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Senate Shuts Down Year-Without-Earmarks Effort

DeMint-McCain one-year earmark moratorium defeated in late-night Senate vote

WASHINGTON, D.C. – During Thursday night’s Senate budget resolution “vote-a-rama,” one amendment in particular caught the attention of strong fiscal conservatives in the Senate and of all three presidential candidates. Senator Jim DeMint’s one-year earmark moratorium amendment was cosponsored by Republicans and Democrats ready to end the era of earmarks.

Although the amendment was defeated 29-71, the vote highlighted the need for increased transparency, accountability and fiscal responsibility in Congress. Opponents of the amendment, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid argued that earmarks are an important part of the spending process.

“It is no surprise 70 Senators could not handle a year without earmarks. Judging from the reckless spending in the budget resolution, there are some serious spending addicts in Congress,” said Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform. “I suppose tossing around three trillion in taxpayer dollars to fund entitlement programs in serious need of reform isn’t enough. Reid and his cronies must have their earmark fix as well.”

Earlier in the week, Senators DeMint and Tom Coburn (R-OK) were joined by taxpayer groups and members of the House of Representatives in a rally to call attention to the need for meaningful earmark reform. Common themes included the overall spending recklessness, as well as the importance of increasing transparency and accountability in federal spending.

“Taxpayers are lucky to have advocates of fiscal restraint like Senators DeMint and McCain to fight for their interests,” continued Norquist. “The 29 Senators who voted for the one-year moratorium are to be commended for standing up to the big spenders.”

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jkartch@atr.org.

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