

## Kansas Congressional Delegation Comments on Split Debt Limit Votes

Posted By [Paul Soutar](#) On August 2, 2011 @ 4:19 pm In [Breaking News, Charts, Graphs, Maps, Column A, Federal Government, News, Video](#) | [No Comments](#)

The Kansas delegation to Congress evenly split their votes on the \$2.4 trillion increase in the national debt limit.

The Senate today voted [74-26](#) <sup>[1]</sup> to approve the record increase in the national debt limit in exchange for \$2.1 trillion in spending reductions over the next 10 years. Monday the House approved the bill [269-161](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. The bill was quickly and privately signed by President Barack Obama.

The amount of claimed debt increase and spending cuts are already being disputed. Regardless of the validity of those claims, ratings agencies said they needed to see greater fiscal responsibility, about \$4 trillion in real cuts, to avert a downgrade for the country's AAA stable rating.

If the U.S. rating is reduced it would likely lead to higher interest rates for debt at the national, state and local levels and thus even higher debt service costs in already tight budgets.

<sup>[3]</sup>A Cato institute analysis shows that the [budget deal doesn't cut spending](#) <sup>[4]</sup>. As in nearly all government spending "cuts," only the rate of increase is cut but actual spending continues to rise.

The Kansas delegation split its vote on the deal:

<sup>[1]</sup> [Senate](#): <sup>[1]</sup>

- Pat Roberts, Yes
- Jerry Moran, No

[House](#) <sup>[2]</sup>:

- Tim Huelskamp, Dist. 1, No
- Lynn Jenkins, Dist. 2, Yes
- Kevin Yoder, Dist. 3, No
- Mike Pompeo, Dist. 4, Yes

Moran addressed the Senate shortly before casting his vote against the deal. "There was some thought by many of us that we could use this moment of raising the debt ceiling to make some significant changes in the way that we do business in Washington, D.C." Moran said he wrote to President Obama in March that he would not support a debt ceiling increase without substantial reductions in spending and structural changes in the way Washington does business. "In my view, we have failed to do either one."

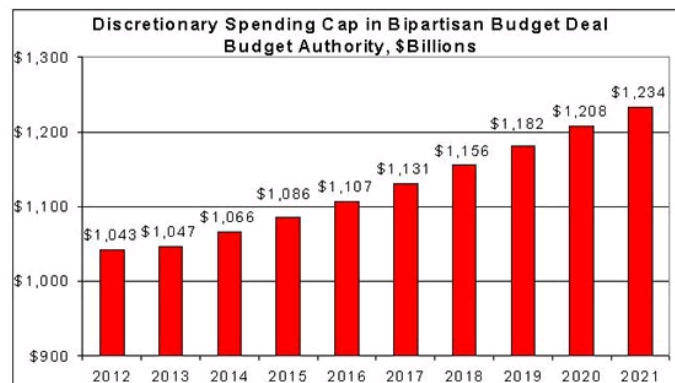
"There are no cuts in this bill. There is only a reduction in the growth of spending," Moran said.

Roberts, in a [press release](#) <sup>[5]</sup> issued today, said:

"My first priority in voting today was to ensure our country did not default, which could have sent our country into economic chaos at a time when our economy is already on the brink. I will never play roulette with Kansans' life savings.

"This agreement protects Kansas families and businesses from an even greater economic crisis than we have already experienced while stopping proposed tax increases and cutting \$2.4 trillion in run-away government spending.

"Had this agreement been mine to craft and pass alone, we'd have even greater spending cuts, but as Kansans saw over the last week, we could not achieve that with a



Democrat-led Senate and the Obama White House.

On Monday Pompeo, in a statement on his [vote to pass the debt deal](#),<sup>[6]</sup> said, in part:

"I voted in favor of the deal before the House today because it moves our nation forward in addressing the spending addiction that threatens the future of our children and grandchildren. This bill cuts spending more than it raises the debt ceiling. It implements caps to restrain future spending, it advances our Balanced Budget Amendment and, most importantly, it does these things without raising taxes on individuals, families, and job-creators. It adheres to the conservative principles I set out when this debate began.

