

[N.C. delegation is divided on spending cuts](#) (Charlotte Observer – April 5, 2011)

Although tea party influence has waned in recent negotiations to prevent a government shutdown, GOP leaders still want the support of most of the House freshmen Republicans that the movement supported. Those include the vote of U.S. Rep. Renee Ellmers of Dunn, an activist-turned-politician who won her seat in part on a platform of cutting government spending. Under House rules, Republican leaders have until tonight to present a plan for a continuing resolution to pay for the federal government through the end of this fiscal year, and reports indicate that there could be compromise around \$33 billion in cuts. A vote would come Friday. Without passage, non-essential federal workers could be furloughed after Friday. In an interview Monday, Ellmers called a shutdown "a last resort." "Our goal as Republicans - we're united on this," Ellmers said. "We do not want to see a government shutdown, and we're doing everything to prevent it." Ellmers said she'd like to see a continuing resolution that cuts \$51 billion - the rest of the \$61 billion in spending cuts that House Republicans passed in February. (\$10 billion already has been cut in short-term stopgap measures.) Recent reports indicate that the compromise will be less, with the Washington Post reporting Monday that leaders are looking at a possible \$33 billion in cuts. "I guess my question is, if the Senate is agreeable to \$33 billion, why not \$51 billion? If we're going to cut, let's cut," she said. Ellmers also blamed Senate Democratic leaders for pushing toward a government shutdown. "That is what we're trying to avoid, but it seems like (Senate Majority Leader) Harry Reid and (Sen.) Chuck Schumer are continuing on this stunt-filled rampage of shutting down the government and blaming it on Republicans," Ellmers said. U.S. Rep. **Mel Watt**, a Charlotte Democrat, said he hadn't settled on a breaking point that would define his vote. Instead, he said, he'll look at the details and figure out the balance of cuts vs. impact, which he suspects will include job losses. "I think everybody supports the notion that we have to start applying more fiscal discipline,"

**Watt**

said. "But then when you get right down to it, you know somebody's going to get hurt from that, and I have to see who's going to get hurt and how much they're going to get hurt, and balance that against the benefit, short-term, of making these cuts, and the impact on jobs."

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said he doesn't plan to vote to shut down the government, but that he also wouldn't support a package that hurt his constituents. U.S. Rep. Sue Myrick, a Charlotte Republican, said her ideal was the continuing resolution passed weeks ago that would have cut more than \$60 billion. It didn't have a chance in the Democratic-controlled Senate. A meeting was scheduled Monday evening for the Republican caucus, where members would be briefed on budget plans. Those will likely include the budget for 2012, scheduled to be unveiled today by House Budget Committee Chairman Rep. Paul Ryan and expected to include more significant cuts to entitlement spending such as Medicare and Medicaid. "The main thing is the 2012 budget," Myrick said. "That's my big concern. That's where the rubber meets the road."