



## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

### **On Taxes – In Their Own Words**

Fifth Democratic Debate

July 23, 2007

The Citadel

CNN

**QUESTION:** Hi, I'm Stephanie. We're in the Bay area, in my bathroom, because this is one of the places where I use compact fluorescent light bulbs. I use these to decrease my personal energy use, and I hear politicians talking about alternative energy to delay -- to decrease our energy impact as a whole. So my question for you is, how is the United States going to decrease its energy consumption in the first place? In other words, how will your policies influence Americans, rather than just using special light bulbs, to do this?

**COOPER:** Senator Gravel, how do you get Americans to conserve?

**GRAVEL:** Very simple, change our tax structure. Have a fair tax where people are taxed on what they spend rather than what they earn. And our tax system is totally corrupt right now.

And so if we now have a retail sales tax, you'll take this nation of ours from a consuming nation to a savings nation.

**COOPER:** Senator Dodd?

**DODD:** Anderson, there are a number of things. The 50-mile-per-gallon standard is something I've advocated by 2017, that I would push hard for. Entire fleet of federal automobiles would be hybrids or electric automobiles, so we reduce even further our consumption.

But I believe I'm the only candidate here, along with Al Gore, who's called for that, is a corporate carbon tax. You've got to tax polluters. You've got to separate the price differential so that we can move away from fossil fuels that do so much damage to our environment, to our economy, to our future, to jobs in this country.

Until you deal with the issue of price, until you impose a corporate carbon tax, we will never get away from fossil fuels. It's the only way this can be achieved. You have to advocate that if you're serious about global warming.

**BIDEN:** First of all, change the tax structure. We are giving people tax breaks who don't need it. The top 1 percent got an \$85 billion a year tax break. It is not needed.

(APPLAUSE)

My dad used to have an expression -- don't tell me what you value; show me your budget.

And the budget we have here is we all dance around it. We need more revenue to be able to pay for the things the governor and everybody else talks about.

And there's only one way to do it. You either raise taxes or take tax cuts away from people who don't need them. I'd take them away from people who don't need them.

(APPLAUSE)

**QUESTION:** My name is Marcus Benson from Minneapolis. And I'd like to know, if the Democrats come into office, are my taxes going to rise like usually they do when a Democrat gets into office?

**COOPER:** Congressman Kucinich, are the taxes going to rise?

**KUCINICH:** The answer is no; that we're going to stop the tax increases that President Bush gave to people in the top brackets. We're going to end war as an instrument of policy, with the defense policy of strength through peace.

So we're not going to be borrowing money from China to fight wars in Baghdad. We're going to lower our trade deficit by ending NAFTA and the WTO and going back to trade based on worker's rights.

We're going to have a change in our economy so that people will be able to get something for the taxes they pay but they're not going to have to pay more.  
(APPLAUSE)