



To: Reporters and Editors
From: Erin Shields for Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.)
Re: Baucus remarks regarding tax "extenders"

Please see below excerpts of remarks delivered by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today on the Senate floor today urging the House of Representatives to take up and pass Senate legislation that would provide renewable energy tax incentives, protect 20 million Americans from the alternative minimum tax, and provide tax relief for families and businesses. Baucus made these comments following an expected objection to a unanimous consent request by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) to pass these provisions. From Chairman Baucus:

"Mr. President, I regret the Senate has been unable to take up and pass this legislation. We all know how important it is. The problem here now is that the Senate has now demonstrated the limit of what it can do and what it can't do and the Senate has demonstrated it cannot pass the tax extender bills. It cannot be done.

"I want to follow on with what the Leader said, it is not a matter of embarrassing anybody. Sometimes our friends in the other body think we are trying to embarrass them. It is not a matter of embarrassing anyone; it is a matter of getting good public policy passed here for our country in the closing days of the congress.

"We're talking about energy incentives to help make us more independent from OPEC, trying to get mental health parity bill finally passed, which clearly is important for obvious reasons, then there are the...tax "extenders," that just help America be competitive, the research and development tax credit. This is very simple stuff, very basic stuff. I think some of our colleagues and friends on the other side think we are trying to embarrass them. This is not a matter of embarrass embarrassing anybody, it is not a partisan matter, but doing something for America.

"The main point is that we need to get this passed now. It's very modest. Next year is another year we can deal with all kinds of issues we want to deal with but for the good of the country I very much say to my colleagues over there on the other side, just, please, don't miss this opportunity. Please do what is right. Let's pass this bill before you leave town.... It must be passed over there. That is the only responsible way out of this difficult situation that we're in.

"Nothing is perfect. Nobody gets everything. But we have demonstrated now that the House-passed bills cannot pass. That has been demonstrated by the objection we just heard. They cannot pass. So the only solution, then, is to take up the bills -- which were compromised with the Republicans over here and Blue Dogs over there. It seems to be a fair compromise. I hope the House will take that up."

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