

I would like to update you regarding my vote on H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the economic stimulus.

I do not want to see any family face unemployment or foreclosure, or any business experience a downturn. While I can understand the premise of an economic stimulus to restore opportunity in these challenging times, the entirety of the \$816 billion package ultimately brought before Congress puts us on a path of unsustainable spending, in the name of stimulus, which will be very difficult to reverse.

After carefully deliberating on the size, scope, and sustainability of the economic package, and meeting with President Obama and members of his administration, I could not in good conscience vote for this bill.

A number of important ideas were included, such as alternative energy for a sustainable energy future, a modern electric grid, and health information technology, which are bold initiatives that I would support on their own merit. Yet a substantial portion of assistance goes to subsidizing states, which delays tough choices at a local level. Some states, like Nebraska, have thus far responsibly managed their budgets, even in tough times, and I could not ask Nebraskans to pay for poor governance elsewhere.

Furthermore, I remain concerned that policy discussions have not focused on implementing a mechanism to begin a process for addressing the nation's fiscal imbalances. Since 2000, government spending has increased by about 60 percent and the national debt has nearly doubled to \$11 trillion. Even without the stimulus, which is the largest spending bill in U.S. history, the national debt already consists of nearly \$35,000 for every man, woman, and child – and when factoring in our future spending obligations on programs such as Medicare and Social Security, taxpayer exposure could reach \$175,000 per person. If projected spending holds, government could grow by at least another 50 percent over the next seven years, which is not an option taxpayers can afford.

This borrow-and-spend philosophy leaves an unfair debt burden to our children and the next generation. The bill for our excess will eventually come due in one of three ways: increased taxes, increased inflation, and/or further dependence on foreign ownership of our public debt. None of these scenarios is healthy for the American people.

Congress must immediately implement a plan for fiscal stabilization, to create opportunity and jobs for our families, and to promote good governance. As a member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, please be assured that I will work with my colleagues toward sound policies that will benefit the long-term solvency of our economy.