



# NEWS

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## **Tax Relief and Missile Defense: Not Contradictory Goals**

*Taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist says providing national defense should be America's first priority, not last*

WASHINGTON- A broad coalition of missile defense advocates spoke at the U.S. Capitol today to emphasize the importance of Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as an issue in the President's agenda. Speakers included Senator Jon Kyl (R-Az), Congressman Curt Weldon (R-Pa), Frank Gaffney, President of Center of Security Policy, Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform and David Keene, president of American Conservative Union.

Earlier news stories spoke of SDI as a division between conservatives who sought tax relief, and those who sought increased defense expenditures. A recent *New York Times* op-ed called taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist "the Republican tax-cutting zealot who drove the Bush budget policy," and "the biggest enemy of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's plans for a 'Revolution in Military Affairs' and a revamping of America's strategic forces."

Yet, Norquist's appearance as a featured speaker at the Americans for Missile Defense press conference surprised none of the defense experts who spoke. In his speech, Norquist said "Taxpayers must make defense a priority. If there were a lot of excess money for the defense budget, missile defense should be a priority. If there were a small amount of money, defending America should still be a priority. Either way, defending America is top priority."

Peter R. Huessy of the National Defense University echoed Norquist by stating, "American leaders need to be reminded of their constitutional mandate—'to provide for the common defense.' There is no qualifying phrase, 'but only if our adversaries say it's a good idea.' It is time to fulfill our pledge."

President Bush campaigned on a promise to deploy a national missile defense, and the issue remains a concern for citizens across the nation. The decision to deploy is yet to be made by Congress.

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information, or to arrange an interview with ATR President Grover Norquist, please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jcollegio@atr.org](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org).

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