



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on July 20, 2011

Bachmann, Paul Vote Against “Cut, Cap and Balance” Bill

Representatives Ron Paul of Texas and Michele Bachmann of Minnesota, the only presidential candidates among current members of Congress, broke with almost all of their Republican colleagues in the House Tuesday night when they voted against the GOP "cut, cap and balance" plan for deficit reduction.

"This bill only serves to sanction the status quo by putting forth a \$1 trillion budget deficit and authorizing a \$2.4 trillion increase in the debt limit," [Paul said in a speech](#) on the House floor.



Bachmann faulted the measure for not dealing with health care reform bill passed by the Democratic Congress last year, the Affordable Patient Care and Protection Act.

"We must remember that ObamaCare is the largest spending and entitlement program in our nation's history," she said. "That means, at a time when we can least afford it, President Obama added to our spending problem by the trillions. Without its repeal, we cannot have real economic reform."

Only seven other Republicans joined Paul and Bachmann in opposing the measure, while just five Democrats voted for it. The bill, which passed by a vote of 234-190, would require an estimated \$111 billion in spending cuts next year and cut overall spending at the levels of the budget plan passed by the House in April. It would also require Congressional approval of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution before any increase in the current \$14.3 trillion debt limit. Passage of a constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds vote in each house before it could be sent on to the states for ratification. That's unlikely to happen, if at all, before the August 2 date that the Obama administration has said is the deadline for borrowing under the current authorization. The bill has virtually no chance of passing the Democratically controlled Senate and would face a veto by President Obama if it did.

"We don't have any more time to engage in symbolic gestures," Obama said of the bill. "We don't have any more time to posture." But while Obama dismissed the measure as "symbolic," Paul denounced it as a sanctioning of the status quo.

"First, it purports to eventually balance the budget without cutting military spending, Social Security, or Medicare," the Texas Republican said. "This is impossible. These three budget items already cost nearly \$1 trillion apiece annually. This means we can cut every other area of federal spending to zero and still have a \$3 trillion budget. Since annual federal tax revenues almost certainly will not exceed \$2.5 trillion for several years, this Act cannot balance the budget under any plausible scenario."

Paul also rejected the long-established distinction between "discretionary" and "non-discretionary" spending. "America faces a fiscal crisis, and we must seize the opportunity once and for all to slay Washington's sacred cows — including defense contractors and entitlements. All spending must be deemed discretionary and reexamined by Congress each year," said Paul, a 12-term Congressman.

"I have never voted for a debt ceiling increase and I never will," he said. "Increasing the debt ceiling is



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an endorsement of business as usual in Washington. It delays the inevitable, the day that one day will come when we cannot continue to run up enormous deficits and will be forced to pay our bills."

Photo: U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, (R-Texas) greets U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann, (R-Minn.) before speaking at a rally by home school advocates, March 23, 2011, at the Statehouse in Des Moines, Iowa.: AP Images



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