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BAILOUTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
PROGRAMS
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

September 21, 2012

Dear Colleague:

Congress's earmark ban was a victory for good government. Despite the ban, Congress continues to find ways to funnel largesse to well-connected private organizations.

One approach to granting special favors has been to enact commemorative coin bills. These bills require the Treasury to mint coins in honor of private groups. The coins include a "surcharge," which the government funnels to the groups. The surcharges can total millions of dollars per coin bill, and the U.S. Mint reports they have raised more than \$418 million since 1982.

Senator DeMint and I are introducing the Commemorative Coins Reform Act of 2012. The bill does not ban commemorative coins. It simply requires surcharge revenue from newly authorized commemorative coin bills to be deposited in the U.S. Treasury for deficit reduction. Congress shouldn't use commemorative coins to fundraise for private groups, and this bill puts a stop to that practice.

For more information or to become a cosponsor, please contact Kurt Couchman in my office at kurt.couchman@mail.house.gov or 5-3831.

Sincerely,



Justin Amash
Member of Congress