

News *From the* LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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New GOP-backed highway funding bill is pork on wheels, charge Libertarians

You won't believe what Congress has snuck into this \$217 billion bill!

WASHINGTON, DC — Quiz question: Which of the following projects WERE included in the highway funding bill passed by the U.S. House last week?

- (a) A botanical garden in Missouri.
- (b) New exhibits at the Smithsonian museum.
- (c) A study on sidewalks at the Kennedy Center.
- (d) A public television documentary on "infrastructure awareness."
- (e) A study on spinal cord injuries.

"If you guessed *all* of the above, you're right," said Steve Dasbach, national chairman of the Libertarian Party. "Talk about highway robbery: Politicians are spending millions on projects that have *nothing* to do with America's roads and bridges — but *everything* to do with their own re-election."

Congress crammed 1,467 pork projects — totaling \$10 billion — into the mammoth \$217 billion highway bill, which is currently in conference committee. It should land on President Bill Clinton's desk by early May.

Where does the money go? Politicians on the Transportation Committee directed 90% of the money into their *own* districts, Dasbach noted, then carefully ladled out another \$15 million to 250 other Republicans and Democrats to make sure the bill would pass.

"Predictably, it passed the House by a lopsided 337-80 vote, proving that when it comes to funding a transportation bill, it doesn't matter whether Democrats or Republicans are behind the wheel: Both will gladly steer millions of dollars into the hands of their political allies — while driving the country further into debt," he said.

But politicians aren't just wasting highway money: They're wasting more of it than ever before, thanks to the Republicans.

"The new highway bill approved by the Republican-controlled Congress is 51% *larger* than the previous one passed by a Democratic Congress," Dasbach said. "And the number of pork-laden, earmarked projects has skyrocketed by 1,000% in the last 10 years.

"This bipartisan lardfest shows the danger of trusting politicians with your money: Billions of transportation fund dollars always seem to make a mysterious U-turn into their re-election fund instead," he said. "The only way to be sure that these Congressional road hogs waste as little money as possible is to give them as little to *spend* as possible."

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