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Earmark Reform

U.S. Rep. John Campbell (R-Irvine) an original cosponsor of the earmark reform legislation and an advocate for public disclosure of earmarks stated, **“The new rule we passed today, will ensure that when an earmark is included in legislation members of Congress and their constituents will know who requested that project.”**

Earmarks are specific funding requests made by an individual member of Congress. Each year Congress approves thousands of these projects commonly referred to as “pork,” in spending and authorization bills. The legislation passed today amends House rules to require bills, which contain member requested earmarks, to include information about which member of Congress requested the earmark. This new rule would apply to any appropriations, authorization, and tax legislation considered in the House.

“When Congress sets money aside for a specific purpose at the request of an individual member of Congress, Americans ought to know which member requested that project. This new transparency will help deter members of Congress from submitting frivolous pork projects. Every member of Congress should be willing to stand behind their requests, or they should not make those requests,” continued Campbell. In an email to constituents earlier in the year, Congressman Campbell took the rare step of voluntarily disclosing the earmarks he requested to the public. This email can be read here:

<http://campbell.houseenews.net/common/mailings/?id=52>

“The use of earmarks can be an effective tool for members of Congress to ensure federal projects that are a priority for their constituents are addressed. However, this process is too often abused. The proposal we approved today is a major step in correcting this abuse. Should more steps need to be taken to completely fix the system I would support other reforms or eliminating the process all together if necessary,” added Campbell.

Federal Spending Database

In addition to earmark reform, the House took another step to add transparency to federal spending. Yesterday, the House passed a bill to create a “Google-like” searchable database of federal spending. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act will provide the public with access to the information about federal grants, contracts, earmarks and loans. **“Americans work hard to pay their taxes. They deserve a way to know how those tax dollars are being spent. This new database will put this information at the fingertips of every American and bring more accountability to those in charge of spending tax dollars,”** stated Campbell.

This legislation was passed last week by the Senate and is expected to be signed into law by the president in the near future.