

Rep. Rothman Votes to Improve Homeland Security

For Immediate Release: May 18, 2006

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Republican Majority Instead Continues to Spend More on Tax Cuts for Super-Rich

(Washington, DC)— Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) voted yesterday morning to eliminate a small portion of the tax cut for individuals making over \$1 million and use those funds to beef up border and port security. The vote took place during a House Appropriations Committee meeting on a spending bill for homeland security. Unfortunately, the Republican Majority on the Appropriations Committee rejected the idea of asking the super-rich to sacrifice part of their tax cut, and instead passed a bill that leaves security agencies without the resources they need to protect Americans.

"Everyone knows that you cannot hire new border control agents without money to pay their salaries. Yet, the Republican Majority on the Appropriations Committee refuses to adequately fund something as critical to our country's security as the hiring of 1,800 additional border patrol agents," said Rothman. "Instead, Republicans would rather give an average of \$42,000 to every individual with an income in excess of \$1 million."

With just 8% of the money currently set aside to provide the super-rich with tax cuts, totaling \$3.5 billion, the U.S. could have hired 1,800 additional border patrol agents, 300 additional customs agents and inspectors and 800 immigration enforcement agents. The nation also could have provided an additional \$150 million in Firefighter Assistance Grants, \$200 million for new radiation detection equipment to prevent smuggled nuclear weapons or dirty bombs from reaching U.S. soil, and \$200 million for the U.S. Coast Guard.

The amendment that Rothman supported failed on a vote of 33-25, with all Republican Committee members voting no. Last week, Rothman voted for similar changes to the 2007 Military Quality of Life and Veterans' Affairs Appropriations bill that would have provided \$2.6 billion in additional funding for veterans' healthcare. The Republican majority on the Committee voted it down.

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