



From: Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen [mailto:Congressman.Frelinghuysen@mail.house.gov]
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The Week just past

"The week started with news that the Obama Administration had fired the Chief Executive Officer of General Motors and was, in effect, demanding that Chrysler merge with Italian automaker, Fiat.

"Then came reports that Treasury Secretary Geithner was considering using his federal powers to replace other corporate leaders. When asked by CBS News if he would leave open the option to pressure a bank CEO to resign, Geithner replied: 'Of course.'

"While this further intrusion of the federal government into the internal workings of businesses is not healthy nor welcome, the really bad news for America came Thursday when the House approved a budget for the next fiscal year that massively expands government spending, government taxation and government debt.

"This was not a good week for the taxpayers."

Opposes budget that spends, taxes and borrows too much

Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen Thursday voted "No" on the Democratic Majority's \$3.6 trillion budget for the next fiscal year.

"Simply put: this budget proposal will hurt our economy in the short term and will have grave consequences for the economy in the long-term.

"Drafted by those who believe we can spend our way back to prosperity, this budget spends too much, it taxes too much and it borrows too much.

"There is never a good time to raise taxes. However, I cannot think of a worse time to raise taxes than in the midst of a serious economic downturn.

"So in the near term, this budget – containing \$1.2 trillion in taxes over the next ten years - will further slow our economy and kill jobs.

"However, what should keep us all awake at night is this budget's explosion of debt. The Majority's budget will double the national debt in five years and triple it in ten. Looking at it another way, they will accumulate more debt than all of the Presidents from George Washington up to and through George W. Bush.

"It is unconscionable for us to deal with the challenges before us by mortgaging the future of our children and our children's children.

"Every American generation from the very beginning to the present, has always felt that it could leave the country in better shape for its children than it was for themselves. However, if this budget passes, that American dream is in serious doubt.

"In the final analysis, this is not a budget. It's an 'invoice' that this Congress will hand to future generations to pay."

Supports pro-growth budget framework

On Thursday, Rep. Frelinghuysen voted for a budget framework that:

- Spends \$4.8 trillion less than the Democrats' budget over 10 years. Freezes spending (except for veterans and national security programs)!
- Brings debt under control, borrowing \$3.6 trillion less than the Obama budget over 10 years.
- Does not raise taxes. Instead of imposing \$1.2 trillion in tax increases on investors, small businesses, and families as proposed in the Obama budget, the Republican budget extends tax relief avoiding tax increases during a recession. Permanently extends the 2001 and 2003 tax relief. Permanently fixes the Alternative Minimum Tax.
- Creates 2.1 million more Jobs than the Democrats' Budget. Instead of a big government strategy in which Washington attempts to spend, tax, and borrow America to prosperity, the Republican budget puts its faith in individuals, small business and private sector investment to generate economic and job growth.
- Funds National Priorities. Increases the Defense budget by \$5 billion over the Obama budget and reserves the \$50 billion annual "placeholder" for unmet Defense needs. Increases Veterans funding by \$540 million over the President's budget. Provides for health and retirement security by reforming programs to ensure they can provide benefits for future beneficiaries.

New Threats Emerge

Even as the Obama Administration places the finishing touches on a national security budget that is expected to make broad and deep cuts to America's defense programs, new and dangerous threats are emerging. For example, Rep. Frelinghuysen this week questioned the commander of the Missile Defense Agency about China's new intercontinental ballistic missile specifically designed to destroy U.S. aircraft carriers operating in the Pacific Ocean and an imminent missile launch from North Korea.

"This is just one example of how the world is becoming a more dangerous place," said Frelinghuysen. "There is no doubt that storm clouds are gathering on the horizon – from a growing Chinese land and naval capability, to a newly resurgent and aggressive Russia, to threats from Iran and Venezuela and trans-national terrorist groups.

"Clearly, the defense budget is in serious need of 'reform.' But a blind slashing of defense spending does not equal 'reform.'"

Takes Aim at Deportations of Serious Crime Suspects

Reacting to what he calls "an outrageous miscarriage of justice," Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen this week introduced two measures designed to address legal circumstances that led to the deportation of an illegal alien charged with sexually assaulting a Morris County teenager.

"The legal interaction between state criminal law and the federal immigration process is multi-layered, complex and, sometimes, frustrating," said Frelinghuysen. "However, what is crystal clear is that the federal government must take steps to prevent another American crime victim from being victimized again, this time by

our own bureaucracy!”

In April 2008, a foreign national in the United States illegally was arrested and charged with aggravated sexual assault following an attack on a 12-year girl. He was remanded to the Morris County jail where he remained until August when he was able to secure his release from Morris County custody by posting bail. Aware that the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) had a “detainer” on the suspect, the Morris County Sheriff’s Department transferred custody of the suspect to ICE.

In September of 2008, the suspect was transferred to an ICE detention center in Louisiana where he appeared before an immigration judge and was ordered deported. Appropriate officials in New Jersey were never informed that this suspect was about to be or was subsequently deported.

Frelinghuysen’s legislation (H.R. 1823) would allow a state’s chief executive, or another appropriate official, to request that the DHS stay the removal of an alien charged with an aggravated felony. “While recognizing the DHS must maintain flexibility and discretion to accomplish its alien removal mission, this bill will provide an important new tool to state and local officials as they work to bring to trial illegal immigrants charged with a serious crime,” said Frelinghuysen.

“This solution is by no means perfect but it attempts to strike a balance between our national desire to deport illegal aliens as quickly as possible and the ability of victims of serious crimes to have their rights protected. Simply put, the federal government needs to think twice before handing the alien suspect in an aggravated felony a ‘get out of jail free’ card. These matters are too important to be put on auto-pilot!”

Frelinghuysen also introduced a “Sense of Congress” resolution (House Concurrent Resolution 90) which directs DHS and its Bureau of Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) to develop an effective and efficient system of communication that allows state and local law enforcement and prosecutors to know, in a timely manner, when suspects charged in their jurisdictions with aggravated felonies are in the final stages of the deportation process.

“There is another important component to this tragic incident – a state component. Bail was set for this suspect at a level that, in hindsight, appears incredibly low. In this regard, I would urge my former colleagues in the State Legislature to consider changes to the Constitution or the State Criminal code that requires a judge to understand a suspect’s immigration status before bail is set in cases involving serious and violent felonies. Adequate bail levels will go a long way toward preventing a recurrence of this outrageous situation.”

Bad Idea of the Week

The Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said on Tuesday that Congress should consider limiting the salaries of defense company CEOs.

“I’d like to take a look at that [defense executive pay] as part of the overall executive compensation question,” said Carl Levin (MI). He said that several options exist for reducing CEO pay, among them a change in the tax code, through the Securities and Exchange Commission or through the influence of stockholders on executive pay.

Really? What’s next? Should Congress get into the business of determining compensation levels at every private company?

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