

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez voted in favor of the Temporary Payroll Tax Continuation of 2011. This legislation will extend the payroll tax cut, unemployment insurance, and prevent a 27 percent cut in Medicare physician payments through the remainder of 2012. Congressman Gonzalez issued the following statement regarding the bill's passage in the House:

“While I am pleased that the passage of this bill will extend the funding for programs that are critical to the health and well-being of millions of Americans, it doesn't provide long-term solutions. The payroll tax cut will provide assistance to 160 million Americans in the midst of a fragile economic recovery, but our country still must address the larger issue of an unfair tax code that rewards a privileged few at the expense of middle class working families.

“Preventing a nearly 30 percent cut in the Medicare physician payment rate is critical to ensuring millions of seniors will continue to see the doctor of their choice, but we cannot afford to constantly kick the can down the road when it comes to medical reimbursements. Addressing the health of our nation's seniors in short term segments is irresponsible and demands an actual commitment towards real solutions.

“We had to extend unemployment insurance to uphold the promise made to American workers. However, Republicans continue to incorrectly portray this program as a handout for those who no longer wish to work. In fact, millions of workers who lost their jobs through no fault of their own have been paying into this contingency fund to help tide them over in the event of economic downturns like the one American currently faces, and everyone receiving these benefits is actively looking for a job.

“Congress must be willing to make the commitment to work on a bi-partisan basis on these problems rather than leaving crucial legislation up to the unwillingness of some obstructionist lawmakers to compromise. Until that time, the function of Congress will be held hostage by the political theater of election year politics.”

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