

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 16, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-0001

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-0001

Speaker Pelosi,

We write today to urge you to acknowledge the overwhelming public support for the first congressional pay cut in almost eight decades and to schedule a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives on H.R. 4720, the Taking Responsibility for Congressional Pay Act, as soon as possible.

Representatives have to make sacrifices of their own before they ask anyone else to do without. For more than a decade, both parties have buried this country deeper and deeper in debt. Naturally, the American people now do not trust Congress to set the right priorities. We need to prove that we are actually serious about restoring fiscal discipline – serious enough to start the cutbacks with our own pocketbooks.

In early March of this year, the Taking Responsibility for Congressional Pay Act was introduced as part of the fight to get us back to fiscal balance. H.R. 4720 reduces salaries for Senators and Representatives by five percent starting next January and blocks any automatic increase to member pay. It would be the first pay reduction for Congress in 77 years – since the heart of the Great Depression.

From the beginning, this bill attracted widespread backing from folks across the country. Yet for months, and despite multiple requests to move it forward, the bill has not seen any progress in the House. It seems that it is being swept under the rug.

Late last month, we received clear evidence that this was in stark contrast to the will of the American people. A Rasmussen poll released August 31 showed that an astonishing 75% of likely voters want Members to reduce their salaries until the budget is balanced. This is a majority that cannot and must not be disregarded.

Folks understand that a congressional pay cut is both the right thing to do and critical to restoring fiscal discipline in Washington. They realize that our country is facing an unprecedented fiscal crisis, and we cannot keep leaving the tough decisions for next week or next month or next year. They get that the days of consequence-free spending in Washington have to be over. We need to show the people that we get it too and take action on the pay cut bill – now.

We must develop a plan that works for the long run, and that means fundamentally changing the way we do business in Washington. This bill is not a silver bullet, but it is a necessary first step. We call on you to listen to the public and bring the Taking Responsibility for Congressional Pay Act to the floor immediately.

Please contact us directly if you have any questions or would like to further discuss this effort to make a real difference in addressing our growing deficits and skyrocketing debt.

Sincerely,

A Kirkpatrick

Dave Lockhart

Bill Foster

Leonard L Bevell

J. Giffards

JAMES W. Childers

Larry Kniell