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Presenting the Newest Member of the Mantis Club: President Barack Obama

President earns membership "honors" after only a good two weeks in office

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Reform announces the newest member to be inducted into the “prestigious” Mantis Club: President Barack Obama. Previously only open to governors, the Mantis Club has opened its doors to welcome the President of the United States. To qualify for membership to the Mantis Club, a governor (or president) must campaign on a platform of no-new-taxes and then quickly reverse course once entering office. The Mantis Club is named for the praying mantis, an insect which is easily camouflaged and devours its mate soon after mating.

On the sixteenth day of his presidency, Barack Obama broke one of the central promises of his candidacy: No American earning under \$250,000 per year would face any form of tax increase under his administration. By signing the S-CHIP legislation on Wednesday, February 4, 2009, Obama has now broken his oft-repeated promise. Obama’s signature puts into effect a 156 percent increase in the federal excise tax on tobacco, a hike of 61 cents per pack. On average, smokers, whose median income is a little more than \$36,000, make about 30 percent less than non-smokers.



Obama promised repeatedly on the campaign trail that he would never raise taxes on those making less than \$250,000 per year. “I can make a firm pledge. Under my plan, no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase. Not your income tax, not your payroll tax, not your capital gains taxes, not any of your taxes” (Barack Obama, September 12, 2008, Dover, NH).

“President Obama has proven himself to be a worthy member of the Mantis Club,” continued Norquist. “By turning his back on campaign promises and enacting a tax increase on the very constituency he vowed to protect from higher taxes, President Obama embodies the bait-and-switch philosophy of Mantis Club members. His pledge lasted sixteen days.”

Obama joins tax-hiking governors and ex-governors Tim Kaine of Virginia, Steve Beshear of Kentucky, Mark Warner of Virginia, and Jon Corzine, Jim McGreevey and James Florio of New Jersey. For more information visit www.ATR.org

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 John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or at jkartch@atr.org.

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