



Nov 11, 2016

Dear Representative:

Taxpayers for Common Sense urges you to reject the proposed conference rules amendment to effectively end the earmark moratorium.

While it discusses restoring Congressional power of the purse, this change is really about bringing back a system that picked winners and losers on the basis of political muscle instead of project merit. 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 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.

The thousands of earmarks this change would surely launch will inevitably lead to accusations of pay-to-play and corruption, and represents an affront to voters who've expressed a desire to make government work for taxpayers rather than special interests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'A. Ry Alexander'.

Ryan Alexander

President of Taxpayers for Common Sense