

[Nancy Remsen, Burlington Free Press](#)

You can read about Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-VT, and what he thinks about the tax deal President Barack Obama brokered with Republicans just about everywhere these days.

The efforts of Rep. Peter Welch, D-VT, haven't drawn as much national attention, but Welch is as staunch an opponent of extending the tax break for the rich as Sanders. Leahy, too.

"Is it right to borrow a couple hundred billion for tax cuts for people who don't need it?" Welch asks rhetorically. "The answer to that is no."

Welch said he is urging House leaders to separate the various components of the bill — such as the tax cuts for the middle class, tax cuts for rich and the extension of unemployment benefits — and have up-or-down votes on each. "There are clear choices to be made."

Welch said it was too soon to tell if leadership would agree to those votes. "We're hanging in there."

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-VT, also opposes the tax package because "I'm not willing to add another \$858 billion to our national debt in order to give enormous tax breaks to multi-millionaires."

Leahy said his stand reflects the views expressed by most of the telephone calls, letters and emails he has received from Vermonters.