



**AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM**

GROVER G. NORQUIST

PRESIDENT

## **Taxpayer Group MAY RATE a Vote in Favor of Bennett Amendment to S.1**

This week, the Senate is considering S.1, a lobbying and ethics bill. Title II, Section 220 of that bill serves as a *de facto* gag order against legitimate grassroots activism. Senator Robert Bennett (R-UT) has introduced an amendment that would strike Section 220 of S.1. **ATR may rate a vote on this amendment.**

The first amendment to the U.S. Constitution states that, “Congress shall make no law...[abridging the right of the people] to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” The Founding Fathers knew that Congress would have a tendency to assume power to itself and become isolated from the people. Therefore, they enshrined a special right to grassroots activists—Congress cannot turn a deaf ear to them, even if it wants to.

**Section 220 of S.1 is tantamount to turning a deaf ear to grassroots activists of all political stripes.** This section of the bill would require grassroots activist organizations to report the names and contact information of any firm they employ for more than \$10,000 to activate supporters. This would include direct mail, some polling, internet activism, etc. **The clear intent of this language is to frighten legitimate grassroots activist organizations into inaction. The result would be that much communication between members of Congress and their constituents would come to a halt.** Virtually all communication between Congress and the outside world would be restricted to the Beltway fishbowl of lobbyists and the media. The American people would be shut out, against the express intent of the Constitution.

## **ATR URGES A VOTE FOR THE BENNETT AMENDMENT TO S.1**