



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA) Introduces Bill to Repeal Spanish-American War Tax

Legislation would end 107 years of “temporary” tax on talking

WASHINGTON – Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA) introduced S. 1321 today, which would repeal the 3% federal excise tax on telecommunications, a 107-year-old “temporary” tax enacted to fund the Spanish-American War.

While the Spanish-American War tax was originally billed as a luxury tax in 1898, when only the wealthiest Americans had phones, the telephone is now a ubiquitous part of American life. The tax is therefore highly regressive, as it represents a greater share of the income of poorer Americans.

In 2000, the House of Representatives passed legislation repealing the Spanish-American War tax by a vote of 420-2, and both houses of Congress passed appropriations legislation including the repeal in the same year. President Bill Clinton, however, vetoed the legislation.

“Repealing the Spanish-American War tax is long overdue,” said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist. **“We’ve been stealing money from telephone users for 107 years to fund a war it took us four months to win. We applaud Senator Santorum for taking the lead on this effort, and encourage all senators to cosponsor.”**

The House bill, H.R. 1898, was introduced in April by Rep. Gary Miller (R-CA), and has 101 cosponsors.

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Christopher Butler at (202) 785-0266 or by email at cbutler@atr.org.