



## MEMO

**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Montanans for Tester  
Preston Elliott, Campaign Manager  
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### A FEW FACTS ABOUT CONGRESSMAN DENNIS REHBERG

As special interests continue to fund TV attacks against Montana farmer Jon Tester, we want to highlight a few quick facts about millionaire Congressman Dennis Rehberg that every voter should know:

- During his 10-plus years in Washington, Dennis Rehberg **voted to increase the debt ceiling 10 times**. That's right, 10-plus years in Washington, 10 votes by Dennis Rehberg to increase our nation's debt.
- Why? As one of the wealthiest members of Congress, Dennis Rehberg gave enormous tax breaks to fellow millionaires, resulting in more than another **\$1,000,000,000,000 (one TRILLION dollars) to our nation's debt**. Rehberg is directly responsible for leaving mountains of debt to Montana's hardworking families.
- Apparently this was acceptable to Congressman Rehberg... because during his career, he has **voted to give himself a pay raise FIVE times**.

Of course, Dennis Rehberg's career as a politician began long before his time in Congress. He has been involved in politics since 1977—one year *before* Jon Tester took over his family's farm!

Below are more details about Dennis Rehberg's long and irresponsible career as a DC politician:

### **10 PLUS YEARS IN WASHINGTON, 10 VOTES BY DENNIS REHBERG TO INCREASE OUR NATION'S DEBT.**

#### **CHECK THE RECORD, HERE ARE THE VOTES:**

1. **Rehberg Voted to Increase Debt Limit by \$2.5 Trillion in Short-Term Partisan Plan.** [S. 627, House Roll Call [Vote #677](#), 7/29/2011]
2. **Rehberg Voted to Increase Debt Limit With Restrictions That Would Force Deep Cuts in Medicare and Social Security.** [HR 2560, House Roll Call [Vote #606](#), 7/19/2011]
3. **Rehberg Voted for Budget That Increased Debt Limit to \$9.6 Trillion.** [HCR376, [Vote #158](#), 5/18/06]
4. **Rehberg Voted Against Avoiding Debt Limit Hike.** [HR 4297, [Vote 67](#), 3/16/06; CQ, 3/16/06]

5. **Rehberg Voted To Deem & Pass Debt Limit Increase Of \$781 Billion** [CRS, The Debt Limit: History and Recent Increases, [1/10](#); HCR95, [Vote #149](#), 214-211, 4/28/05]
6. **Rehberg Voted To Increase The National Debt Limit By \$700 Billion** [HRS 683, [Vote 280](#), 6/22/04; [CQ Today](#), 6/23/04; AP, 6/22/04]
7. **Rehberg Voted for Budget That Increased Debt Limit By \$690 Billion** [SCR 95, [Vote #198](#), 5/19/04]
8. **Rehberg Voted To Increase The National Debt Limit By \$800 Billion** [S 2986, [Vote 536](#), 11/18/04; [Washington Post](#), 11/19/04]
9. **2003: Rehberg Voted To Deem & Pass \$984 Billion Increase In Debt Limit.** [CRS, The Debt Limit: History and Recent Increases, [1/10](#); HCR95, Vote #141, 216-211, [4/11/03](#)]
10. **2002: Rehberg Was Deciding Vote to Increase Debt Limit By \$450 Billion After Spending Government From Surplus Into Deficits.** On June 27, 2002, Rehberg voted in favor of S 2578, legislation increasing the public debt limit by approximately \$450 billion. The House passed the legislation 215-214. It was the first time the U.S. Congress voted to increase the public debt limit after spending a budget surplus into deficits. [Congressional Research Service; S 2578, [Vote 279](#), 06/27/02]

## **WHY? WELL, FOR STARTERS CONGRESSMAN REHBERG WANTED TO GIVE TAX BREAKS AND TAX LOOPHOLES FOR THE RICH, MILLIONAIRES LIKE HIMSELF...**

**Rehberg Supported \$70 Billion Tax Cut Bill that Benefits the Wealthiest Americans.** In 2006, Rehberg voted in favor of a \$70 billion tax cut bill. The bill extended the Bush tax breaks on capital gains and dividends for two years, but only included a one year patch for the Alternative Minimum Tax, a tax that was particularly painful for millions of middle class families. The [Washington Post](#) called the bill a “windfall for the rich, and a hole in the federal budget.” According to a study by the Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, Middle-income households would receive an average tax cut of \$20, while the 0.2 percent of households with incomes over \$1 million would get average tax cuts of \$42,000. The [Washington Post](#) wrote that, “This Congress and administration are putting the nation deeper and deeper in debt to benefit a sliver of the population that doesn’t need the help. Someone’s going to have to pay for these deficit-financed tax cuts eventually, and it’s likely to be your grandchildren.” The bill passed 244-185. [[Washington Post](#), 5/11/06; HR 4297, [Vote 135](#), 5/10/06]

