

THE REV. CHARLES S. CURRIE, JR.

A MINISTER IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 8, 2010

SENT VIA E-MAIL

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Congressman:

Earl

Many people are legitimately upset at the tax deal the president reached with Congressional republicans. My first instinct was to oppose the deal but this posting from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has weighed on me since it was issued yesterday evening:

The deal between President Obama and Republican leaders on tax cuts and unemployment insurance has two substantial positive aspects: its surprisingly strong protections for low- and middle-income working families and its stronger-than-expected boost for the economy and jobs. But it also has one deeply disturbing negative feature: not only the extension of the high-end income-tax cuts, but also an egregious estate-tax giveaway that Senator Jon Kyl demanded for the estates of the wealthiest one-quarter of 1 percent of Americans who die.

Congress should approve this package — its rejection will likely lead to a more problematic package that does less for middle- and low-income workers and less for the economy. Then, in 2012, when the economy should be stronger, the President should make clear he will veto any legislation to extend either the high-end tax cuts or the weakening of the estate tax beyond the estate-tax parameters that were in place in 2009, and he should take that case to the country.¹

My deepest concern is that Republicans will use the high deficit this compromise will continue to create to call for a reduction in services for those living in poverty - a number that keeps growing. Without the president keeping his election year pledge to reduce poverty by 50% over ten years (a pledge he has not matched with a plan for reducing poverty) the compromise over taxes has the potential to increase the divide between rich and poor and force millions more into poverty.

. In 2007, Barack Obama said:

It's been four decades since Bobby Kennedy crouched in a shack along the Mississippi Delta and looked into the wide, listless eyes of a hungry child. Again and again he tried to talk to this child, but each time his efforts were met with only a blank stare of

¹ <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=3340&emailView=1>

