



Grover G. Norquist

President

June 23, 2004

Dear Representative:

This week, you will be given the opportunity to vote on amendments to H.R. 3973, the Spending Control Act of 2004. Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) supports H.R. 3973 as it represents a good start for budget enforcement, the bill can be improved by adding some teeth that will really help control spending. Given the current spending explosion that has erupted over the past few years, it is imperative that strong budget enforcement be put into place as soon as possible. ATR may rate votes on amendments related to the Family Budget Protection Act, H.R. 3800.

Spending discipline is needed and need now. In calendar year 2004 total federal spending will be \$2.45 trillion. This is \$586 billion more than was spent in calendar year 2000 and federal spending has been increasing at an average annual rate of more than 7 percent during the same time period.

These spending increases have far exceeded the rate of inflation, economic growth, and the personal income of working American families. As a result, the average American will need to work 87 days out of the year to pay for federal spending. That is an increase of two days since last year and nine days since 2000. The spending binge must end and strong budget enforcement is needed to start the process to slower federal spending growth.

H.R. 3800, the Family Budget Protection Act, contains many provisions necessary to put real some muscle into budget enforcement and should be made part of H.R. 3973 for final passage. Amendments which would provide the following budget enforcement tools should be supported:

- Joint Budget Resolution (Ryan/Gutknecht): Convert the concurrent budget resolution into a joint budget resolution that is signed into law by the President;
- Entitlement Cap (Hensarling): Limit growth in entitlement spending to the current inflationary adjustment for each program and population growth;
- Family Budget Protection Accounts (Ryan-Wis.): Allow Congress to target spending during the appropriations and direct spending processes and allow that spending to be redirected for deficit reduction; and,
- Enhanced Rescission (Ryan-Wis.): The rescission process would be enhanced so the President can propose the elimination of wasteful spending in appropriations bills and these proposals would be given expedited legislative consideration.
- Substitute H.R. 3800: A comprehensive budget reform bill, which has more than 100 cosponsors, will be offered as a substitute for H.R. 3973.

The time for talk about out of control spending and the deficit is over. Real action is needed and the amendments mentioned above would demonstrate your commitment to protecting American taxpayers. I want to repeat, Americans for Tax Reform may be rating any of amendments that come for a vote this week in our annual Congressional ratings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Norquist', written in a cursive style.

Grover Norquist