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## George H.W. Bush to Receive Profile In Courage Award for Raising Taxes, Breaking “Read My Lips” Pledge

*Norquist: “Courage would have been standing up to the spending lobbyists in Washington and saying, No.”*

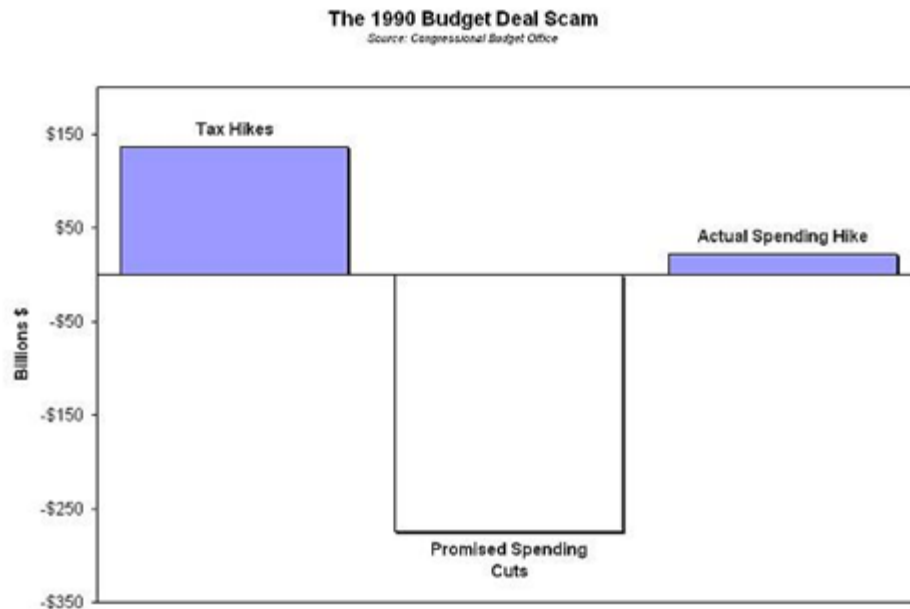
WASHINGTON, D.C. – Because he “agreed to a tax increase as part of the compromise, and he was pilloried by conservatives for doing so,” George H.W. Bush will receive the Profile in Courage Award from the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, it was [announced](#) Thursday. The 15-member award committee, dominated by individuals with a big government philosophy, is chaired by longtime journalist and tax increase advocate Al Hunt.

“George Herbert Walker Bush’s tax increase led to higher spending, higher taxes, and the Clinton presidency which brought even higher spending and increased taxes,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. “The ‘compromise’ of 1990 was bad economics, bad policy, and a betrayal of the American people. Courage would have been standing up to the spending lobbyists in Washington and saying, ‘No.’ Doing what official Washington and its spending lobbies want is not courage. It is a failure of nerve.”

### The 1990 “Read My Lips” Budget Deal Scam

Starting in May of 1990, President George H.W. Bush huddled with Democrat House and Senate members at Andrews Air Force Base.

- **What was Promised:** Congressional Democrats convinced a number of Republicans to join them in a bipartisan deal promising \$2 in spending cuts for every \$1 in tax increases. President Bush signed the deal on November 5, 1990.
- **What Actually Happened:** Every penny of the tax increases (\$137 billion from 1991-1995) went through. Not only did the Democrats break their promise to cut spending below the CBO baseline by \$274 billion—they actually spent \$23 billion above CBO’s pre-budget deal spending baseline. Thirty-four House Republicans broke their own Taxpayer Protection Pledges and went along with this one-sided “deal.” As a result, Republicans lost eight seats in the 1990 Congressional midterms, and President Bush only received 38% of the vote in the 1992 Presidential election.



Bush later [admitted](#) that the 1990 tax hike deal was a mistake when he was running for reelection in 1992:

***“I’m very disappointed with Congress. I thought this one compromise – and it was a compromise – would result in no more tax increases. I thought it would result in total control of domestic discretionary spending. And now we see Congress talking about raising taxes again. So I’m disappointed, and given all of that, yes, a mistake.”***  
***--March 1992***

“Because he broke his word to the American people Bush lost to Clinton in 1992. Clinton then raised taxes and spending even more. Bad policy is bad politics which leads to more bad policy,” said Norquist.

**The Last Republican to  
Compromise on Tax Increases**

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– President George H.W. Bush, March 4, 1992

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