

# **Nobody Fooled by Republicans' About-Face on Executive Pay**

*After Condemning Limits on Executive Earnings, Republican Leaders Look to Rewrite their Record*

This week, Republican leaders couldn't jump quickly enough to decry bonuses for AIG employees and blame everyone but themselves for allowing it to happen. Their outrage, however, marks a significant turnaround for a party that has been fundamentally opposed to restrictions on executive pay for companies receiving taxpayer funds, condemning them as recently as last month. Now, Republican leaders are going so far as to claim that they have led the fight to protect taxpayers from excessive executive compensation. The reality couldn't be further from the truth.

## **Republicans in Congress Have Been Fundamentally Opposed to Limits on Executive Pay for Firms Receiving Taxpayer Assistance**

**Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY):** "I really don't want the government to take over these businesses and start telling them everything about what they can do." [ABC News, 2/4/09; on proposed limits on executive compensation]

**Senator Mel Martinez (R-FL):** "What executives have done is troubling, but it's equally troubling to have government telling shareholders how much they can pay the executives." [Huffington Post, 2/6/09]

**Senator James Inhofe (R-OK):** "Do we really tell people how to run [a business], and who to pay and how much to pay?" [Huffington Post, 2/6/09]

**Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL):** "It should be up to the board of directors of a private corporation to set the compensation of an executive; it shouldn't be Congress's role." [Face the Nation, 9/21/08]

**Senator John Kyl (R-AZ):** "Because of their excesses, very bad things begin to happen, like the United States government telling a company what it can pay its employees. That's not a good thing in America." [Huffington Post, 2/6/09]

**Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC):** "If you accept the fact that the government should be setting pay scales in America, then it's hard not to go after these exorbitant salaries. But I think it's a sad day in America when the government starts setting pay, no matter how outlandish they are." [Huffington Post, 2/6/09]

**Minority Whip Eric Cantor (R-VA):** "I'm not necessarily advocating going forward, that the federal government be able to set salaries across the board for any company. I think that that is just not what we're about. We're a free market country. We always have been a free market country." [CNN Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer, 9/28/08]

## **Republicans Now Trying to Rewrite History of Opposition to Executive Pay Limits**

*"I think if you look at the facts we were fighting, we were the ones that brought the fight to make sure we had executive compensation under control. As the money was being spent and bill was moving through Congress, we're the ones, Republicans, putting the restraint on who would get bonuses and how much people would get paid." – House Minority Leader John Boehner, CNN, 3/18/09*

## **Democrats Fighting for a Fair Financial Rescue**

The Democratic-led Congress has consistently fought for limits on executive compensation - along with other taxpayer protections - at companies receiving money from the federal government to stabilize the financial industry.

*Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 3/19/09*