So Refreshing; Congress Doing Its Job

by Phyllis Schlafly March 4, 2011

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Republican Members of the House, goaded on by TEA Partiers, have made a good start in fulfilling their promise to cut $100 billion out of current spending of taxpayers' money. The House approved 66 amendments, most on roll-call votes, to H.R. 1, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act for FY 2011.

Here is a sampling of those 66 amendments, which are only a drop in the bucket for dealing with the federal deficit, but they reveal some of the nonsense now imbedded in the federal budget. Democrats predicted that House Members at home during the Washington's Birthday recess would discover that constituents are angry about cuts, but Congressmen report getting more kudos than complaints because the American people have wised up to the fact that government spending does not create jobs.

Amendment #8, sponsored by Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL) and passed 231 to 191, prohibits the use of any funds in the Act to design, renovate, construct, or rent any United Nations headquarters. The UN was projected to spend $1.9 billion to make its headquarters even more luxurious than it already is.

Amendment #11, sponsored by Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN) and passed 240 to 185, prohibits any of the Act's funds from being used by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America or its affiliates. This big vote reflects the 2010 election of many more pro-lifers and public opinion moving against taxpayer funding of abortions.

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Amendment #79, sponsored by Rep. Cory Gardner (R-CO) and passed 241 to 184, prohibits the use of any of the Act's funds to pay the salary of any Department of

Health and Human Services employee who develops or promulgates regulations or guidance about ObamaCare's health insurance exchanges. The public is still opposed to the mandates and the costs of ObamaCare.

Amendment #83, sponsored by Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) and passed 246 to 182, prohibits the IRS from using appropriated funds to enforce ObamaCare's individual mandate to buy insurance. This vote probably reflects the news that the IRS is hiring 1,054 new agents to enforce the individual mandates and to fine Americans who don't obey.

Amendment #84, sponsored by Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-KS) and passed 239 to 185, cuts out of the Environmental Protection Agency's appropriation the $8.5 million budgeted for the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Registry, which was preparing to operate Cap and Trade. Pompeo said, "This data is the very foundation of the EPA's effort to pursue its radical anti-jobs agenda."

Amendment #100, sponsored by Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY) and passed 268 to 163, wipes out an appropriation of $42,600,000 for the U.S. Institute of Peace and transfers it to the Spending Reduction Account. U.S. taxpayers have already sunk $720 million into this boondoggle and gave its bureaucrats an office building near the State Department.

Amendment #149, sponsored by Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO) and passed 244 to 149, prohibits giving any of the Act's funds to the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That's a welcome strike against global warming propaganda.

Amendment #154, sponsored by Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX) and passed 235 to 187, prohibits any of the Act's funds from carrying out provisions of the Education Jobs Fund, which mandates that only Texas must certify that stimulus funds will be used to supplement and not supplant state funding of education programs. How's that for telling one state how to spend its own money!

Amendment #196, sponsored by Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI) and passed 217 to 209, reduces the appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) by $20 million and transfers the money to the Spending Reduction Account. Too bad the House didn't totally defund the NEA since it has carried on years of offensive attacks on our culture.

Amendment #204, sponsored by Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA) and passed 249 to 175, prohibits any of the Act's funds from being used for salaries and expenses for President Obama's "czars" who have not been confirmed by the Senate. It's

probably a tossup whether this, or defunding the redecoration of UN buildings, gets the popularity prize with Americans.

Amendment #208, sponsored by Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) and passed 247 to 175, prohibits any of the Act's funds from being used for the Presidential Election Campaign Fund or the Presidential Primary Matching Payment Account. U.S. taxpayers have been increasingly registering their disapproval of this expenditure on their annual income tax returns.

Amendment #267, sponsored by Rep. Steve King (R-IA) and passed 241 to 187, prohibits the Act's funds from being used to implement ObamaCare this year, saving about $2.8 billion.

Amendment #404, sponsored by Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR) and passed 244 to 181, prohibits any of the Act's funds from being used by the Federal Communications Commission to implement so-called "network neutrality." Americans don't want the government taking over supervision of the internet.