

SUPPORT FOR PAYGO, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

“For a long time it's been clear that, unless the government changes course, the nation will accumulate so much debt that prosperity will decline, future generations will suffer and America will forfeit its role as a global leader.”

– Fred Hiatt, *Washington Post*, 2/1/10

Tomorrow, the House will vote to send statutory “pay-as-you-go” (PAYGO) legislation to the President, a major step in Democratic efforts to strengthen fiscal responsibility. Experts, the media and some Republicans have expressed support for PAYGO, because it is a proven tool for turning deficits into surpluses and a necessary step in our efforts to cut wasteful spending, address the deficit, and reduce the national debt.

“A well-designed pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) rule can contribute significantly to the fiscal discipline needed to address the nation’s serious long-term budget problems.... The nation’s fiscal situation would be far healthier had policymakers adhered to such policies over the past decade. Supporters of the PAYGO proposal should be commended for pursuing this action.”

– **Robert Greenstein, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1/27/10**

“‘I can't tell you why [Republicans] are taking this approach,’ said Jim Kolbe, a former [Republican] member of Congress and longtime fiscal hawk from Arizona. ‘...I think that certainly the pay-go and the commission have some merit and we should be supporting those. I don't have an answer to this. Whether this is just part of them being philosophically opposed or are they just being obstructionists, I don't know?’”

– **Huffington Post, 1/29/10**

“The reality is the things where consistently the Republicans have been in the past, like pay as you go, I think we should be supportive of. That is the place where we should go.”

– **Ed Rollins, Republican Strategist, 1/29/10**

“One of the hallmarks of the Clinton presidency was its focus on fiscal responsibility. It turned a federal budget deficit into a surplus. One of the tools used to accomplish that was so-called ‘pay-as-you-go’ legislation.... This was abandoned during the past Bush presidency, under which government spending rose by 8.4 percent, as compared to a 3.5 percent growth in the Clinton years. President Obama has urged Congress to revive pay-as-you-go as a way to limit future deficit growth. The House passed a bill last year. Last week, the Senate followed through on a 60-40 vote — 60 Democrats yes and 40 Republicans no. Once upon a time the GOP was in favor of fiscally responsible government spending. Now it's just against anything Democrats propose. Nonsense.”

– **Times Herald-Record (NY), 1/30/10**

“While the Senate voted Thursday to authorize a new national spending limit, House Blue Dog Democrats successfully included a tough new “pay-as-you-go” budget item. This is a step in the right direction.... The ‘pay-as-you-go’ budget law makes it harder for Congress to implement new tax cuts or federal benefits programs without balancing it out with appropriate offsetting funding or budget cuts.... [T]his is a simple and necessary first step in the battle ahead of significantly reducing the federal deficit.”

– **West Central Tribune (MN), 1/29/10**

“In the 1990s, Congress enacted ‘pay-as-you-go’ to rein in deficits, a system in which every new spending program had to be paid for, either through new revenues or reduced spending elsewhere. Those rules lapsed during the Bush administration. Last week, the Senate voted, 60-40, to bring them back, with not a single Republican voting in favor. A week from now, with Scott Brown replacing Sen. Paul Kirk, even that basic pillar of fiscal responsibility might not have survived.”
– **Daily News Tribune (MA), 2/3/10**

“To help stem the flood of red ink, Obama also called for a return to ‘pay-go,’ in which funding must be found to pay for any new federal program before it goes forward. Pay-go is a positive concept that was developed and promoted by Rep. George Miller, D-Martinez.”
– **Contra Costa Times (CA), 1/29/10**

“[President Obama] commendably supported creating a bipartisan fiscal commission to propose solutions to America’s deficits and he backed reinstating pay-as-you-go rules.”
– **Providence Journal (RI), 1/31/10**