



February 19, 2009

The Honorable John Sullivan
United States House of Representatives
434 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Sullivan:

On behalf of the 362,000 members of the National Taxpayers Union (NTU), I write in support of H.R. 1023, your “Federal Agency Program Realignment and Closure Act” (FAPRAC). This bill would launch a bipartisan commission composed of members of both the public and private sectors that would systematically address and eliminate the staggering waste in our federal budget. In a time when millions of Americans are tightening their belts due to a slowing economy, Congress should begin tightening the federal government’s belt as well by trimming back on bloated spending. H.R. 1023 would begin to do that with less of the political rancor associated with budget battles.

FAPRAC would operate in a manner similar to the military’s Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission, which puts together a list of recommendations for base closures on which Congress must vote up or down. Because Congress must vote on the entire package, BRAC has been successful in reducing the influence of parochial interests on the realignment process and taxpayers have benefited as a result. H.R. 1023 would offer the same benefits by attacking wasteful spending and inefficient or duplicative programs without allowing special interest groups to derail the process.

NTU believes that any spending commission should be established in permanent law and should operate on a regular basis, rather than dissolving after just one report. Further, the process of overriding commission recommendations should be subject to a supermajority requirement to prevent a majority party from protecting its pet projects. H.R. 1023 is a good start down that road to a strong, permanent commission to protect taxpayers and their hard-earned dollars.

In economic times like these, millions of hard-working Americans are sitting around their kitchen tables and exploring ways to trim back unnecessary spending in order to manage their family budgets. Congress has spent decades heaping on unnecessary and wasteful projects, and FAPRAC gives them a chance to address them in a bipartisan and fair way. **NTU supports H.R. 1023 and any roll call votes on the bill will be significantly weighted in our annual Rating of Congress.**

Sincerely,

Andrew Moylan
Government Affairs Manager