



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 28, 2011

Tea Party Activists Target House Speaker Boehner

Fox News reports on the progress of Boehner's bill:

Boehner revised his plan after congressional budget analysts said it would save \$850 billion over the next decade instead of the \$1.2 trillion advertised. The latest figures put the savings above \$900 billion, more than the bill's proposed debt limit increase. The House is expected to vote on the revised plan Thursday.



Tea Party activists have voiced their opposition to Boehner's debt bill, which would raise the debt ceiling by \$900 billion while simultaneously cutting spending by nearly \$917 billion over the next 10 years. They say the cuts don't scratch the surface because the U.S. deficit for 2010 was almost \$1.5 trillion. Additionally, Congressman Ron Paul says, "The cuts aren't real.... There are no cuts."

Tea Party supporters have been outspoken about their criticism of Boehner. "Boehner must go," Tea Party Nation founder Judson Phillips said in his blog on Wednesday, calling the speaker a "big government Republican" who "worships at the altar of massive spending."

"We need a speaker who is a leader. We need someone with courage and vision. Boehner has none of those qualities. He is not a leader," Phillips wrote. "John Boehner simply wishes to be the manager in chief of the welfare state. His vision of the GOP and the speakership involves golfing, drinking and not rocking the boat."

The criticism comes even as Boehner has the support of GOP freshmen and Tea Party lawmakers in Congress, who all appear to be largely supportive of Boehner's debt bill.

TPM Muckraker [reports](#):

Over 30 GOP freshmen ... gathered at the steps of the Capitol to declare their unequivocal support for the legislation, highlighting that while certainly not perfect, the bill remained the only viable option for raising the debt limit and reining in the deficit.

Many of the new members touted the historic nature of the spending cuts, saying that the very reason they ran for office was to reform the culture in Washington, and that this was exactly the opportunity to do so.

While most Tea Party-backed lawmakers support another plan — "cut, cap, and balance" — which raises the debt ceiling by another \$2.4 trillion in exchange for a balanced budget amendment, they are willing to accept Boehner's proposal, since "cut, cap, and balance" died in the Senate.



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"The leadership did not put pressure on us," said Rep. Steven Palazzo (R-Miss.). "They just gave us the facts and the resources to come to a decision on our own. We had plenty of time to review it and that's what we did. I was ... undecided and now I'm a yes."

"We have a saying [in Tennessee] that says: 'Get 'er done,'" said Rep. Diane Black (R-Tenn.). "And they sent me here to get 'er done. And this is a part of getting 'er done."

But Tea Party grass-roots activists are not happy with Boehner's leadership, or his debt bill. Perhaps it's because Boehner's bill so closely resembles that proposed by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid that one would have to go through each with a fine-toothed comb to find the differences. The only significant difference is that Reid's bill raises the debt ceiling so that spending can continue unabated past 2012, while Boehner's plan keeps the spending going until February.

Tea Party lawmakers have come to Boehner's defense, however. "My Republican leadership in the House is doing a great job," freshman Rep. Joe Walsh said at a Tea Party rally Wednesday. "Imagine having to negotiate with Barack Obama. Imagine having to negotiate with Harry Reid. Give John Boehner, give Eric Cantor all the credit in the world."

Still, Tea Party activists have targeted Boehner as the culprit. Phillips contends that Boehner has been a "total disaster" as Speaker. According to Phillips, Boehner is "much like the French Army ... surrenders early and often."

For Phillips and other Tea Party members, anything less than pushing "cut, cap, and balance" legislation is "surrendering again."

Additionally, over 80 percent of the members of the Tea Party Patriots said they are "not satisfied with the leadership of the House" and 74 percent want Boehner replaced.

"The reason we asked is that people are bringing it up to us — maybe we should see about a different speaker," said Jenny Beth Marin, co-founder of the Tea Party Patriots.

Bill Wilson of Americans for Limited Government said that the critics need to refocus their attention on the flawed legislation, not on the man behind it. "Political rhetoric should not be directed at Speaker Boehner, but instead should focus on the deeply flawed legislation that he has offered as a solution to the credit crisis facing our nation," Wilson said, urging House Republicans to vote against the plan. "Conservatives need to stand together in favor of keeping the spending cut promises of the 2010 election, but should maintain our focus on the legislation and not personalities," he said.

Photo of John Boehner: AP Images



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