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The Defense Authorization Bill for 2009 is set to hit the floor today and already a battle is brewing over earmarks. House Armed Services Chairman Ike Skelton (D-MO) included a provision in the enormous Defense authorization that rejects President Bush's Executive Order: Protecting American Taxpayers From Government Spending on Wasteful Earmarks which directs Executive Branch agencies not to commit, obligate, or expend funds on the basis of earmarks included in the actual text of legislation. Not only do they undo President Bush's executive order, they also have indicated their intent to "sneak" earmarks into bills at the last minute using a process known as "airdropping", will be actively used.

The provision inserted into the bill is only 5 lines long but effectively declares that the president's executive order "shall not apply". The bill currently lists 541 individual projects totaling \$9.9 billion in the accompanying report.

It appears that the earmarkers are now more determined than ever to bring home the bacon.

Oink.