



November 29, 2022

House Republican Conference  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515



Dear Republican Member of Congress,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and our millions of members and supporters from across the country, we urge you to support the amendment being offered by Rep. Tom McClintock (R-Calif.) during the consideration of rules for the Republican Conference in the 118th Congress on Wednesday, November 30, 2022. It strikes the language that allows earmarks under the current transparency requirements, in effect reinstating the earmark ban.



Earmarks are one of the most corrupt, inequitable, and wasteful practices in the history of Congress. Supporting Rep. McClintock's amendment is your first opportunity to demonstrate to taxpayers that the election of a Republican majority in the House will be accompanied by a serious effort to restore and maintain fiscal responsibility.



Since 1991, [according](#) to Citizens Against Government Waste's *2022 Congressional Pig Book*, there have been 116,816 earmarks costing taxpayers \$411.4 billion. In 2006, one year after the 2005 highway bill had \$24 billion in earmarks, including the infamous Bridge to Nowhere, appropriations earmarks totaled a record \$29 billion. That was also the year Republicans lost the majority in the House of Representatives, followed soon thereafter by the incarceration of members of Congress, staff, and lobbyists as a result of the corruption associated with earmarks.



The inequitable and power-driven distribution of earmarks is demonstrated by the inclusion of the names of members of Congress who obtained earmarks in the appropriations bills during the 118th Congress. The 89 members of the House and Senate appropriations committees, making up only 17 percent of Congress, were responsible for 41.1 percent of the earmarks and 29.1 percent of the money. There were 273 Democrats, or 99.3 percent of the 275 in the House and Senate, who received 5,435 earmarks totaling \$8.51 billion, while 120 Republicans, or 45.8 percent of the 262, received 1,320 earmarks costing \$4.95 billion.



Article 1 arguments over the power of Congress to appropriate money as a reason to earmark funds have been thoroughly debunked, including the February 9, 2017, [op-ed](#) by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and former Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas), in which they said, "Congress needs to assert its power of the purse, but not in this manner. Letting members of Congress take credit for federal money steered to their constituents does not fix the incentive problem at the core of today's congressional dysfunction." Instead, "Congress can use the authorization process to reform how federal agencies spend taxpayer dollars to ensure the process for selecting funding priorities and recipients is transparent, merit-based and consistent with congressional intent."





Earmarks are a lazy, unfair, and corrupt way to circumvent the authorization and appropriations process. The American people have made it clear they want business as usual to end in Washington, D.C. Again, we urge you to show your commitment to fiscal responsibility and support Rep. McClintock's amendment to restore the earmark ban.

Sincerely,

Tom Schatz, President, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Pete Sepp, President, National Taxpayers Union

Phil Kerpen, President, American Commitment

Steve Pociask, President/CEO, American Consumer Institute

Grover Norquist, President, Americans for Tax Reform

David McIntosh, President, Club for Growth

Myron Ebell, Director of the Center for Energy and Environment, Competitive Enterprise Institute

Adam Brandon, President, FreedomWorks

George Landrith, President, Frontiers of Freedom

James Taylor, President, Heartland Institute

Garrett Bess, Vice President, Heritage Action for America

Andrew Langer, President, Institute for Liberty

Saulius "Saul" Anuzis, President, 60 Plus Association

James L. Martin, Founder/Chairman, 60 Plus Association

Steve Ellis, President, Taxpayers for Common Sense

David Williams, President, Taxpayers Protection Alliance

