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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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April 6, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner,

For much of the past year, public attention has been focused on the issues that divide us as Democrats and Republicans as well as the partisan tactics and extreme rhetoric that has been used in pursuit of conflicting priorities. But at a time when our economic recovery is still struggling to take hold, and with my home state of Rhode Island now experiencing the second highest unemployment rate in the country, working families want to see Washington put aside partisan rhetoric in favor of pragmatic solutions to the challenges we face.

One of the most urgent areas of concern lies in reforming our tax structure. As you know, under current tax laws, working men and women may be asked to pay a higher percentage of their income in taxes than wealthy individuals, many of whom derive a significant portion of their earnings from capital gains. Although there are many issues on which we may disagree, surely both Republicans and Democrats must acknowledge that there is something wrong with a system that asks a Fortune 500 CEO to pay a lower tax rate than his or her secretary.

Last week, President Barack Obama reiterated his call for Congress to institute the "Buffett Rule." My fellow Rhode Islander, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), has introduced legislation in the U.S. Senate, that would ensure multi-million dollar earners pay at least 30% of their income in taxes, which would ensure parity with taxes imposed on middle class families. The Senate has scheduled a vote on this legislation, the Paying a Fair Share Act, S. 2230, for April 16th. As you know, Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) has introduced the House companion to Senator Whitehouse's bill, H.R. 3903, which I have cosponsored.

As millions of middle class Americans struggle to make ends meet, and with the President calling on Congress to act, I believe we must put aside partisan differences and do the right thing for our country by considering this commonsense proposal. I strongly urge you to take all necessary action to ensure that legislation instituting a "Buffett Rule" is brought to a vote when the U.S. House of Representatives returns to session.

I thank you in advance for your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David N. Cicilline".

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress