

Read Jeb Bush's Lips: Taxes OK

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Photograph by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, right, and Cato Institute Tax Policy Studies Director Chris Edwards prepare to testify before the House Budget Committee on June 1, 2012 in Washington.

Jeb Bush, former Florida governor, brother of one former president and son of another, has made it clear he has no interest in serving as Mitt Romney's running mate this year.

He made it even clearer today.

Appearing before the House Budget Committee in Washington, Bush said he could support a deficit-reduction plan that includes \$1 in tax increases for every \$10 in spending cuts.

"If you could bring to me a majority of people to say that we're going to have \$10 in spending cuts for one dollar of revenue enhancement — put me in coach," Bush told the committee.

"This will prove I'm not running for anything," he added, prompting laughter in the room.

"I appreciate your candor," said Representative Lloyd Doggett, a Texas Democrat.

That 10-one ratio of taxes and spending cuts was rejected by all the Republican presidential candidates during a debate in August — including Romney.

It was Bush's father, former president George H.W. Bush, who famously said at the Republican convention that nominated him for president in 1988:

"Read my lips, no new taxes."

It was his acquiescence to taxes in a 1990 budget deal on Capitol Hill that made those words a haunting element of his re-election campaign — and defeat — in 1992.

Jeb Bush has studiously avoided such pledges. He said today that as governor he was repeatedly presented with — and rejected signing — an anti-tax pledge sponsored by conservative activist Grover Norquist that most Republicans in Congress have taken.

Bush has not been as studious about the question of serving as Romney's running mate. When asked by reporters, he repeatedly has said he'd have to consider it if asked, but doubts he'll be asked.

He was explicit as could be on April 20, telling this reporter: "I am not going to be the veep nominee. [Lay that to rest.](#)"

Sounds like he may have done that again today, both with policy and words.

"Not in the cards for me," he told reporters on the Hill. "Don't know how many times I have to repeat it."

Bloomberg's Brian Faler contributed to this report.