urging the president to hold tough after already agreeing to reduce federal spending by \$1 trillion over 10 years.

"The Speaker is in an objectively difficult spot. I believe, one he wants a deal, two he knows it's going to include raising taxes on the top 2 percent," Welch says.

Boehner has a real challenge, Welch says, in persuading Republican members who were against tax increases to vote for them.