

Chief Deputy Whip Peter Welch (D-Vt.) issued the following statement in response to Majority Leader Cantor's comment on a clean debt ceiling vote:

"Leader Cantor's comment is nothing more than a political stunt. The outcome of a debt ceiling vote in advance of Mr. Cantor revealing his ransom will tell us what we already know: America needs to get its fiscal house in order. There is no disagreement on that question.

"The real question is: What is Mr. Cantor's price for preserving America's full faith and credit? What is his price for preventing a mid-air stall in America's fledgling economic recovery? What is his price for damaging America's international reputation for paying its bills?

"Mr. Cantor should show his cards now rather than playing political games. Thursday's kick-off of the Biden deficit reduction panel should begin a serious effort to restore balance to the nation's books. Everything in the budget should be on the table. Everyone should negotiate. But in the end, we cannot default on America's obligation to pay its bills. The stakes are too high. The clock is ticking."