



July 31, 2009

House Health Care Bill Pushes Marginal Tax Rates Above 52 Percent

In order to help pay for the government's takeover of health care, the current House bill attempts to plug part of the \$1.5 billion fiscal hole it creates with a \$544 million new surtax on high-earning individuals and small businesses. As the top income tax rate is already scheduled to increase to 39.6 percent, the surtax would be layered on top of that: an additional 1 percent on incomes between \$350,000 and \$500,000; 1.5 percent between \$500,000 and \$1 million; and 5.4 percent over \$1 million. In the end, the combination of the income tax, surtax, Medicare payroll tax, and hidden marginal rate increases that operate by phasing out certain deductions, the average Federal-State marginal tax rate would be over 52 percent in the United States, which is higher than 25 of the most economically developed countries in the world, including Germany, Italy, Spain, and France. In fact, in California alone the marginal income tax rate would be 56.92 percent—higher than both Sweden and Belgium! According to a Joint Committee on Taxation data projection for 2011, 42 percent of small business income would be subject to the surtax. Congressman Miller opposes placing job-killing taxes on small businesses and will continue fighting in Congress to get our nation's fiscal house in order.

House Unanimously Passes Homeowner Assistance Bill Authored by Rep. Miller

This week, the House unanimously passed H.R. 2529, the Neighborhood Preservation Act. This bipartisan homeowner assistance bill, authored by Congressman Miller, is designed to address the persistence of foreclosures and large unsold housing inventories. The bill would give families a chance to stay in their homes, stabilize home values, and restore overall confidence in the housing market. This legislation would allow a bank or mortgage servicer to temporarily enter into a long-term lease for properties acquired through foreclosure with an individual or the prior homeowner of a foreclosed property. Under the bill, the prior homeowner would have the option to lease the property with the opportunity to buy back their home. This legislation would also require the lender to sell the property within five years into a more stable market, and thereby potentially recover all or part of the loss that would otherwise have occurred with an immediate sale in a saturated market. At no cost to the taxpayer, the Neighborhood Preservation Act would reduce the number of houses coming into the housing inventory and would preserve the physical condition of foreclosed properties, which would ultimately help stabilize the aesthetic and economic values of homes and neighborhoods. As Americans across the country are affected by this unrelenting foreclosure crisis, Congressman Miller is pleased the House has passed this critical piece of legislation and urges the Senate to take action on this bill.

House Approves Defense Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2010

On Thursday, the House passed a \$636.3 billion Defense Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2010, making it the last of the twelve regular appropriations measures to be passed by the House this year. Specifically, the legislation contains \$29.9 billion in Defense health programs to provide care for our troops and military families, of which includes \$500 million for traumatic brain injury and psychological health treatment, and \$1.2 billion for medical care for active duty forces and mobilized Reserve troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, the bill contains a 3.4 percent pay raise for the military and provides \$104.8 billion for military equipment procurement. Congressman Miller supported this piece of legislation because he believes firmly that there is nothing more important than the safety and security of our nation and its troops. This bill will provide our troops with the support they deserve, and will allow them to continue their extraordinary work to protect the American people, our way of life, and to promote freedom around the globe.

Congressman Miller Unveils Comprehensive Energy Bill

Today, Congressman Miller unveiled the American Energy Production and Cost Reduction Act, a comprehensive energy bill that will reduce our nation's costly dependence on foreign oil, boost our economy, and lower energy costs. In order to make American-made energy more readily available, the legislation reduces regulatory burdens that delay advances in domestic energy production. In addition, the bill ensures that all coastal waters off the United States are open for drilling and incentivizes states by sharing a portion of the revenue derived. It also uses the earnings from offshore drilling to pay down our skyrocketing national debt. Furthermore, the American Energy Production and Cost Reduction Act guarantees nuclear power will be a viable option for future generations and supports renewable energy tax incentives for wind, solar, biodiesel, and other forms of energy. Additionally, it places Congress on record that it will not enact policies that will increase Americans' energy bills, such as cap-and-tax legislation. While Congressional Democrats and the Administration continue their efforts to raise taxes, grow both government and the deficit, and keep much of our nation's valuable natural resources under lock and key, Congressman Miller's bill fights for energy solutions that place the American people first. By increasing the supply of American made energy, we can help drive down the cost of gas, lessen our dangerous dependence on foreign sources of oil, and stimulate our ailing economy.

Cap-and-Tax Mandates "Carbon Contents" Labels and Federal Building Codes

Among the 1,201 page cap-and-tax bill's numerous provisions, which narrowly passed the House in June, the bill authorizes \$25 million in taxpayer dollars annually, for the next fifteen years, to establish a national product carbon disclosure program. The program may include a product carbon label disclosing the carbon content of the product being sold, to enable and encourage knowledge about carbon content by producers and consumers, and to inform of efforts to reduce emissions nationwide. The cap-and-tax legislation also establishes a national building code for commercial and residential buildings, which has traditionally been a state and local issue. Specifically, the bill requires a 30 percent reduction in energy use immediately after passage and an additional 50 percent reduction in energy use by 2014 for residential buildings and 2015 for commercial buildings. At a time when Americans are faced with the unfortunate realities of our declining economy, Congressional Democrats and the Administration are more concerned about using taxpayer-funds to micromanage the everyday details of Americans' lives. As Congressman Miller continues to fight against this disastrous piece of legislation, he will advocate for real solutions at increase domestic energy production, conserve energy, and drive down the cost of energy for Americans.