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LARSON BLASTS GOP LEADERSHIP

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) issued the following statement today on H.R. 2, the House Republican tax plan.

Larson stated: "Tom DeLay reached new heights of hypocrisy today when he announced the Democrats did not put forward a tax plan. This lie further demonstrates the arrogance of power shown by the GOP leadership. The Republican leadership refused to allow a Democratic alternative tax plan to the floor to receive a fair, up or down vote, side by side with the GOP plan. It seems the Republicans are afraid to trust their own members not to vote for the Democratic plan. It is not surprising when constituents back home ask where the Democratic opposition and the voices of dissent are in Washington -- they have been stifled by the Republican leadership, who are so terrified of disagreement they will allow only their own plan to be voted on, making certain that there is no opportunity to debate or discuss any alternative. Again and again, the Democratic minority has spoken out on issues before the House, and again today their voices are muted by the arrogance of an abusive majority who cares little for the democratic process in Congress.

"In 2001, the Republican leadership rammed through \$1.7 trillion in tax cuts, mostly aimed at the wealthiest Americans, promising that they would

stimulate the economy and create jobs. Now, two years later, the federal government is mired in deficits only a few years after we saw the biggest surpluses in history, about 2.7 million Americans have lost their jobs and the economy continues to falter. Ignoring all facts, the Republican leadership is again trying to force billions more in tax cuts through Congress, again focused on the very wealthiest Americans as the federal deficit balloons, funding for education and veterans healthcare is cut, and the elderly continue to go without prescription drug relief. The Republican tax plan is reckless and a proven failure -- it does not stimulate the economy, it does not create jobs and it drives the United States deeper into deficit spending, while still providing another windfall for the very wealthy.

The Democratic plan would cut taxes by about \$124 billion over 10 years, and creates jobs by providing tax relief for working families and businesses, would extend unemployment insurance benefits and provide much-needed aid to states and municipalities. The cost of the Democratic plan is offset by freezing the tax rates for the top bracket rates and would close tax shelters.

"The Democratic plan would provide tax relief for the people who need it by putting money in the pockets of working and middle class Americans, boosting consumer demand, which translates into economic stimulus. It also devotes nearly \$30 billion in tax cuts for small business and business investment, as well as business tax relief to create job growth. The plan also provides much needed relief for the states, incentives for companies to hire the unemployed and extends unemployment insurance. The Democratic plan is fair, fiscally responsible and effective in its goal to create jobs, provide tax relief and stimulate the economy," said Larson.

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