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[The Illusion With America](#)

Repeat after me: I vote GOP. I do not carry their water.

Posted by [Erick Erickson \(Profile\)](#)

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The House Republicans are set to unveil the Contract with America Part II, which we already know based on history will be more an illusion than substance. We also know, based on early word about what is in there, that it will be an unmitigated spectacle of wasted opportunity. There will be good points we will all love. But what will be missing will make it a wasted exercise by a party that still shows little sign of getting exactly why it lost power in 2006.

One of the best examples of how terrible this thing will be is the lack of an earmarks ban. It's not sexy, but cutting off the gateway drug to big government is critically important. Earmarks have been used by the leadership of both parties to pass every bad piece of legislation in the last several years.

Right now, the House GOP has a conference rule prohibiting earmarks. The Democrats have no such rule. That the GOP is not willing to extend the ban across the aisle via House Rules is a clear sign they really just don't get it.

While the Illusion with America will surely defund Obamacare and rein in the regulatory zeal of the Obama administration, I hear it will do nothing about already enacted regulations, will have very little in it relating to a pro-family agenda, and most troubling *it will most definitely not rein in the federal government itself.*

That last bit, which relates directly to earmarks, is the most disturbing. The government should secure our borders. The government shouldn't be funding abortions. The government shouldn't be pushing Obamacare. Putting these in *Contract 2: Back to Power* are such no-brainer issues, you can hardly call them bold or exciting. Republicans have been campaigning on these for a year now. But there are major other areas the government should not be involved in.

Without, at minimum, an earmarks ban and a repeal of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, we are left asking one question: where the hell is the check on government itself, including on a Republican Party whose last foray into the majority saw a number of them hauled off to jail in scandals largely related to earmarks and spending?

In Forbes Magazine in the November 13, 2000, edition, Ed Crane, the head of CATO, [penned a column entitled "GOP Pussycats", noting](#)

*Over the past three years the Republican-controlled Congress has approved discretionary spending that exceeded Bill Clinton's requests by more than \$30 billion. The party that in 1994 would abolish the Department of Education now brags in response to Clinton's 2000 State of the Union Address that it is outspending the White House when it comes to education. My colleagues Stephen Moore and Stephen Slivinski found that **the combined budgets of the 95 major programs that the Contract with America promised to eliminate have increased by 13%**. [Emphasis added]*

We know from history that the GOP became everything they campaigned against.

We know from history that if the GOP cannot now, during the campaign season, promise to get rid of earmarks, the GOP will never do so once back in power.

We know the GOP is better than the Democrats. We know the GOP will fight to defund Obamacare. But we also know that the Democrats were willing to lose everything to nationalize healthcare and the GOP is so scared of ever doing anything to lose power they'd rather trade permanent policy victories for politics as usual with them in charge.

It is all an illusion.

The tea party movement exists because a great deal of the nation sees government as too much in our lives. It doesn't do well what it should do and does too much more than it should. I highly doubt the Republicans will be willing to take a stand against government in general — just Barack Obama's government.

That is not enough. It is not in tune with the American people's concerns. I guarantee you we will all like solid bits of this great Illusion. We can expect little of it to pass the Senate. The one thing the House GOP could do on it own would be a rule prohibiting earmarks. That will be a bridge too far for them.

In our zeal to take back the House and help our team, let's not expect too much.

Category: [House of Representatives](#), [Republicans](#)

[Morning Briefing for September 22, 2010](#)

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RedState Morning Briefing

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