

July 22, 2009

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- Continuing his efforts to reduce America's budget deficit, today U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) voted to make pay-as-you-go budget rules federal law. Under the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2009 (H.R. 2920), Congress will be forced to pay for any new spending or tax cuts it approves. Altmire is an original co-sponsor of this legislation, which passed the House today.

“During the 1990s, pay-as-you-go budgeting helped America move from yearly budget deficits to record surpluses,” Altmire said. “Unfortunately, Congress abandoned pay-go budget rules in 2002 and put in place policies that led to record budget deficits and a dramatic increase in the national debt. By making pay-as-you-go budget rules federal law, we can ensure that Congress is making the tough decisions needed to reign in our growing budget deficits.”

This pay-go legislation has a strong enforcement mechanism to ensure that Congress pays for what it spends. If Congress fails to fully pay for the new legislation it enacts over the course of the year, the President would be required to cut funding from certain programs. This enforcement mechanism will ensure that Congress is held accountable for all of its spending decisions.

A member of the conservative Blue Dog Coalition, Altmire has long advocated for pay-as-you budget rules and other fiscal responsibility measures. One of Altmire's first actions when he came to Congress in 2007 was to vote to reinstitute pay-as-you-go budgeting to the rules of the House (H. Res. 6). The legislation Altmire voted for today will strengthen the House's current pay-as-you-go budget rules by giving them the force of law.