



GET TO WORK: Get Control of Government

THE ISSUE:

The federal government is out of control. Congress passes massive pieces of legislation with little regard to constitutional limits. By vastly exceeding its proper bounds, the federal government continually centralizes and increasingly regulates much of America's economy, politics and society.

Congress must immediately reestablish legislative accountability by posting complete legislation, ending earmarks, reviewing all unauthorized programs and respecting constitutional limits on government. Congress must check executive branch overreach with aggressive oversight, roll back recent government interventions, stop unnecessary administrative regulations and sunset new ones, restrict bureaucrats' rulemaking authority and override expansive executive orders.

THE FACTS:

- **Massive Regulatory Costs:** In FY 2010, 43 major regulations costing more than \$26 billion were issued by the Obama Administration, the highest annual total on record. The burden of federal regulation per year totals \$1.7 trillion—more than Americans annually pay in personal income taxes.
- **Irresponsible Lawmaking:** Congress passes massive laws, written behind closed doors, filled with arcane cross-references that most Members of Congress neither read nor understand—effectively turning over lawmaking to unaccountable staff and unelected bureaucrats.
- **Earmarks Against the National Interest:** According to Taxpayers for Common Sense, the House spending bills for fiscal year 2011 decreased earmarks to 3,000. The Senate bills contained over 3,700 earmarks worth \$6.0 billion, a substantial increase.
- **Permanent by Default:** According to the Congressional Budget Office, 250 expired federal programs are nevertheless being funded, costing taxpayers \$290 billion in FY 2010.

CONGRESS MUST:

- **Provide Legislative Text:** Each House of Congress must adopt a rule requiring the public posting of the text of each bill and major amendment not less than 72 hours before floor debate on that bill or amendment.

- **Plain English Legislation:** For the sake of clarity and accountability and to end the practice of vague references, all language in proposed legislation should be accompanied by a document clearly marking all changes and deletions from existing law, as is now done only after a law passes.
- **Stop Earmarks:** Congress must permanently end the earmarking process which favors local pork projects over the national interest.
- **End Automatic Funding:** Any program (other than for physical protection of Americans) that Congress has not reauthorized must be suspended for review. Committees must not be permitted to create new programs with automatic funding or that specify minimum funding levels to circumvent the appropriations process.
- **Reassert Constitutional Limits:** Rather than deferring to courts, Congress must promptly repeal any unconstitutional legislation enacted by previous Congresses, consider the constitutionality of pending bills and assert constitutional limits on the size and scope of government.
- **Conduct Aggressive Oversight:** In order to enforce legislative intent, Congress must aggressively oversee how laws are being carried out, determine their effectiveness and review their impact on society, jobs and the economy.
- **Roll Back Government Intervention:** Congress must divest the federal government as soon as possible of all assets acquired in the TARP and similar programs, and prevent such interventions in the future.
- **Stop Unnecessary Regulations:** Congress must use the Congressional Review Act to stop new and unnecessary regulations. If the President blocks such action, Congress must use appropriations riders to prohibit agencies from adopting such rules.
- **Sunset New Regulations:** To prevent the perpetuation of outdated regulations, all new regulations must include a "sunset" date on which they expire automatically unless specifically renewed.
- **Check Executive Orders:** If an executive order issued by the President is based upon authority under a statutory grant of power, Congress must expedite a process to consider negating or modifying the underlying authority, and Congress should override inappropriate executive orders on that basis.

We must now hold our representatives, senators and President accountable and tell them: **GET TO WORK!**