

By now, many Americans are aware of the legislative acrobatics of House Republicans---acrobatics that have left Americans facing a tax increase at the end of the year. As Ranking Member of the Committee on Rules, I had a front row seat to these legislative acrobatics and I want to share them with you.

On Monday, after the Senate had voted 89-10 to approve a 2 month extension of the payroll tax cut, Speaker Boehner announced that he would put the legislation on the House floor for an up or down vote. Titled a "motion to concur" on our committee agenda, this up or down vote would have sent the bill straight to the President, who had already indicated that he would sign it.

[As reported earlier this week by Huffington Post](#) ,

Initially, the House Republicans planned to hold a standard vote on a "motion to concur" with the Senate tax cut extension, which is part of a \$33 billion package that also prevents unemployment benefits from running out and doctors' Medicare payments from being slashed 27 percent.

But in a heated meeting of the Rules Committee that determines how votes are held, the motion was changed to a "motion to reject."

You've read the correctly, the Republican Majority on the Rules Committee changed the vote to a "motion to reject"—a vote that would make sure the Senate compromise was defeated no matter what. This change is even documented in writings from the Committee itself- [as you can see in the actual agenda \(click here\)](#) , the Committee on Rules was scheduled to vote on a "motion to concur". That never happened.

As they say, it's all there in black and white. Why did the House Republicans make this change? Quite simply because they knew if they held a simple vote on the Senate compromise, the legislation would pass.

As a result, House Republicans have a group of legislators sitting in Washington, DC at this very moment, waiting for another round of negotiations- negotiations that have not come. I guess they'll continue to wait until Godot shows up.

Meanwhile, 160 million middle class Americans are counting down the days until their taxes go up, and their paychecks go down. If the House Republicans don't agree to compromise, the taxes for an average American family will go up by \$40 with each paycheck. Those \$40 mean fewer groceries, fewer fill-ups on gas, fewer paid heating bills, fewer prescription refills, and less money to get by.

The stakes are too high, and the consequences too great. Its time that House Republicans leave their Washington offices, and go talk to their constituents. Its time for them to hear what Americans want- fewer fights in Washington and more policies that help middle class American families survive. Its time that they compromise and provide the tax cut that middle class Americans badly need.