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11:26 am CST - May 28, 2010

TXTV



Legislators to Deficit Reduction Commission: Don't Exempt Military Spending From Scrutiny



Washington, D.C. – As Congress considers appropriating hundreds of billions of dollars in funding for the Department of Defense, a bipartisan group of legislators today announced an initiative to urge the President's deficit reduction commission to reduce military spending as part of government efforts to address the budget deficit.

At a press conference today, **Representatives Barney Frank (D-MA), Ron Paul (R-TX), and Walter Jones (R-NC)**, along with Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), released a copy of their joint letter to the President's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, and outlined their plans for forcing serious consideration of spending that has long been considered a sacred cow.

The legislators universally expressed their commitment to maintaining a strong defense, but argued that a review of military spending must be part of any serious discussion of reducing the deficit.

They stressed in the letter that although the four Members represent a wide range of views on national issues, they are united in their belief that "consequential deficit reduction must be achieved, and that this can only happen when all federal spending is closely scrutinized to ensure that the taxpayers are getting their money's worth."

The legislators also described their recent efforts to move the discussion beyond the abstract, convening a Sustainable Defense Task Force to make specific recommendations of ways to cut military spending without sacrificing military preparedness.

The Task Force is made up of experts from across the ideological spectrum, including the National Security Network, Taxpayers for Common Sense, Council for a Livable World, Center for Defense Information, and the CATO Institute. The legislators, along with other colleagues from both parties, will present those recommendations to the deficit reduction commission.

"The four of us strongly believe that unless there is a substantial reduction in American military spending over a ten-year period, close to slightly over a trillion dollars, you simply cannot deal with deficit reduction in a way that is economically and socially responsible," said Congressman Frank.

"There is nothing conservative about spending money we don't have simply because that spending is for the military," said Congressman Ron Paul. "No enemy can harm us in the way we are harming ourselves, namely bankrupting the nation and destroying our own currency. The former Soviet Union did not implode because it was attacked; it imploded because it was broke. We cannot improve our economy if we refuse to examine all major outlays, including so-called defense spending."

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"We are asking that a closer look be taken at our national security," said Jones. "If we do not need the 652 overseas bases that we have currently, then we should take that money and put it back into our own country. We should take that money and use it to take care of our wounded men and women returning from war."

"It is very clear that a serious effort to cut wasteful government spending, cannot unilaterally exempt defense spending from scrutiny," said Wyden.

"For too long even the suggestion that Congress consider cuts to the Pentagon's budget has been attacked as contrary to national security, when the reality is that calling an expenditure "defense spending" does not mean that it actually contributes to the national defense. Rather we should be scrutinizing military programs to make sure that taxpayer dollars are being spent efficiently and are going to the programs that will best support the troops and protect national security."

The legislators will now seek bipartisan support from their colleagues in both the House and Senate. They are confident that, given growing pressures on the federal budget, other Members will join their efforts.

The efforts announced today expand on the proposal set by President Obama to freeze all discretionary federal spending, and also on Defense Secretary Gates' pledge for belt tightening at the Pentagon.

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9 Comments

CWJensen
1:47 pm CST
May 28, 2010
THIS is why we MUST never allow Libertarians to hold any significant position or numbers in our government. As I have said before in a very limited way they can be an asset but be VERY CAREFUL that you read and UNDERSTAND just what they STAND for:
<http://www.lp.org/platform>

CWJensen
1:56 pm CST
May 28, 2010
Anyone that teams up with Barney Frank is the ENEMY . Ron Paul hypocrite.....The Federal Reserve ,Freddie Mae and Freddie Mac all protected by the Fagot Frank are destroying our economy and Ron Paul who claims to champion fiscal responsibility teams up with Frank? Don't ever WASTE your time running for president again.....you have shown your TRUE colors RON.

CWJensen
2:02 pm CST
May 28, 2010
What you need to know about Walter Jones:
<http://www.alternet.org/story/22281/>
The Three StoogesPoliticians First.

Cp
3:33 pm CST
May 28, 2010
You are all a bunch of heathens commenting on this site. My brother is serving still, guarding the opium fields and is disgusted by the orders he's been given. We are all being robbed yet can print cash out of thin air only on the name of security?!! What about the tent cities of families in fl. Ar. Jersey. Ron Paul is dead on correct and it looks like frank is learning ethics and waking up.

CWJensen
3:54 pm CST
May 28, 2010
Would really appreciate YOUR definition of heathen. I am sure that should not be too difficult for an enlightened individual such ass yourself.

SJK
5:14 pm CST
May 28, 2010
Anybody and everybody that sticks to the truth is a threat to the progressive left! I believe if you stick by the truth and what America truley stands for you will be considered a heathen because it is not in agreement to what the progressives want for America and the American people! Obama's NEW WORLD ORDER of BIG GOVERNMENT, LESS FREEDOM, HIGH TAXES, GLOBAL GOVERNANCE, and can't forget.....the REDISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

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where only Obama and his cronies will have all the wealth! Anyone in disagreement with this administration is considered to be a terrorist! That is INSANE and NOT what America is all about!!! Too bad Ron Paul is or has become a part of all this evilness....or should I say INSANITY! I think it is a combination of both!

alicia
10:10 pm CST
May 28, 2010

I'm suspicious, in the extreme, of *anything* Frank espouses.

Regarding ethics, Frank's a bit long in the tooth to be acquiring them.

I agree that cuts could be made in defense spending. Unfortunately, whenever cuts are made, they are invariably made in people and operational capability, NOT in enormous cost overruns that involve congressmen's pet projects. Cp should be aware of this.

Btw, Cp, orders flow from the top, down. You're mad at the wrong people.

During the Carter administration, when USN vessels were at sea, they had to rest at anchor, engines off, every night in order to conserve fuel. If these irresponsible clowns have anything to do with defense cuts, we'll be in the same boat...at anchor.

The day our defense is in the hands of Frank & Paul, we're dead.

alicia
10:16 pm CST
May 28, 2010

Oh, and these goofuses are going to ensure that the "taxpayer dollars are being spent efficiently?" Hahahahahahaha!

I don't know how they managed to say that with a straight face! LOL

Sonny
9:55 am CST
May 28, 2010

You want to cut wastful spending? All Democrats including our socialist liberal President resign.

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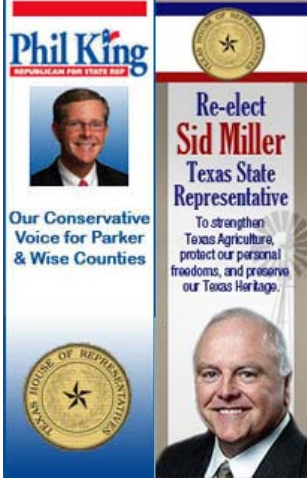
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- Gil Rodriguez, Texas Insider Managing Editor