



October 23, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Reid, Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The National Housing Conference (NHC) urges Congress to take immediate action on the debt ceiling by passing a clean debt ceiling increase to meet federal obligations already incurred. The risks of harm to families and communities due to instability in housing finance that would result from a failure to service our debt demand Congressional action that sets aside partisan politics.

As the Government Accountability Office has found, even coming close to brink of a default could lead to higher interest rates immediately, which would make home mortgages more costly for families and make rental housing more costly to finance. That would weaken housing demand at a time housing markets and the broader economy can ill afford it.

A failure by the United States to meet our debt obligations could also lead to a downgrading of our national credit rating, which would ripple through the financial system. By raising the federal government's baseline borrowing cost, a down grading would affect everyone from homebuyers seeking mortgages to city and state governments to developers seeking to finance housing. The effects could be long-lasting, far beyond the immediate legislative debate.

The National Housing Conference represents a diverse membership of housing stakeholders including mortgage bankers, tenant advocates, real estate professionals, nonprofit and for-profit home builders, property managers, policy practitioners, equity investors and more, all of whom share a commitment to safe, decent and affordable housing for all in America. We are the nation's oldest housing advocacy organization, dedicated to the affordable housing mission since our founding in 1931. We are a nonpartisan, 501(c) 3 nonprofit that brings together our broad-based membership to advocate on housing issues.

We appreciate your attention to this issue and hope that you can reach across the aisle to raise the debt limit and maintain the full faith and credit of the United States government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chris Estes'.

Chris Estes
President and CEO