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Obama WH to Congress: Let's spend a little more before the midterms!

posted at 2:55 pm on September 16, 2010 by Ed Morrissey
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What a great idea! With voters rising up to wrest control of Congress away from Democrats in large part because of overspending and regulatory overreach as well as a failing economy, Barack Obama has decided that the next few weeks on Capitol Hill should be dedicated to more ad hoc spending:

Despite coming under daily assault from Republicans over spending, the Obama administration is pushing a \$20 billion-plus pre-election shopping list on its Democratic allies in Congress as they prepare must-pass legislation to prevent a government shutdown next month.

Republicans are protesting the [spending requests](#), which include \$1.9 billion for grants to better-performing schools, financial help for the Postal Service and more than \$4 billion requested by the administration to finance settlements of long-standing lawsuits against the government.

A tally by Republicans puts the price tag of the Obama requests at more than \$20 billion, including \$5.7 billion to prevent shortfalls in the popular Pell Grant program next year and permit the cash-strapped Postal Service to delay a scheduled \$5.5 billion payment into a health care fund for retirees and use the money to stay afloat.

The wish list appears to be an overreach given political anxiety among Democrats over spending with midterm elections to determine whether they maintain control of Congress just seven weeks away. Rep. Tom Latham, [R-Iowa](#), predicted that the White House would get relatively little of what it's seeking.

Actually, for all of the anxiety about the massive policy changes that may happen in the post-election lame-duck Congress, it's this kind of spending that's most likely to be the focus. This Congress still hasn't produced a budget or even a budget *resolution* for FY2011, despite the fact that **it starts in 15 days**. Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid have to pull together a continuing resolution to authorize operations of the federal government for October 1st, and they are almost certain to avoid attaching any bill that raises the level of spending before November 2nd, when Republicans can use it as a bat with which to beat them in the elections.

Instead of playing along and maintaining the illusion of fiscal control, Obama tips his hand a little too early by demanding this money now. And it's unclear why this has to be addressed before the election, anyway. None of the shortfalls mentioned are so time critical that Congress couldn't address them either in the normal budget process or with riders in November. Clearly, Democrats will want to write the FY2011 budget after the election and pass it before the session ends, since a failure to do so would put Republicans in charge of the FY2011 budget. Why talk about spending more now?

Besides, as Veronique de Rugy reminds readers at [The Corner](#), the funds for those requests could easily be found if Congress decided to actually *cut* spending. [Cato Institute](#) has some good ideas where to start. Perhaps instead of asking for even more spending on top of that which threatens to turn Democrats into a shrinking minority on Capitol Hill, the Obama White House might start listening to the voters and start finding ways to live within the massive means provided to the government by Americans each year. If they had done that from the beginning, Democrats wouldn't need to hide their budgeting process in a lame-duck session at all.

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Hey! Let's throw some amnesty and DADT logs on the fire too, and watch that sucker BURN!

/burn their chances for ANY success on 11/2, that is...

ornery_independent on September 16, 2010 at [2:57 PM](#)

It's times like these that I wonder if Obama is some kind of Republican plant making these policies to remind people about how Conservatism is what works...

then I remember that he is just a moron.