"We are in an epic battle for the future of our Republic. No one piece of legislation – certainly not one that a liberal President would sign – could ever fix decades of fiscal malfeasance. While this reality ensured this debt limit deal would be imperfect, this bill shows how much House Republicans have changed the terms of the debate in Washington. We've made a strong start out of the gate, but this is certainly not the finish line – it's not even the homestretch."

Jenkins issued the following [press release](#)<sup>[7]</sup> Monday:

"Just a few months ago the Administration was requesting business as usual in Washington, as they promoted an increase of the debt limit without any consideration for spending controls, but the American people and the People's House stood up and said enough is enough. Enough wasteful Washington spending. Enough piling more and more debt on our children. Enough empty promises."

"Today, we have officially begun to change the culture in Washington. Leadership means saying no when no is the right answer and saying yes when yes is the right answer. Today, after months of wrangling for the best deal possible in a divided Washington, it's time to say yes. We have passed a bill that avoids a default, cuts nearly a trillion dollars from our bloated federal budget, lays out a plan to cut trillions more, requires an up or down vote on a Balanced Budget Amendment and all without increasing a single American's taxes. This plan isn't perfect, but it is an important first step as we continue to fight to reform Washington and get our nation on a course toward financial accountability."

Yoder issued a press release Monday on his [vote against the \\$2.4 trillion debt increase](#)<sup>[8]</sup>.

"Today I voted against a \$2.4 Trillion increase in our national debt. I believe we missed an opportunity for historic spending reform in Washington and that we have once again passed our problems on to another day. Although I commend our leaders for working out a temporary solution against choppy political waters, I could not join in an effort that did not solve the problems that got us in to this spot in the first place. To borrow a phrase, I was not persuaded by the logic that Congress would gladly pay Tuesday for a hamburger today. I look forward to many future efforts to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle as we continue to work towards growing the economy, spurring job creation and fiscal reform that that will combat the national debt."

Huelskamp, self-identified as a Tea Party supporter, [appeared on the PBS News Hour](#)<sup>[9]</sup> Monday.

"I'm looking for a solution that actually works and avoids a downgrade.

"I'm very fearful that, despite this package, if it would pass, we would have a credit downgrade. And that's something I want to avoid. And S&P and Moody's have been suggesting that might be possible. And, you know, if things aren't quite good enough and, you know, it doesn't stick to the principles that I was elected on, I think it's time for a no and looking for a better package that will solve the long-term problem we have as a nation.

When asked by the PBS host if the U.S. might still get a downgrade, Huelskamp replied, "Oh, I think that's very possible and in fact very likely, based on the latest testimony we have had from S&P and Moody's. It wasn't about the default. It was about our inability to put us on a trajectory to pay off currently a \$14.3 trillion debt. It isn't that we don't borrow enough. It's the fact that we have been spending too much. And that's the message I have heard from the credit rating agencies."

## Related

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[1] 74-26: [http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll\\_call\\_lists/roll\\_call\\_vote\\_cfm.cfm?congress=112&session=1&vote=00123](http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=112&session=1&vote=00123)

[2] 269-161: <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2011/roll690.xml>

[3] Image: <http://kansas.watchdog.org/files/2011/08/Cato-debt-deal-spending-chart.jpg>

[4] budget deal doesn't cut spending: <http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/budget-deal-doesnt-cut-spending/>

[5] press release: [http://roberts.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord\\_id=e9bd4293-1808-40be-8f5b-6861d946d9c9](http://roberts.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=e9bd4293-1808-40be-8f5b-6861d946d9c9)

[6] vote to pass the debt deal,: <http://pompeo.house.gov/press-release/pompeo-votes-pass-debt-deal-eve-deadline>

[7] press release: <http://lynnjenkins.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=160&sectiontree=21,186,160&itemid=926>

[8] vote against the \$2.4 trillion debt increase: <http://yoder.house.gov/press-release/congressman-yoder-votes-against-24-trillion-increase-national-debt>

[9] appeared on the PBS News Hour: [http://huelskamp.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=3527:pbs-newshour-from-left-and-right-opposition-to-debt-deal-remains&catid=41:in-the-news](http://huelskamp.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3527:pbs-newshour-from-left-and-right-opposition-to-debt-deal-remains&catid=41:in-the-news)

[10] Kansas Senators split on debt vote: <http://blogs.kansas.com/gov/2011/08/02/kansas-senators-split-on-debt-vote/>

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