**Rehberg Voted Against Scaling Back Bush Tax Cuts for Millionaires To Save \$25.8 Billion in 2006.** In June 2005, Rehberg voted against an amendment to the FY 2006 Defense Appropriations Bill that would have scaled back tax cuts for those with incomes of more than \$1 million per year as included in the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (PL 107-16) and the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 (PL 108-27), to generate \$25.8 billion in tax year 2006. The Obey amendment was rejected 18-40. [CQ Committee Coverage, House Appropriations Committee Markup, HR 2863, 6/7/05]

**Rehberg Supported GOP Capital Gains and Dividend Tax Cut Extension For the Wealthy.** In December 2005, Rehberg voted “to approve a \$56 billion measure to extend capital gains and dividend tax cuts for another two years, until 2010. The extension would leave the tax rate on investment gains at 15 percent... Republicans said the tax bill was an important way to maintain investor confidence, encourage job creation and continue economic growth... Democrats, however, complained that the GOP majority cut vital social programs for poor women and children in order to spend billions on tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. And, they said, the legislation would add about \$20 billion to the deficit.” [HR 4297, [Vote 621](#), 12/08/05; [Chicago Tribune](#), 12/9/05]

**Rehberg Supported Bush’s 2004 Multitrillion-Dollar Tax Breaks for Wealthy.** In March 2004, Rehberg supported Bush’s budget that permanently locked in multitrillion-dollar tax breaks that mostly benefit the nation’s wealthiest. According to the AFL-CIO, “To finance these taxes cuts for millionaires and billionaires, the Republican budget resolution—which mirrored Bush’s proposal—inflated the record-high \$477 billion U.S. deficit and by \$120 billion shortchanged or cut funds for the domestic programs working families need most—from job creation to health care, transportation and education. It also accelerated the repeal of the estate tax and made permanent tax cuts—such as the

estate tax repeal, the capital gains and dividend rate cuts and the reduction in marginal rates—that provide huge benefits to families with the highest incomes.” [HCR 393, [Vote 92](#), 3/25/04; 2004 AFL-CIO Scorecard]

**Rehberg Voted For \$350 Billion Tax Cut For The Rich While Giving 50 Million Households Nothing.** In 2003, Rehberg voted for an irresponsible tax cut package that deepened the nation’s fiscal crisis and left middle-income households out in the cold. Some 53 percent of all U.S. households — or 74 million — will receive a tax cut of \$100 or less in 2003 from the bill. Additionally, 36 percent of households — or 50 million — will receive no tax cut whatsoever in 2003, while tax filers who make \$1 million or more per year will receive an average tax cut in 2003 of \$93,500. The bill passed 231-200. [HR 2, [Vote 225](#), 5/23/03; Center for Budget & Policy Priorities, 5/28/03]

- **Rehberg Voted For \$550 Billion Tax Cut Favoring Corporations & Wealthy At Expense Of Middle Class.** In 2003, Rehberg voted for tax cuts that would give the majority of the benefit to the wealthiest people in the country. Taxpayers with incomes of more than \$1 million would receive average tax cuts of \$93,500 in 2003, while the middle fifth of households would receive an average tax cut of just \$217. Additionally, the top five percent of households in the country would get 72 percent of the tax cut benefits from the capital gains/dividend proposal. Meanwhile, the total cost of the plan if extended as promised would be between \$865 billion and \$1.1 trillion through 2013, twice as costly as advertised. The bill passed 222-203. [HR 2, [Vote 182](#), 5/09/03; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 5/21/03]

**Rehberg Supported Budget Busting Tax Cut for the Wealthy.** In 2001, Rehberg voted in favor of the Bush tax cut package that reduced taxes by \$1.35 trillion through 2010 through income tax cuts, relief of the marriage penalty, a phase-out of the federal estate tax, doubling the child tax credit, and providing incentives for retirement savings. Critics of the bill warned that the tax cut was too large and would jeopardize future Social Security benefits. According to the Wall Street Journal, the entire Social Security Trust Fund will be used “to fund the government over the next two years,” while “well over \$100 billion of Social Security funds in each of the following three years” will be used for other purposes. Over the following ten years, more than \$1.8 trillion of the Social Security Trust Funds would be spent on other purposes. The bill passed 240-154. [Wall Street Journal, 2/5/02; Congressional Budget Office; Campaign for America’s Future; HR 1836, [Vote 149](#), 5/26/01]

