



AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

Grover G. Norquist
President

July 21, 2008

To: All Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
Re: Urge opposition to H.R. 3999 and H.R. 6532

Dear Member of Congress,

I write to urge you to exercise fiscal restraint and to oppose the National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act (H.R. 3999), which would drastically increase funding levels for bridge replacement by authorizing \$1 billion for Fiscal Year 2009 for bridge-related programs – an increase of about 25 percent.

At a time when taxpayers are struggling to make ends meet and families have to prioritize their budgets, Congress should do no less: Rather than allocating large sums in new funding for bridge replacement and rehabilitation while at the same time instituting new inspection requirements, Congress should re-assess its transportation spending priorities.

The same rationale should apply to Chairman Rangel's bill which seeks to bail out the Highway Trust Fund by diverting revenues from the General Fund of the Treasury. Not only would H.R. 6532 transfer billions more than required to cover the Highway Trust Fund's overspending problem (which is home-made and was anticipated in 2005), it would also only serve as a temporary quick fix, and would only exacerbate the transportation funding problem in the long run. The bailout was the wrong approach in the FAA bill, and it is the wrong approach now.

Rather than resorting to band-aid policies likely to result in overall spending increases, as these revenues will no longer be available to be spent on General Fund spending priorities, I urge you to lend your support to H.R. 6534 sponsored by Congressman Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), which would rescind unexpended funding for unexpended earmarks included in the bloated 2005 SAFETEA-LU transportation bill.

This type of reprioritization can reasonably be expected to yield sufficient savings as the 2005 highway bill misallocated over \$20 billion to over 6,300 pork-barrel earmarks, including the infamous bridge to nowhere.

It is time for government to live within its means, and your opposition to H.R. 3999 and H.R. 6532 is a vote for the taxpayer, as is your support for H.R. 6534.

Onward,

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