

San Antonio, TX – Tonight, the House of Representatives passed the [Permanent Estate Tax Relief for Families, Farmers, and Small Businesses Act of 2009 \(HR 4154\)](#), which would permanently exempt estates under \$3.5 million per person from the estate tax, by 225 to 200. Although family matters prevented him from voting, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20) issued the following statement of support for the bill.

“For too long, small business owners and farmers have been harried by uncertainty about the estate tax. This bill not only exempts 99% of Americans from owing any tax at all, but it makes the tax rates permanent, bringing long-needed certainty to the process. I applaud my colleagues for this improvement to our tax code.”

Under HR 4154, the estate tax policies created for 2009 by the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 would be made permanent, including the exemption for estates under \$3.5 million and the maximum tax rate of 45%. Without this bill, there would be no tax in 2010 but, in 2011, the exclusion would be only \$1 million and the maximum rate would rise to 55%. It [has been reported](#) that fewer than 01% of Americans have paid any estate tax in each of the past three years.

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