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# House Action Reports

***Edition: Floor Summary***

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## **House Amendments to S 627, Budget Control Act**

This Floor Summary describes changes made to the House amendments to S 627, Budget Control Act, which the House passed July 29 by a vote of 218 to 210. For a summary of the bill considered on the floor, see House Action Reports Fact Sheet No. 112-15, July 28, 2011.

As passed by the House, the measure allows the president to increase the statutory debt limit by as much as \$2.5 trillion through a two-step process — provided that Congress has enacted \$2.7 trillion in spending cuts and other deficit reduction and has adopted a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.

The measure provides for more than \$915 million in initial spending cuts, primarily by capping discretionary spending for the next 10 years, and authorizes the president to immediately seek a \$900 billion increase to the debt limit. Of that debt ceiling increase, \$400 billion would occur when the president certifies that the increase is needed, and the other \$500 billion would be subject to a congressional resolution of disapproval. The president could seek a subsequent \$1.6 trillion increase in the debt limit, also subject to a congressional resolution of disapproval, if Congress later this year both enacts \$1.8 trillion in deficit reductions recommended by a bipartisan Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction and adopts a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.

The bill passed the House after Republican leaders modified it to make the second, larger debt limit increase contingent upon congressional adoption of a balanced-budget amendment. The original measure only required that Congress enact a \$1.8 trillion deficit reduction package, but many GOP conservatives said that was insufficient. Adding the balanced budget requirement virtually guarantees it will be rejected in the Senate, where all 53 Democrats opposed the original plan. The Senate is expected vote on the House-passed bill Friday evening. The measure might, however, serve as the legislative vehicle on which an eventual agreement is carried.

## **House Changes to House Amendments to S 627**

The House considered the measure on July 28 and 29 under a rule that permitted no amendments.

During floor consideration of the legislation, however, leaders recommended a second rule to modify the bill in an effort to attract more support for the measure. That second rule, adopted July 29 by a 239 to 187 vote, automatically modified the bill to make the president's authority to increase the debt limit by \$1.6 trillion contingent upon Congress first adopting a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.

The bill subsequently passed July 29 by a 218 to 210 vote.