

Republican Quest for Line-Item Veto Is a Sham, Estate Tax Repeal a Rip-Off

For Immediate Release: June 22, 2006

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Today, the Republican Leadership in Congress will seek to give President Bush line-item veto power, a power that was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. They are also pushing another of the President's pet items-repeal of the estate tax. Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) intends to vote against both of these bills and released the following statement:

Line-Item Veto a Sham

"In my opinion, the claim that President Bush needs line-item veto power over the Congress in order for his own Republican majority to stop deficit spending is self-evidently ridiculous. This is simply another attempt by this White House to increase the power of the Executive Branch at the expense of the Legislative Branch - the Constitution be damned.

"Republicans control the House of Representatives, the Senate, the Executive branch, and the Presidency. With all of that power, Republicans have had ample opportunity and leeway to balance the budget over the past six years. President Clinton left President Bush a \$230 billion surplus. Yet Bush and the Republican Majority in Congress have squandered that surplus, plunged us into debt, and failed to balance the budget. Those failures are the result of bad policy choices - such as a multi-billion dollar tax cut package for the top 1% of Americans during wartime. These tax cuts account for fully 1/3rd of the nation's deficit!

"Also, but not surprisingly, this version of a line-item veto would allow programs like federal food stamps to be eliminated, but would not allow for the elimination of a tax loophole written for people with incomes of \$1 million a year."

Estate Tax Repeal a Rip-Off

"While today's line-item veto quest is a sham, the Republican Leadership's most recent attempt to repeal the estate tax is a rip-off. The estate tax bill considered today would pile \$762 billion more in debt onto our children's backs while benefiting less than 2% of Americans.

"That proposal is too expensive. Our nation must meet needs in national defense, homeland security, health care, education, veterans' benefits, and other domestic priorities. Any policy that would drain \$750 billion from our Treasury at this time should be rejected on that basis alone."

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