

Congressman Rothman: Foreign Aid Cuts Jeopardize National Security

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 9, 2010

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Washington, DC - On February 9, 2011, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ), a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittees on Defense, and State and Foreign Operations, spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives about the importance of fully funding foreign aid. Below is a link to the C-SPAN video of Congressman Rothman's remarks and an excerpt of his speech as delivered.

Remarks start at 21:46 in the following link: <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/HouseSession4003>

An excerpt of Congressman Rothman's speech:

My goodness, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, North Korea, China - to say now is the time to have less people understanding foreign languages, less embassies, less diplomats, to try to avert war and nuclear proliferation when it constitutes less than 1% of the budget already? That's going to solve our problems? That not only won't solve our economic problems, that will create more and more danger to U.S. national security.

That is why, while we need to cut spending, while we need to get rid of waste, while we need to find additional sources of revenue, like the unnecessary \$4 billion that this Congress now gives already to the oil and gas and energy industries to do what? \$4 billion to do what? To encourage them to look for energy? Well I, gee, I thought they were making a profit at that already! The greatest profits in their histories! Yes they are. So why give them \$4 billion in subsidies? Let's use that for other purposes.

Cut taxes, cuts that - use that to reduce our deficit, use that not to cut foreign aid which returns probably a thousand times per dollar than what we contribute in terms of the 1% of our budget that goes to diplomats, embassies, state departments, and the meager foreign aid we provide to our essential military allies who are helping us protect against Al Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood. Who are helping us protect our vital sea lanes and economic lifeblood around the world.

I look forward to working with my Republican colleagues, but priorities are priorities and we ought to make cuts where they make sense, not where they jeopardize U.S. national security.

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