

House leader surprised by Obama not defending DOMA

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass. -- House Majority Leader Eric Cantor says he was "taken aback" by President Barack Obama ordering his administration to stop defending the constitutionality of a federal law that bans recognition of gay marriage.

The Virginia Republican said Thursday that he'd never been around when a president decided not to defend a law on the books. He says the U.S. Congress is mulling its options on the 15-year-old Defense of Marriage Act.

Cantor made his comments in response to a question following a speech at Harvard University.

Cantor also says the House budget will include proposals on how to curb spending on programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

Hundreds of students gathered outside to protest Cantor's visit, faulting Republicans for deep cuts to programs like global health initiatives and AmeriCorps.