



Gary Peters' 'Deathbed Conversion'

By TOM GANTERT | July 21, 2010

One of his political rivals called Gary Peters' "revolt" over spending a "deathbed conversion."

The Club for Growth says the Democrat Congressman from Bloomfield Township approved trillions in spending and gave him a worse rating than Nancy Pelosi for his voting on economic growth bills.

Yet, the news site Politico is reporting that Peters is part of a "rogue" group of four junior House Democrats frustrated with spending at the federal level.

The four "rogue" Democrats — Peters, John Adler from New Jersey, Jim Himes from Connecticut and Peter Welch from Vermont — are all facing contested elections in 2010.

Adler's seat is being targeted by the GOP. Former Philadelphia Eagle Jon Runyan, who is from Flint, is expected to win the GOP primary and go up against Adler.

Politico reported that Peters and his colleagues are forming a working group to propose "major cuts" estimated at \$70 billion over the next 10 years.

But Tad DeHaven, a federal budget analyst for the Cato Institute, said \$7 billion a year from a \$3.8 trillion federal budget is "a rounding error."

"Whatever they are targeting must be pretty small potatoes in the vast scheme," DeHaven said. "There is lots more money to go after than that. People hear \$70 billion and think, 'That sounds like a lot of money so that must be something good.' They count on the general ignorance of the population to make it sound like they are being aggressive. It demonstrates how unserious they are about cutting and spending. It is almost insulting they would pretend otherwise. They are just trying to sucker voters."

The Club for Growth, a political action committee in favor of limited government, rates all U.S. legislators with a score of 0 to 100. A score of 100 indicates the highest support for pro-growth policies.

Peters scored a "4" on his voting records for "pro-growth" policies. By comparison, Nancy Pelosi scored a "7."

Mike Connolly, a spokesman for the Club for Growth, said Peters supported trillions in tax hikes when he voted in favor of the federal stimulus, President Barack Obama's budget, cap-and-trade, cash-for-clunkers, the federal health care reform act and the 2009 "Omnibus" bill that included thousands of earmarks.

"Whatever he says, he doesn't care about spending or the deficit," Connolly said. "He cares very much about being re-elected, which is why he and his friends are now (declaring) their fiscal responsibility. In 18 months since he's been in office, he has personally voted to increase spending — and the debt on our kids — by trillions of dollars."

Paul Welday, who is running in a GOP primary in the 9th District for the right to go against Peters, said all four of the

"rogue" Democrats are facing battles in 2010.

"It is fascinating to me that suddenly Gary Peters is having a deathbed conversion on the issue of federal spending," Welday said. "Voters see through that. After casting vote after vote after vote to increase federal spending to record levels and to increase debt to record levels, now they are going to come up with these type of things?"

Peters' spokesman Cullen Schwarz didn't reply to a message left on his voicemail.

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