

This missive, as I originally wrote it was to inform you that the House of Representatives has now adjourned for its traditional August recess.

This should be a good thing. Not just because I enjoy being home in California. But because nothing much has changed in this Congress from when it started in early 2009. It is still the most closed, partisan, and poorly run Congress in recent memory. But today, in keeping with this recent lackluster tradition, Speaker Pelosi has called the House back to pass a single bill...but I will save my thoughts on that for a future missive, so stay tuned!

Every day, Congress passes bills that make the economy worse. You would think that the abject failure of the stimulus and other programs would make the majority leaders change course. But they have not. Just in the last week before the recess (or so we thought), the House took up bills on the floor that would increase spending by more than \$285 billion dollars (by authorization, mandatory, or appropriations) and increase taxes by more than \$22 billion. Do the math and that means increasing the debt and deficit by \$262.6 billion.

No nothing has changed in Washington in the last 20 months, in spite of the clear expressions from the people that things need to change. These actions are hurting job creation and economic growth, not helping it. If we are not in DC, we are not increasing your taxes and putting you deeper in debt. I guess in a relative sense, that's a good thing.

Here are some bits of news from the week that you should know:

**In my last missive I told you about the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development spending bill**, but for the first time in the 3 terms I have served in Congress, I was not allowed to offer any amendments to strip earmarks out of a spending bill. In the past, under both Republican and Democratic majorities, I was always allowed at least one opportunity to get a vote on removing earmarks from any spending bill. But Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer keep making this Congress more closed and more tightly controlled. Perhaps the reason I was denied is because of what I had found. In six cases, the bill awarded **MORE MONEY**

for the earmark than the member had requested. If a Member of Congress asked for \$250,000 for some bridge somewhere, and they get \$300,000, what is going to happen with the extra \$50,000? Will they put gold on the bridge? Will they pay everybody more? Will they have a big

party? Is it any wonder why government wastes so much money when we do stuff like this? Here are the 6 earmarks that got more money than requested:

**Rep. Bishop (GA)**

**Amount Received:** \$500,000

**Proposed Recipient:** Southwest Georgia Regional Airport Improvement Program

**Amount Requested:** \$100,000

**Description:** This project would address the design of a new commercial building, aircraft apron improvements, new building curb front, and new building terminal building site work and utilities.

**URL:** [http://bishop.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=414:fy2011-appropriations-requests-labor-health-a-human-services&catid=23:fy-2011-approps-requests](http://bishop.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=414:fy2011-appropriations-requests-labor-health-a-human-services&catid=23:fy-2011-approps-requests)

**Rep. Bishop (GA)**

**Amount Received:** \$450,000

**Proposed Recipient:** Leesburg North Bypass

**Amount Requested:** \$100,000

**Description:** The program will fund the Leesburg North Bypass from US 19 to SR 195 as well as acquire the right-of-way.

**URL:** [http://bishop.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=414:fy2011-appropriations-requests-labor-health-a-human-services&catid=23:fy-2011-approps-requests](http://bishop.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=414:fy2011-appropriations-requests-labor-health-a-human-services&catid=23:fy-2011-approps-requests)

**Rep. Ellison (MN)**

**Amount Received:** \$900,000

**Proposed Recipient:** Lowry Avenue Bridge Replacement Phase II

**Amount Requested:** \$487,000

**Description:** Funds are requested for the Phase II part of the Lowry Avenue bridge replacement project, the bridge spans the Mississippi River in Northeast Minneapolis.

**URL:** [http://ellison.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=16&Itemid=60](http://ellison.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=16&Itemid=60)

**Rep. Fudge (OH)**

**Amount Received:** \$550,000

**Proposed Recipient:** City of Shaker Heights. Warrensville/Van Aken Transit Oriented Development.

**Amount Requested:** \$500,000.

**Description:** Improve popular intersection and provide intermodal transit center as a gateway to the East side of Cleveland. 250 jobs.

**URL:** <http://fudge.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=127&parentid=4&iontree=4,127&itemid=338>

**Rep. Doyle (PA)**

**Amount Received:** \$100,000

**Proposed Recipient:** Mount Washington Community Development Corporation -- Workforce and Trail Development in Pittsburgh's Newest Regional Park

**Amount Requested:** \$99,900

**Description:** Funding would go towards the trail development at the Grand View Scenic Byway Park, Pittsburgh's newest Regional Park. The Park aims to provide a sustainable economic development tool for the region while restoring a healthy native ecosystem for the benefit of the people and environment of Western Pennsylvania. Because over 1 million people visit Mount Washington every year, the Park's Master Trail Plan, creating 19 miles of trails, can play a significant economic development role.

**URL:** [http://doyle.house.gov/apps/list/press/pa14\\_doyle/20100319EarmarkRequests.shtml](http://doyle.house.gov/apps/list/press/pa14_doyle/20100319EarmarkRequests.shtml)

**Rep. Rangel (NY)**

**Amount Received:** \$250,000

**Proposed Recipient:** Positive Workforce

**Amount Requested:** \$240,000

**Description:** A 4 story building in Harlem, NY City completely renovated that will provide over 10,000 square feet of space, for non-profit workforce development programs along with other multiple programs and services for the community. Estimated cost for this project is \$1,450,000. Funding streams for the Positive Learning Center have been in-kind, equity/sponsor and private contributions.

**URL:** <http://rangel.house.gov/AppropsRequests.doc>    *\*\*Project listed on Page 43\*\**

**Rep. Olver (MA)**

**Amount Received:** \$300,000

**Proposed Recipient:** New England Freight Rail Infrastructure Study

**Description:** This project would study what investments would have the greatest benefit to increasing the capacity of rail infrastructure that moves goods from the west across Massachusetts to access New England markets.

**Amount Requested:** \$250,000

**Note:** Rep. Olver's office has since changed the amount, to 300,000 citing a 'clerical error' on their website.

**URL:** [http://www.olver.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=922&Itemid=25](http://www.olver.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=922&Itemid=25)

**Total Requested: \$1,776,900**

**Total Received: \$3,050,000**

**Difference: \$1,273,100**

**When bills are thousands of pages in length**, it often takes a while to learn all the ugly details buried within those pages. More and more of said details are coming out from some of the legislation recently passed by this Congress. In the Financial Regulation (FinReg) bill, we have now learned that the SEC was made exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). That means that even Members of Congress will not be able to get documents from the SEC if it is believed that they did something wrong or regulated things poorly. So, if there were another Bernie Madoff, the SEC could hide whatever they did or didn't do with that situation. No other agency has such protection. I have already introduced a bill to repeal this provision of the "FinReg" bill.

**And in the Health Care bill**, there is a provision that prohibits you from using your cafeteria (Flexible Spending Accounts) plan at work to buy non-prescription drugs. This is removing some of the flexibility in such 'flexible plans' and is a tax increase on anyone who has one of these plans. But it also encourages people to use prescription drugs even when an over-the-counter alternative is available. Like many things in the Health care bill, this will drive up costs, not lower them.

**So after the votes today, Congress will not come back into session until mid-September.** Then, we will be in for at most 4 weeks before adjourning for the election. Then, of course, there will be a "lame duck" session in November and/or December until the new Congress comes in January. It is unlikely that much substantive legislation will actually become law in that short September period so close to an election. So, much of the focus is on the "lame duck". If Democrats were to lose the majority in one or both Houses, might they try to pass very unpopular legislation in that lame duck when the wrath of the voters cannot hurt them anymore? Democratic leadership in DC denies it. We will see.

Until next time, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell  
Member of Congress