




AMERICANS
for TAX REFORM

 **Center for
Fiscal
Accountability**

January 21, 2010

To: All Members of the U.S. Senate
Re: Oppose Conrad/Gregg, Support a BRAC-style Spending-Only Commission Instead

Dear U.S. Senator:

We write to once again reiterate our opposition to the Conrad/Gregg bipartisan tax and spending “reform” proposal, and to urge you to instead support a BRAC-style spending-only commission. After a series of government bailouts, the trillion dollar spending and debt package passed under the guise of “economic stimulus,” and an overall increase in federal spending, taxpayers demand that Congress take action, but there is a right way, and a wrong way to do so:

The proposal put forth by Sens. Conrad and Gregg is a bad deal for taxpayers. As written, it will almost certainly lead to a repeat of the debacle at Andrews Air Force Base, the infamous 1990 budget deal, in which taxpayers were promised \$2 in spending cuts for every \$1 in tax increases, but were left higher taxes and higher spending instead.

On the other hand, a commission modeled after the Defense Base Closure Realignment Commission (BRAC) which led to the successful closure of military bases that were underused, would be a prudent mechanism to address our nation’s fiscal problems. The BRAC process, put in place by Congress in 1990, would not have worked if it had been tasked with either closing unnecessary bases or raising taxes to pay for unnecessary bases. It worked precisely because it had one job: to save taxpayer money by closing unnecessary bases, and that is the model we should follow now.

As you craft such a BRAC-style spending-only commission, we urge you to listen to the American people, who earlier this week spoke loud and clear in the Massachusetts special election for the U.S. Senate. Scott Brown’s victory was more than a referendum on healthcare, it was a national referendum on the direction of our country. American taxpayers demand less spending, and greater transparency in the way Congress operates. Consequently, a BRAC-style spending-only commission should be designed to hold its deliberations not behind closed doors, but under the watchful eye of the American people.

Unlike the Conrad/Gregg commission, a well-designed spending-only BRAC-style commission with an emphasis on transparency would give Congress a vehicle to bring about the change in direction taxpayers are looking for, and we urge you to support efforts to establish such a body.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist
President
Americans for Tax Reform

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