



May 3, 2024

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative,



On behalf of the undersigned organizations and our millions of members and supporters from across the country, we urge you to support [H.R. 8051](#), the Earmark Elimination Act, introduced by Rep. Ralph Norman (R-S.C.), which would create a permanent ban on earmarks in the House of Representatives.



Earmarks are one of the most corrupt, inequitable, and wasteful practices in the history of Congress. Supporting this bill would demonstrate to taxpayers that you are committed to restoring and maintaining fiscal responsibility.



Since 1991, according to Citizens Against Government Waste's [Congressional Pig Book](#), there have been 124,212 earmarks costing \$437.5 billion. The fiscal year (FY) 2023 appropriations bills contained \$26.1 billion in earmarks, the third highest total since CAGW began tracking earmarks.



The inequitable and power-driven distribution of earmarks is demonstrated by the inclusion of the names of members of Congress who obtained earmarks in the appropriations bills during the 117th Congress. In FY 2023, the 89 members of the House and Senate appropriations committee, making up only 17 percent of Congress, were responsible for 41.4 percent of the earmarks and 29.9 percent of the money. Democrats took advantage of the opportunity to get earmarks far more than Republicans. There were 271 Democrats, or 98.5 percent of the 275 in Congress, who received 7,890 earmarks totaling \$14,504,807,625, while 127 Republicans, or 48.7 percent of the 261 in Congress, received 2,109 earmarks costing \$7,114,165,577.



Article 1 arguments over the power of Congress to appropriate money as a reason to earmark funds have been thoroughly debunked, including the February 9, 2017, [op-ed](#) by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and former Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas), in which they said, "Congress needs to assert its power of the purse, but not in this manner. Letting members of Congress take credit for federal money steered to their constituents does not fix the incentive problem at the core of today's congressional dysfunction." Instead, "Congress can use the authorization process to reform how federal





agencies spend taxpayer dollars to ensure the process for selecting funding priorities and recipients is transparent, merit-based, and consistent with congressional intent.”

Earmarks are a lazy, unfair, and harmful way to circumvent the authorization and appropriations process. The American people have made it clear they want business as usual to end in Washington, D.C. Again, we urge you to show your commitment to fiscal responsibility and support H.R. 8051 to permanently ban earmarks in the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,



Tom Schatz
President, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

Phil Kerpen
President, American Commitment



Steve Pociask
President & CEO, The American Consumer Institute

Matthew Kandrach
President, Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

Jeff Mazzella
President, Center for Individual Freedom

James Taylor
President, Heartland Institute



Cameron Sholty
Executive Director, Heartland Impact

Pete Sepp
President, National Taxpayers Union



Paul Gessing
President, Rio Grande Foundation

Saulius “Saul” Anuzis
President, The American Association of Senior Citizens

James L. Martin
Founder/Chairman, 60 Plus Association

Steve Ellis
President, Taxpayers for Commonsense