



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

1920 L Street, NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20036
202.785.0266 • Fax 202.785.0261

WWW.ATR.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

CONTACT: Chris Butler
202-785-0266

Taxpayer Group Calls for BRAC Style Spending Offsets for Emergency Aid

Proposal seeks Commission to offset spending in times of emergencies requiring increased federal spending

WASHINGTON – Today, Americans for Tax Reform (ATR), the nation’s largest taxpayer advocacy group, called on Congress to create a BRAC style commission to identify savings to the federal budget when emergency spending is needed outside the existing budget. Under this proposal, the spending commission can offset the \$200 billion needed for Hurricane Katrina relief and any other emergency spending required hereafter.

“BRAC” stands for Base Realignment and Closure, the process in which military bases are closed. A commission recommends which bases are not in line with the goals of the military and realigns the savings to other uses. Given the sensitive nature of closing military bases, the BRAC process packages the recommendations together and Congress takes an up and down vote on the entire package. With most members of Congress knowing that an increase of federal spending of \$350 billion in one year is fiscally irresponsible, yet lacking the courage to offset the spending, a Commission in the form of BRAC is the best way to ensure the hurricane relief is provided with minimal impact to taxpayers.

“Congress is not willing to cut \$200 billion out of the federal budget just as Congress was not able to close down one single military base,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“But with BRAC implemented, six rounds of base closings have been successfully completed saving taxpayers billion of dollars and making the military more efficient. It’s now time to follow this model for all emergency spending.”**

Under the ATR proposal, the Commission will recommend any money spent for Hurricane Katrina relief will be offset 100 percent over five year through a set of cost savings and recommendations. Congress will take an up or down vote. If the vote passes, the Commission’s recommendations would be implemented. If Congress rejects recommendations, the Commission will put forth new recommendations which Congress will vote on again, similar to the BRAC Commission.

Potential savings to the federal budget have been identified by a number of sources. Yesterday, the Republican Study Committee identified \$923 billion of cost savings to the federal government over ten years. Today, Sens. Coburn (R-OK), DeMint (R-SC), John McCain (R-AZ), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), John Ensign (R-NV), and John Sununu (R-NH) outlined a menu of options for cost savings that can save the federal government. Clamping down on improper payments and poor accounting by the federal government alone can save taxpayers \$100 billion per year.

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