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Rokita Votes to Cut Spending, Reform Entitlements, Spur Job Creation

Washington, DC – Today Rep. Todd Rokita released this statement after voting for H.R. 3630, The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2011, legislation that provides support for Americans struggling to find work, cuts overall spending, protects the Social Security Trust Fund and reforms entitlement programs:

“While this legislation is not perfect, it does offer real spending cuts over the next decade by freezing the salaries and benefits of civilian federal employees, preventing Social Security overpayments and fraud, and recalibrating federal benefits for high income Americans. It makes meaningful reforms to programs like Social Security, Medicare and Unemployment Insurance. Most importantly, this bill is paid for—meaning we won’t borrow more money from our children and grandchildren.

Anytime we can put aside the Washington gimmicks and actually cut federal spending and reform entitlement programs, we are taking a step in the right direction. Still, an enormous amount of work remains to be done.

This legislation also provides a boost to the economy by requiring President Obama to issue a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline, a project that would create as many as 20,000 American jobs and move our nation towards energy security. In addition, H.R. 3630 blocks several economically destructive regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency,” Rokita said.

H.R. 3630 extends the payroll tax holiday, but replenishes the Social Security Trust Fund with cuts to other federal programs. In addition, this legislation extends unemployment benefits, but reforms the process to begin shortening the duration that the unemployed can rely on the program in the future. It also strengthens requirements that recipients of unemployment benefits seek employment and job training. Finally, it authorizes the states to drug test current and future recipients of unemployment benefits.

H.R. 3630 also prevents a scheduled 27.4 percent cut in physician payment rates under Medicare. This cut would be punishing for doctors and patients. If a cut of this magnitude were enacted, many doctors would simply stop seeing Medicare patients.

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