

**Floor Statement of Rep. John Linder (R-GA)
On the Welfare Emergency Fund Provisions of
Democrats' Small Business Tax Bill (HR 4849)
March 24, 2010**

Mr. Chairman, I oppose this legislation.

Since the Democrats' 2009 stimulus law, 3.3 million jobs have been eliminated, not the 3.7 million jobs they forecast it would create. Unemployment has risen to 10 percent, not the 8 percent peak Democrats promised. And 16 million Americans are currently unemployed, an all time record.

That stimulus legislation created numerous welfare expansions, including a new \$5 billion welfare "emergency fund." This fund directly undermines the successful 1996 welfare reforms by paying States more money if they increase welfare dependence instead of work. The legislation before us would extend and expand that welfare emergency fund, costing taxpayers another \$2.5 billion.

Democrats claim this welfare expansion will create jobs, as they claimed their stimulus bill would. The facts show stimulus didn't create jobs, and this won't, either.

Why are we doing this? According to the latest HHS figures, States have not spent over \$3 billion in the current welfare emergency fund. By the end of year, the Congressional Budget Office estimates one-third of the fund – about \$1.5 billion – will remain unspent.

But instead of letting this "emergency" fund expire, or even just giving States more time to spend current funds, Democrats insist on shoving another \$2.5 billion in welfare out the door. This will cost taxpayers billions of dollars more, and benefit especially those few States that spent all of what Democrats promised in last year's stimulus bill. So the more you spend, the more you get. All on top of last year's trillion-dollar stimulus bill, and the trillion-dollar health takeover bill the President signed yesterday.

But it's not enough, because it's never enough.

Two weeks ago, in a hearing on welfare spending, one expert testified to the subcommittee on which I serve as Ranking Republican that government will spend \$953 billion on means-tested welfare programs next year, a nearly 50 percent increase since 2007. I asked the Obama Administration witness, who supported the welfare expansion before us today, whether her testimony was that \$953 billion is not enough. She responded: "Who's to say what is enough?"

The reality is we are the ones elected to represent the American people in saying what is enough. And after a trillion dollars in failed stimulus spending, and a trillion dollars for the government health care takeover yet to come, I say enough. Oppose this unnecessary welfare spending increase.