

MEMO

To: GOP Members & Candidates
From: House Republican Leader John Boehner (R-OH)
Re: Turning the Tide in the Economic Debate
Date: 25 Oct 08

With barely 10 days remaining in the campaign, Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid and Barack Obama have presented us with an opportunity to fundamentally change the economic debate in America and to define a clear choice for the election. *We must capitalize!*

Pelosi has declared that Congress will pass a \$300 billion “stimulus” spending bill as soon as two weeks after the election. This coincides with Barack Obama’s assertion that government’s focus should be “spreading the wealth around” and Barney Frank’s unapologetic confirmation that a Democrat-dominated Washington will embark on an aggressive government spending spree fueled by higher taxes. The Democrats’ tax-and-spend economic scheme is not simply a theoretical campaign promise; it’s something they intend to start moving to enact as early as next month.

At the most critical time in this campaign, these developments reflect a Democratic leadership out of touch with regular Americans on the issue they care most about. National survey data from the past week make clear Americans disagree with the Obama-Pelosi-Reid economic agenda and prefer a pro-growth approach that relies on tax relief and reform rather than new government spending:

- **Americans overwhelmingly believe cutting taxes, not increasing government spending on programs, is more likely to “stimulate” the economy.** According to [a Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll](#) released last week, 60% of Americans believe cutting taxes is more likely than to stimulate the economy and get the country out of recession than increasing government spending on programs, while just 20% say increasing spending on programs is more likely. [A separate poll by Rasmussen](#) found similarly.
- **The American people overwhelmingly believe the focus of government economic policy should be economic growth and jobs, not income redistribution or “spreading the wealth around.”** A New Models/Winston Group survey taken Oct. 22-23 found 86% of Americans believe the focus of government economic policy should be economic growth and jobs, compared with just 9% who (like Barack Obama) believe the focus should be redistribution of wealth.
- **Americans overwhelmingly believe that if you cut taxes on small businesses, they’ll use the money to create jobs.** The aforementioned New Models/Winston Group survey found that 71% of Americans believe this to be the case.

America remains a center-right country – and on the critical issue of the economy, a majority of the American people and the Republican Party are on the same page. When it comes to the policies needed to get our economy moving again, Americans favor tax relief, which would have an immediate impact for small businesses and families, over the slow-moving machinery of big government.

We must seize this opportunity during the final days of the campaign and define the clear choice before the American people on Election Day. Earlier this year, when Pelosi, Reid and Obama were on the wrong side of the American people on energy, Republicans called them on it – and we won. The same dynamics are in play now with respect to our economy – *if we, as Republicans, will engage.*

THE REPUBLICAN RAPID RECOVERY PLAN FOR OUR ECONOMY

I've traveled the country this month on behalf of Republican candidates and challengers. In district after district, the fear about jobs and the economy is palpable among small business people and working families. We have an unprecedented opportunity to connect with these anxious Americans and shift the economic debate onto winning ground. But to break through the media clutter of the final 10 days, we must have a bold plan and an aggressive, wide-reaching communications effort to support it.

Earlier this month I outlined [an economic growth plan](#) as an alternative to the \$300 billion stimulus spending bill proposed by Nancy Pelosi. This week I will unveil a detailed Rapid Recovery Plan that blends elements of my original plan with new reforms. We should encourage economic growth not by increasing spending on government programs and pork, but by helping middle-class families and small businesses keep more of what they earn and encouraging investment and job creation. My plan will do that.

I urge you and your campaign to seize this opportunity to change the economic debate and put your Democratic opponent on the defensive on the most critical issue of this election. I encourage you to incorporate the data outlined above into your campaigns and build your messaging around it in the final days. Among the points I encourage you to emphasize:

- If we cut taxes on small businesses, they'll use the money to create jobs.
- We should give tax relief to middle-class families as well, to help them with the cost of living.
- A zero capital gains tax is the fastest way to rebuild Americans' 401(k)s.
- Enacting comprehensive "all of the above" energy reform will create 1 million new jobs.
- Speed is essential, so relying on government bureaucracy won't work.

This is a most critical hour for our nation's future. Working together, as a team, reform-minded Republicans can shift the economic debate and turn the tables on the Democrats on the pivotal issue in this race.

I will be in touch soon with additional information and updates. Please contact The Freedom Project (www.freedomproject.org) with any questions, or to simply to let us know how you and your campaign will play a part in this effort.