



Monday, Nov. 21, 2011

Balanced Budget Amendment Fails in House Vote Friday

A vote Friday in the U.S. House of Representatives came up short of the two-thirds majority needed to add a Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The vote was 261 to 165.

Rod Blum, who is running for the Republican nomination in Iowa's new First Congressional District, described the vote as “disappointing on several levels.”

In order to attract more Democrat votes, House leaders pushed a weakened version of the Balanced Budget Amendment offered by Virginia Republican Rep. Bob Goodlatte. Only 25 Democrats ended up voting in favor of the bill.

“My preference was the tougher Balanced Budget Amendment offered by Utah Senators Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee.” Blum said. “The Hatch-Lee version would have put a cap on the size of government at 18% of the gross domestic product, a percentage that federal government revenues have averaged since WWII. Their bill also would have forced a supermajority vote for tax increases, and would have stripped from courts the power to raise taxes.”

Blum was disappointed not only because the bill failed to win the two-thirds majority, but because the weaker version of the Balanced Budget Amendment was brought to the floor.

“The 25 Democrats who voted for a Balanced Budget Amendment deserve our thanks and appreciation, because they voted what was best for our country, not what was best for their partisan agenda.” Blum said.

“Unfortunately Bruce Braley was not one of those 25 common sense Democrats. In fact, Braley was the only member of the Iowa delegation to vote against the Balanced Budget Amendment. Even Congressman Leonard Boswell, who represents Des Moines, and Congressman David Loebsack who represents Iowa City, voted for the bill.”

“This vote is a perfect example of how Bruce Braley says one thing when he's in Iowa and votes with Nancy Pelosi and extreme liberal House Democrats when he's in Washington,” Blum said. “Braley runs around Iowa holding deficit town meetings, and holding himself up as being concerned about the deficit, but votes for runaway federal spending and trillion dollar deficits as far as the eye can see.”

“The older I get the less attention I pay to what a person says and more to what they actually do,” Blum added. “Bruce Braley can't have it both ways. He can't complain about deficits in Iowa and claim he is doing something about it just by talking about it. Talking about problems, doesn't solve problems.”

Blum noted that Congressman Braley made no statement or issued a press release explaining his vote against the Balanced Budget Amendment. “There is no statement or press release about the Balanced Budget Amendment vote on his official congressional web site, or on his campaign web site.”

“It is morally wrong for our generation to saddle future generations with a mountain of debt and the interest payments that come with it. Washington DC politicians have proven they can't be trusted to spend within our means. It's time to take away the government credit card from Bruce Braley.”