

broadened the tax base to help pay for some of the bill's tax cuts. That also did not get three-fifths. It was a violation of the House rule.

Mr. Speaker, we know if this was passed we could never do that kind of a thing. We could never have that kind of a Balanced Budget Act.

Lastly, I want to go even further back to the Articles of Confederation. Initially they thought this was a good idea. They said that nine out of the original 13 States would have to vote. Article 9 of the Articles of Confederation required just this kind of supermajority, nine out of 13 States.

If we look back at some of the debate that occurred in the Constitutional Convention, we will find that tax increases became too politicized. They could never get 9 out of 13 States to actually do what was necessary to keep this Republic going. And so in 1787 at the Constitutional Convention our Founding Fathers recognized that this was a supreme defect and they established a national government that could impose and enforce laws and collect revenues through a simple majority rule.

Mr. Speaker, my point is, this is a legislative responsibility. Do not take this legislative responsibility and pass the buck, send it across the street to the Supreme Court and have these difficult issues resolved by the Judicial Branch. They should properly be resolved by the legislative branch, by Congress.

I do agree with that Post article last year that this is another "show vote." We do not need show votes in the Congress. What we need is people who are willing to make the tough choices, who are willing to look back at history and realize that the public is best served by majority rule and a Congress with the courage to do the right thing ahead of the politically expedient thing. This constitutional amendment is not the right thing to do, it is at best a politically expedient "show vote".

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia for his contribution today. Four times they have had, the Republicans have had to waive their own requirement. Does the gentleman have there any explanation from them as to why that occurred?

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, obviously they felt that they got the political benefit from putting in that three-fifths rule requirement. But then when it would apply, they got a rule that waived it. We raised an objection but nobody seemed to care.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would continue to yield, why would people come to the floor crying about that same issue, then? Why would people now come to the floor crying about why they need to

impose this two-thirds requirement rule, when the same rule they imposed in the House under NEWT GINGRICH, the Speaker, is the one they ignore, they honor in the breach, they never do it?

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the distinguished ranking member that he makes an excellent point. Here we cannot even meet the 60 percent requirement and they want to raise it to a 67 percent requirement. It seems to me, again, that this is just window dressing and not substantive legislation. I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for raising an excellent point.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman for bringing this very important issue to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to compliment the gentlemen and ladies on the other side who have spoken out against this resolution, because I have to compliment them. They are brave to be able to come up here and speak their beliefs and really come out on the position of being for taxes. If I did something like that, I could not return to Texas. But I have to admire them for their willingness to come here and take a pro-tax position, so I think that is to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to our side that if we all in the Congress did a better job in following the Constitution, we would not need this amendment. Because if we took our oath of office seriously, if we followed the doctrine of enumerated powers, if we knew the original intent of the Constitution, this government and this Congress would be very small and, therefore, we would not have to be worrying.

The other contention we have and have to think about is if we do not already follow the Constitution in so many ways, why are we going to follow it next time? Nevertheless, this is a great debate. I am glad I am a cosponsor. I am glad it was brought to the floor.

We do have to remember there is another half to taxation and that is the spending half. It is politically unpopular to talk about spending. It is politically very popular to talk about the taxes. So, yes, we are for lower taxes, but we also have to realize that the government is too big. They are consuming 50 percent of our revenues and our income today, and that is the problem.

Government can pay for these bills in three different ways. One, they can tax us. One, they can borrow. And one, they can have the tax of inflation, which is indeed a tax. We are dealing here only with one single tax. But eventually, when we make a sincere ef-

fort to get this government under control, we will look at all three areas.

We will limit the borrowing power. We will limit the ability of this Congress to inflate the currency to pay the bills. And we certainly will follow the rules of this House and this Constitution and not raise taxes.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) before he goes out, I just wanted to explain one thing. This is not a debate about those "for" taxes and those "against" taxes, so the gentleman misunderstands our position. Our position is not for enshrining corporate loopholes to the tune of \$450 billion in a constitutional amendment. It is not about being for taxes. I am not for taxes. I am trying to keep the gentleman's side of the aisle from enshrining this \$450 billion loophole.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, for the third year in a row we are now debating a resolution to pass a constitutional amendment to require a two-thirds majority for any bill making a change in the revenue laws unless it is, "determined at the time of adoption in a reasonable manner prescribed by law not to increase revenue by more than a de minimis amount." The resolution failed to receive a two-thirds majority for passage the past two years, and last year the defeat was by a greater margin.

All I can say about this resolution is that we have said enough about it and it is time to move on, instead of this waste of time with the gimmicks that are typically associated with these efforts in this House. Let us get away from the gimmicks.

Mr. Speaker, if I can, we ought to call this the "Republican Straight-Faced Amendment." There are Members of this House that vote for term limits after they have served for 20-plus years and do not retire. That constitutionally we ought to take the line-item veto and pass it down to the White House, because somehow they believe that there is more wisdom at that end of Pennsylvania Avenue than this end of Pennsylvania Avenue. And, Mr. Speaker, instead of doing our work, we ought to have a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, which we balanced without disturbing the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, it is gimmickry and it speaks to the lowest instincts of the American voter when these proposals are repeatedly put in front of them by people who lack the fundamental sincerity on most of these issues. If they are for term limits after 12 years or 6 years, pick up and go. If they pledge at home that they are going to do that, they ought to take advantage of it and