

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico’s Third District voted against House Republicans’ legislation to extend the payroll tax cut by requiring more sacrifices from middle-class families and seniors who have been hit hard during the deepest recession in a generation. The bill protects the interests of millionaires and billionaires while including provisions that have already been declared dead on arrival by the Senate and rejected by the President – threatening final passage of tax cuts for 160 million Americans.

“Instead of asking the top one percent to pay even one cent more in order to prevent a tax hike on 900,000 New Mexicans, House Republicans want to place the burden on seniors who rely on Medicare and workers who are struggling to find a job,” Congressman Luján said. “The financial crisis destroyed 6.5 million jobs, yet Republicans want to slash the safety net for unemployed workers without making a serious effort to turn our economy around. This bill forces seniors who make more than \$80,000 to pay more for their health care under Medicare, while Republicans continue to fight every effort to ask more of those making more than \$1 million per year.”

Under the House Republican bill, unemployment benefits for one million Americans who lost their jobs through no fault of their own will be cut, especially in states with the highest jobless rates. These cuts to unemployment insurance will result in a loss of \$22 billion in economic growth. The legislation also includes cuts to prevention funding that has been proven to save lives and is designed to reduce Medicare and Medicaid costs.

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