



AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

1920 L Street, NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20036  
202.785.0266 • Fax 202.785.0261

# NEWS

WWW.ATR.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jennifer Forlenza  
Jonathan Collegio  
202-785-0266

16 September 2002

## Taxpayers Beware: Dodging the Constitution to Impose New Taxes

*Senator Hollings (D-S.C.) uses cunning language to attempt to add tax  
on all imports and exports.*

A vital port security bill that has passed in both the Senate and the House is stalling because of one man's effort to place a tax on U.S. imports and exports. Sen. Ernest F. Hollings' "user fee" on all exports and imports would pay for the implementation of new bill.

The "user fee" is actually a tax on each shipped container, like oil barrels. Under this policy, everything imported to the U.S. would have yet another tax on it. With the state of the economy and the looming war in Iraq, Americans are finding basic needs more and more expensive to purchase. Of special concern to the U.S. is oil. Prices of oil have been rising already because of the threatening conflict in the Middle East. This proposal would increase the rapidly rising cost of oil. Also, with a tax on U.S. exports, America will be hurting its own companies overseas and worsening the recession.

Constitution questions loom as well. Although any tax must originate in the House, this proposal was generated during Conference. Sen. Hollings hopes he has found a way to slyly fix the language so that no one will notice the actual provisions. He plans on calling the tax a "user fee" in an attempt to fool Congress.

Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform in Washington, D.C., said, **"This behavior cannot be allowed. The Founding Fathers knew a tax when they saw one, and they did not expect word artists to attempt to defy the Constitution. Sen. Hollings has no respect for the Constitution, Congress, and the American public if he feels he can slip language into this bill that does not comply with the principles the Founders set forth.."**

Besides the Constitutional question raised by Sen. Hollings' proposal, members of Congress are questioning why another tax is needed in the middle of a recession. Congress has already allocated \$300 million in emergency spending funds. The proposed bill would produce an additional \$600 million to pay for increased security. Continued Norquist, **"The United States has a \$2.1 trillion budget. Is there no way to find the needed \$600 million in this budget so as to spare the American taxpayer in a time of economic hardship?"**

**Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jcollegio@atr.org](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org).**