

GOP Summer Agenda Obstructs Job Creation, Hurts Middle Class Families

As our economy continues its recovery, House Republicans have rolled out a summer agenda that ignores job creation and does not address a number of critical items. Two items expire at the end of this month: a surface transportation reauthorization bill – which the Senate passed with an overwhelming bipartisan vote – and legislation to stop student loan interest rates from doubling on July 1. House Republicans are also holding an extension of the middle class tax cuts hostage to tax cuts for the wealthy, despite the need for families to have certainty that their taxes will not increase next year.

What's missing on their summer agenda – expiring bills that support job creation and the middle class:

- **Surface Transportation Reauthorization:** Passing a bipartisan highway bill would restore certainty to the transportation industry and create jobs in our infrastructure sector.
 - Last week, Republican leadership suggested negotiators will not reach a deal by the June 30 deadline, and that an additional short-term agreement to extend funding would be required [[The Hill, 6/1/12](#)].
 - The Senate-passed highway bill was bipartisan legislation supported by 74 Senators – but Republican leadership won't put it on the House Floor for a vote.
 - Construction jobs have been among the hardest hit during the economic downturn – just last month, 28,000 construction jobs were lost, the largest drop in 2 years, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America.
- **Student Loan Interest Rates:** Congress must take legislative action to prevent student loan interest rates from doubling without undermining health care for middle-class and working families.
 - Without legislative action, on July 1, student loan interest rates will double, affecting 7.4 million students and costing them \$6 billion over the next decade.
 - Republican initially proposed extending the student loan interest rates by including a provision that eliminates funding for preventive and wellness services.
 - Speaker John Boehner called the student loan interest rate issue a “phony issue” before offering two controversial proposals to extend the rate, which does not move us closer to reaching an agreement. [[Washington Post, 5/31/12](#)]
- **Middle Class Tax Cuts:** Middle class families need certainty that they will not see a tax increase at the end of this year.
 - Speaker Boehner falsely claims that extending tax cuts for middle class while asking millionaires to pay their fair share would “kill jobs.” [[Politico, 5/31/12](#)]
 - In fact, extending the tax cuts for the middle class while asking millionaires to pay more would have a minimal effect on small businesses but would be a responsible means toward contributing to our fiscal challenges.

