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Hensarling Statement on Earmark Discharge Petition

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Jeb Hensarling (R-TX), Chairman of the Republican Study Committee, issued the following statement today after House Republicans filed an Earmark Discharge Petition in an effort to force the House Democratic leadership to allow a vote on H.Res. 479, legislation that would ensure all taxpayer-funded earmarks in all congressional bills are publicly disclosed and subject to challenge and open debate on the House floor.

“Earmarks are a large part of the culture of spending and too often they teach people to become dependent on the federal government. Although there are many good earmarks out there, too often the process lends itself to the triumph of seniority over merit, secrecy over transparency, and the special interest over the national interest. It is impossible to combat reckless government spending until you combat the culture of spending, and that cannot happen until there is transparency and accountability in the earmarking process.

“Why is this important? The Comptroller General has said if we don’t alter the spending patterns of the federal government, we are on the verge of being the first generation in America’s history to leave the next generation with a lower standard of living, and the Republican Conference will not be a part of that.

“That is why the discharge petition is so important. Democrats claimed they were going to clean up the pork. If you are going to clean up the pork, you can’t just deal with the sausage. You have to deal with the ham and the bacon as well. In other words, you can’t just deal with appropriations earmarks, all earmarks must be transparent and treated equally. You have to deal with the tax pork and the authorizing pork as well.

“The Democrats said they’d clean it up and instead they rolled back transparency and accountability. This discharge petition will give the Democrats the opportunity to put their vote where their rhetoric is.”

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