



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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## Taxpayers to the Department of Defense: Give me the Best Bang for the Buck!

*ATR urges Department of Defense to award U.S. defense contracts based on the most competitive offer.*

**WASHINGTON** — In an article printed in the March 18<sup>th</sup> *Washington Post* titled “In Defense Bidding, Yankee Doodle Does It,” Renae Merlein outlines the ongoing public relations campaigns between companies that are bidding for U.S. defense contracts. Some companies are attempting to highlight their American ties to persuade the Department of Defense (DoD) to award them large Pentagon contracts. **Americans for Tax Reform (ATR), the nations leading taxpayer advocacy group, reiterates the taxpayers’ desire to have the DoD award the defense contracts based on the safest and most cost efficient products, not theoretical American credentials.**

**“Secretary Rumsfeld has done a tremendous job at executing two successful wars, protecting our homeland, and beginning to streamline the DoD to ensure that our military can meet the new challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,”** said Grover Norquist, President of ATR. **“As part of this ongoing effort, the DoD must ensure that their decisions to award defense contracts are made without unnecessary political pressure.”**

During this election year there will be an ongoing debate surrounding the decision process for the DoD’s defense contract awards. **Companies will attempt to circumvent competition by attacking their opposition as unsafe because of they are owned by companies located outside of the United States.** However, these attacks are unwarranted.

Under current laws, 50 percent of a U.S. weapons system must be American-made. In addition, according to the same *Washington Post* article, just 4.1 percent, or \$8.6 billion, of the \$209 billion that the Pentagon spent on procurement in fiscal 2003 went to foreign entities. The Pentagon fought attempts last year to make the laws more stringent, arguing that would anger allies and increase the cost of some programs by requiring new suppliers to be found.

**“Instead of wrapping themselves in the American Flag to avoid competition, these companies should focus on improving their projects to provide the American taxpayer with the safest equipment at the best price,”** said Norquist.

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jcollegio@atr.org](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org).