



MARK R. WARNER

U.S. Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia

Dear Bill,

I write to you today amid hopeful signs that Congress soon will take meaningful steps to avert mindless, across-the-board sequestration cuts -- and maybe, just maybe, address our broader fiscal challenges in a real way.



With our strong connections to the military and federal government, the sequestration cuts announced on March 1st will be disproportionately devastating to Virginia's economy. I recently called constituents from across the Commonwealth who have written or emailed my office to share their concerns over sequestration.



Click here to watch video of Senator Warner calling constituents

I told them what I want to tell you now: I share your frustration. As most of you know, I've been working for more than three years now to get both sides to come together in a broad, bipartisan compromise to fix our debt.

Here are three reasons why I am more hopeful than ever that we may be ready to take meaningful steps to address our fiscal challenges:

Last week, the House approved a spending bill for the remainder of the budget year that gives the Pentagon added flexibility to make smarter management decisions to avoid the worst effects of sequestration. The Senate is scheduled to consider the bill this week, and there is bipartisan progress on efforts to broaden and improve it to blunt the impact of the across-the-board sequestration cuts. [There is a stupid way to cut budgets and a less stupid way](#), and I believe providing this flexibility is a less stupid approach. I am hopeful Congress will enact this smarter, bipartisan approach. It will remove the economic storm cloud that is hanging over Virginia's military families, shipyard workers, our federal workforce and government contractors.

In addition, the Senate's Budget Committee will complete work on a budget this week that represents a return to a more traditional budgeting process. There will be some gamesmanship and "gotcha" moments, but it is important that we get back to a responsible process of producing a budget. While I won't agree with everything in the

Committee budget, it is an important step forward as we continue the discussion over getting our fiscal house in order.

Finally, you may have heard about recent conversations between the White House and lawmakers from both parties -- conversations that are exploring opportunities to strike a "grand bargain" to address our deficits and debt in a more comprehensive way.

As most of you know, this is the issue I have spent most of my time here in the Senate working on. Since organizing the Senate's [Gang of Six](#) in 2011, some would say I've been obsessed with finding common ground on a meaningful plan that will rationally cut spending, simplify and modernize the tax code, and strengthen our health and entitlement programs so they'll be around for our kids. As these bipartisan discussions move forward I will, as always, continue to fight for a balanced and comprehensive solution.

I'll keep you updated on our progress, and please continue to [contact my office](#) to share your thoughts and concerns.

This coming weekend, I will visit with many of you on the Peninsula and in Hampton Roads. We also are finalizing plans for a trip later this month to the Shenandoah and Roanoke valleys, and into Southwest Virginia, and I encourage you to check our [website](#) for updates.

It remains the greatest privilege to be able to represent you and the Commonwealth.

Best Regards,



Mark Warner

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