

United States Senate

February 12, 2021

The Honorable Janet Yellen
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Yellen:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me last month about your views on the American economy and priorities in your new role.

The United States Treasury Department plays a significant part in enforcing American foreign policy through economic sanctions. We know that sanctions work and that the strong application of these measures against adversaries, including Communist China, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua are essential to holding the brutal dictators and their enablers who hold power in these nations accountable. As you review the foreign policy objectives of the Biden Administration, you must ensure that the sanctions levied against these nations remain in place, and that any attempt to violate our sanctions is appropriately addressed.

As we discussed prior to your confirmation, I am gravely concerned with the United States' massive and unsustainable federal debt. Today, our debt has ballooned to more than \$27 trillion, causing annual interest payments to exceed \$345 billion. Worse, American taxpayers receive absolutely no return on investment for this expense. America's growing debt impacts every aspect of our government by limiting our ability to respond to crises. It also forces us to reduce the productive investments we otherwise would make in areas that matter most to American families and significantly undercuts our success in creating strong and sustainable economic growth.

I remain deeply troubled by your support for raising taxes and spending hundreds of billions in taxpayer dollars on bailouts for the debts and pension holes of liberal states. Today, as American families and small businesses fight to stay afloat, these policies push them deeper into despair. Recently, you stated that rising inflation due to increased debt from President Biden's massive and untargeted COVID-19 spending bill was just, "a risk we have to consider." Secretary Yellen, I want to be very clear - for families looking to make ends meet each month, like mine growing up, the

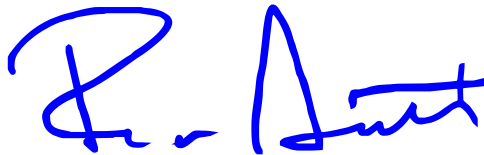
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rising prices of essential goods and services is not merely a statistical “risk” – it’s an existential threat. Families like mine growing up expect you and your team to deliver a better plan to the American people.

America’s debt crisis demands immediate action and in your new role it will be essential that you make this a top priority. We cannot afford to make the wrong play at this critical juncture. I am laser focused on ensuring that any strategy to pay down our nation’s debt protects essential services like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. We can preserve these programs for the families that rely on them while eliminating wasteful spending in other areas of the government. By working to grow the economy through job creation, tax revenues will increase. When I was Governor of Florida, we cut our state debt by more than a third in the eight years following the Great Recession. Our success was fueled by fiscally conservative policy and the elimination of burdensome regulations so businesses could thrive. As our economy grew, we made record investments in the environment, education and transportation. Through thoughtful policy, these results can and must be replicated on the national stage.

Our great nation is at a financial crossroads and the solution is not more government spending, tax hikes and mandates on small businesses or blank checks for fiscally incompetent politicians from New York and California. I sincerely hope you will reconsider your positions on these issues, hold brutal dictators accountable, follow all applicable laws, and commit to working with Congress to see our nation rise out of this moment stronger than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a prominent "S".

Rick Scott
United States Senator