### **...WHICH ADDED MORE THAN A TRILLION DOLLARS TO THE DEFICIT**

**AP: Bush Tax Cuts One of the Biggest Contributors to National Debt Increase, Added \$1.6 Trillion.** As reported by the AP, “Q: How did the debt grow from \$5.8 trillion in 2001 to its current \$14.3 trillion? A: The biggest contributors to the nearly \$9 trillion increase over a decade were: 2001 and 2003 tax cuts under President George W. Bush: \$1.6 trillion.” [AP, [7/17/2011](#)]

**Bush Tax Cuts Added \$1.812 Trillion to the Deficit.** [New York Times, [7/23/2011](#)]

**Bush Tax Cuts “Not Only Continue to Cost the Government But Have Also Increased Interest Payments on the National Debt.”** As reported by the New York Times, “You can think of that roughly \$2 trillion swing as coming from four broad categories: the business cycle, President George W. Bush’s policies, policies from the Bush years that are scheduled to expire but that Mr. Obama has chosen to extend, and new policies proposed by Mr. Obama.... About 33 percent of the swing stems from new legislation signed by Mr. Bush. That legislation, like his tax cuts and the Medicare prescription drug benefit, not only continue to cost the government but have also increased interest payments on the national debt.” [New York Times, [6/9/2009](#)]

### **REHBERG’S TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH: BIGGER DEFICIT AND MORE DEBT FOR MONTANA’S FAMILIES**

### **AND FOR ALL THIS HARD WORK, CONGRESSMAN REHBERG VOTED TO GIVE HIMSELF A PAY RAISE...5 TIMES**

**Rehberg Supported Congressional Pay Raises 5 Times.** Rehberg has voted against efforts to block the annual cost-of-living increases that Members of Congress receive 5 times during his ten years in Congress. Rehberg has supported a majority of efforts to enact a Congressional pay raise.

1. **Rehberg Supported Congressional Pay Raise, Voted to Raise His Own Pay by \$3,300 in 2006.** (H RES 865, [Vote #261](#), 6/13/06; Congressional Research Service, *Salaries for Members of Congress: Congressional Votes*)  
NOTE: This pay raise was later blocked by the Democratic Congress in 2007.

**HEADLINE – House Lawmakers Accept \$3,300 Pay Hike.** As reported by the AP, “House lawmakers Tuesday embraced a \$3,300 pay raise that will increase their salaries to \$168,500. The 2 percent cost-of-living raise would be the seventh straight for members of the House and Senate. Lawmakers easily squelched a bid by Rep. Jim Matheson, D-Utah, to get a direct vote to block the COLA, which is automatically awarded unless lawmakers vote to block it...But by a 249-167 vote, the House rejected Matheson's procedural attempt to get a direct vote on the pay raise.” [AP, [6/13/06](#)]

2. **Rehberg Supported Congressional Pay Raise, Voted to Raise His Own Pay \$3,100 in 2005.** (HR 342, [Vote #327](#), 6/28/05)

**HEADLINE – Congress OKs Raise Despite Matheson.** As reported by the Deseret Morning News, “Rep. Jim Matheson, D-Utah, tried again -- and failed again -- to persuade his colleagues to reject the automatic congressional pay raise that is wrapped inside an appropriations bill. ‘We are at war, and that requires shared sacrifices,’ Matheson said. ‘Let us send a signal to the American people that Congress gets it. A little belt-tightening wouldn't hurt anyone around here.’” [Deseret Morning News, [6/30/05](#)]

3. **Rehberg Supported Congressional Pay Raise, Voted to Raise His Own Pay by \$4,000 in 2004.** (H Res 770, [Vote #451](#), 9/14/04)

**HEADLINE – U.S. House Members Vote to Give Themselves Salary Increase.** [Las Vegas Review-Journal, [9/16/04](#)]

4. **Rehberg Supported Congressional Pay Raise, Voted to Raise His Own Pay by \$3,400 in 2003.** (H. Res. 351, [Vote #463](#), 9/4/03)

**HEADLINE – Another Pay Raise for Congress? House Approves Measure to Give Lawmakers a 2.2 Percent Boost.** As reported by the AP, “The House on Thursday approved a 2.2 percent pay raise for Congress — slightly less than average wage increases in private business but enough to boost lawmakers' annual salaries to about \$158,000 next year. The House members decided to allow themselves a fifth straight cost-of-living raise after rejecting them for several years during the 1990s. Their annual pay has risen from \$136,700 in 1999 to about \$158,000 in 2004, if the legislation clears Congress and is signed by the president. Their salary this year is \$154,700. [AP, [9/4/03](#)]

5. **Rehberg Supported Congressional Pay Raise, Voted to Raise His Own Pay by \$4,700 in 2002.** (H. Res. 488, [Vote #322](#), 7/18/02)

**HEADLINE – House Clears Way for \$5K Pay Raise.** (AP, 7/18/02)

**HEADLINE – Lawmakers Give Themselves Pay Increase to \$155,000.** (Roll Call, 7/22/02)