

Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2008 10:40 AM

To: EMAILUPDATE-MI08@LS1.HOUSE.GOV

Subject: Legislative Update - Michigan Can't Afford Another Tax Hike

I write today to update you on recent legislative activities in the United States Congress. I appreciate the opportunity to contact you.

Fighting the Largest Tax Hike in American History

Earlier this month, Democrats in the House of Representatives passed a budget proposal which would enact the largest tax increase in our nation's history. For Michigan families, it would mean an average of \$3,000 more in taxes each year to the federal government.

Let's face it, this budget is bad for America and dreadful for Michigan. It will raise taxes on every working American and making it more difficult for small employers to stay in business in the United States. It will do nothing to help the residents of Michigan who are already facing very difficult economic times.

The Democrat budget will impose \$683 billion in new taxes over five years to finance hundreds of billions in new spending. These tax hikes would affect workers, families, and small businesses by:

- Raising the 10 percent tax rate bracket to 15 percent, causing 6 million lower income individuals and families who have not been paying taxes to dip into their pockets and begin paying a federal income tax.
- Re-imposing the marriage penalty, causing 23 million taxpayers to see their taxes increase because they are married.
- Slashing the child tax credit in half, forcing 31 million parents to pay more in taxes for each one of their children.

As we have seen in our own state of Michigan, you cannot tax your way to prosperity. This budget will harm our nation, put even more families and workers at risk in a slowing economy, and make it tougher for small businesses to thrive and retain or create new jobs. Rest assured I will continue to oppose tax increases in Congress that jeopardize Michigan jobs and hurt our economy.

To read more about the largest tax increase in American history, please [click here](#).

Protecting Kids with Improved Background Checks

Last week, I co-authored legislation which would strengthen background checks of volunteers working with children.

In an effort to respond to safety concerns, I introduced a bill which would establish a permanent, nationally-accessible background check system for youth-serving organizations. The Child Protection Improvements Act would make background checks for volunteers working with children reliable, affordable, and comprehensive.

As a father, I want my children to always be safe and protected from predators and criminals. Every child deserves to play and learn in an atmosphere in which they are not at risk. Affordable, comprehensive

background checks of volunteers are essential for the safety of our children and the peace of mind of parents, families, educators, and local law enforcement.

We are fortunate to live in a country where millions of volunteers generously make time to participate in community service. But with so many volunteers working with children we need to ensure that child predators are not preying on innocent children through the guise of volunteerism. The pre-existing "Child Safety Pilot Program" performed over 37,000 fingerprint-based FBI background checks since 2003. In many cases, potential volunteers were found to have criminal records, including very serious crimes like sexual abuse of minors and major drug offenses. Only a fingerprint-based national background check could reveal these criminal histories.

But this pilot program was limited in its scope and duration. And for the majority of youth-serving organizations there is still no permanent system to perform reliable, timely, and affordable national background checks on volunteers. My legislation would streamline the background check process, lower the cost of background checks for organizations across the country, and engage the expertise of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in reviewing the criminal records. To read the National Mentoring Partnership's endorsement of this effort, please [click here](#).

[Cracking Down on Crime, Supporting Local Law Enforcement](#)

Michigan's local law enforcement agencies continue to fight crime every day on behalf of our communities and families. I believe they deserve the federal government's support, and I have consistently advocated for new crime-fighting resources for our local police departments.

Unfortunately, a critical law enforcement grant program was cut by over 60% last year. The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG) is a vital tool for state and local law enforcement to address crime prevention, victim assistance, and drug treatment. JAG grants have provided millions of dollars to Michigan law enforcement agencies, making our state a safer place. For example, recently JAG funding in Michigan was used to arrest 223 drug dealers and seize 460 pounds of marijuana.

As a former FBI Special Agent and a member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I believe these deep cuts may leave Michigan law enforcement agencies strapped for resources as they fight crime in their communities.

Because of my concerns with these cuts, I have supported legislation to restore JAG funding and continue strong federal support of local law enforcement programs.

To read a *Detroit News* article on this issue, please [click here](#).

I appreciate your continued interest in the legislative activities of your U.S. Congress. As always, should you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Mike Rogers
Member of Congress

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