



Taxpayer Groups: Don't End The Earmark Moratorium

November 14, 2018

Dear Representative,

Taxpayers for Common Sense and National Taxpayers Union urge you to reject any proposals to amend or repeal the earmark moratorium.

Rather than restoring Congress' power of the purse, ending the earmark moratorium is really about bringing back a system that picked winners and losers on the basis of political muscle instead of project merit.

The negative aspect of earmarks may not be apparent to those elected following the establishment of the moratorium. But in fact, earmarks were not fair or equitable but invited corruption, and did not help Congress do its job better. Ending the moratorium, and the thousands of earmarks that would surely launch, will inevitably lead to accusations of pay-to-play, and would represent an affront to voters who've expressed a desire to make government work for taxpayers rather than special interests.

In reality, appropriations bills offer many opportunities for Congress to direct agencies on how to spend money by setting clear priorities, identifying funding eligibility standards, or increasing or decreasing funding to existing programs. Congress can and should create transparent criteria and metrics to allocate funding in a merit, competitive, or formula-based process and then actually conduct oversight over the Executive Branch.

Rather than backsliding into a system that treats taxpayer dollars as political rewards to be doled out at the expense of other taxpayer priorities, Congress should keep the earmark moratorium and seize the opportunity to demonstrate the proper role effective Congressional oversight can play in setting priorities.

Sincerely,

Ryan Alexander

President, Taxpayers for Common Sense

Pete Sepp

President, National Taxpayers Union