



## ***Taxpayers Against Earmarks, WashingtonWatch.com & Taxpayers for Common Sense Launch Comprehensive Earmark Request Database***

**For Immediate Release**  
**December 7, 2010**

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**Washington, DC** -- Three leading government transparency advocacy groups – Taxpayers Against Earmarks, WashingtonWatch.com and Taxpayers for Common Sense – today launched the first comprehensive database of more than 39,000 congressional earmark requests submitted for 2011 totaling \$130 billion. The database is available online at [www.endingspending.com](http://www.endingspending.com), [www.washingtonwatch.com](http://www.washingtonwatch.com), and [www.taxpayer.net](http://www.taxpayer.net).

“Even though some members of Congress insisted that it was technologically impossible or would cost too much to create an earmark requests database, our three groups were able to build a database in less than six months for less than \$100,000,” said Stephanie Mesick, Director of Research and Outreach for Taxpayers Against Earmarks. “This database allows voters to review all earmark requests in one central place. Given the Senate’s failure to follow the House of Representatives in passing an earmark moratorium, the earmark request database is needed now more than ever to hold Members’ feet to the fire *before* their earmarks are considered and approved.”

“With this database, the American people will finally be able to sift through the tens of thousands of requests seeking \$130 billion,” said Ryan Alexander, President of Taxpayers for Common Sense. “Lawmakers literally signed on the dotted line that these requests represented a good investment of taxpayer dollars. Now the public can investigate and see if they agree with their elected officials.”

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The earmark request database, a joint project of Taxpayers Against Earmarks, WashingtonWatch.com, and Taxpayers for Common Sense, lists all earmark requests made for fiscal year 2011 by each Member of Congress. This comprehensive database would help fulfill what President Obama called for in his 2010 State of the Union Address and what leading members of Congress have been trying to create for the past year. Congress is currently considering the Earmark Transparency Act (S. 3335, introduced by Sens. Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and H.R. 5258, introduced by Reps. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Jackie Speier (D-CA)).

“Transparency is going to remake Washington, D.C., and earmark transparency is just the start,” said Jim Harper, Webmaster of WashingtonWatch.com. “With the information we’re providing the public, we’re delivering control of the government back to the people.” On the WashingtonWatch.com earmark page, visitors are invited to investigate and comment on earmarks for their local areas.

Summary information about the Congressional earmark requests for fiscal year 2011 is attached.

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**About Taxpayers Against Earmarks:** Taxpayers Against Earmarks, Inc. is a non-partisan organization dedicated to educating and engaging American taxpayers about wasteful government spending and the misguided practice of earmarks. The founder and chairman of Taxpayers Against Earmarks is Joe Ricketts, the founder of Ameritrade. For more information, visit [www.endingspending.com](http://www.endingspending.com).

**About WashingtonWatch.com:** Government transparency web site WashingtonWatch.com uses government predictions about the costs or savings from proposed laws to calculate the significance to average Americans — in dollars and cents — of proposed changes to the nation’s policies. Many of [www.WashingtonWatch.com](http://www.WashingtonWatch.com)’s 1.3 million yearly visitors express their opinions by voting and debating the issues in comment forums from every bill in Congress.

**About Taxpayers for Common Sense:** Taxpayers for Common Sense is an independent and non-partisan voice for taxpayers working to increase transparency and expose and eliminate wasteful and corrupt subsidies, earmarks, and corporate welfare. For more information, visit [www.taxpayer.net](http://www.taxpayer.net).