

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



**9.8**

During the oral communication section of the agenda for Tuesday, February 28, 2012, Shirley Ferrante spoke on disabled seniors, a student that was shot and an article in Washington Post regarding Lobbyist.

---

**ATTACHMENTS FILED WITH  
CLERK OF THE BOARD**

**AGENDA NO.  
9.8**

**Riverside County Board of Supervisors  
Request to Speak**

Submit request to Clerk of Board (right of podium),  
Speakers are entitled to three (3) minutes, subject  
Board Rules listed on the reverse side of this form.

**SPEAKER'S NAME:** Shirley Ferranti

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(only if follow-up mail response requested)

**City:** Riverside **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** 2/28/12 **Agenda #** Oval Comm.

**PLEASE STATE YOUR POSITION BELOW:**

**Position on "Regular" (non-appealed) Agenda Item:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Support**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Oppose**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Neutral**

**Note:** If you are here for an agenda item that is filed  
for "Appeal", please state separately your position on  
the appeal below:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Support**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Oppose**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Neutral**

**I give my 3 minutes to:** \_\_\_\_\_

Buster

Subscr  
\* indicat

HOME U.S. NEWS WORLD NEWS ECONOMY SCI/TECH HISTORY REVIEWS CULTURE OPINION

Congress Politics Immigration Health Care Foreign Policy Crime Constitution

# Post: Congressmen Used Earmarks for Personal Gain and to Help Relatives

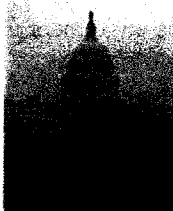
U.  
| Print |

WRITTEN BY R. CORT KIRKWOOD

WEDNESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2012 10:14

Tweet 13

Like 38



Congressmen are not only sending millions of tax dollars back home in earmarks that affect the value of their own property but also funding projects in which family members are involved.

That's the latest revelation describing high-level graft and corruption on Capitol Hill, courtesy of the *Washington Post*. In an investigative project titled "Capitol Assets," the newspaper shows that "public projects meet private interests," and that what some Americans believe — that almost all politicians are crooks — might have some merit.

## Capitol Improvements

According to the main website, the *Post* "compared the annual financial disclosure reports filed by every member of Congress over the past decade to a wide range of public records."

The resulting snapshot was then matched to earmarks and other spending provisions members sought for pet projects. The process uncovered nearly 50 members who helped direct millions of dollars in earmarks to projects that either held the potential to enhance the surroundings of a lawmaker's own property, or aided entities connected to their immediate family. Lawmakers said their earmarks and spending provisions were done to benefit the public, not their private interests.

One of the report's two main articles deals with congressmen shoveling money at projects which are near property they own.

Between 2005 and 2009, according to the *Post*, Rep. Todd Akin (R-Mo.) "helped secure \$3.3 million to upgrade part of Route 141 in his district west of St. Louis." The paper explained:

Less than a half-mile east of Route 141, Akin and his family own nine acres. Akin's family has applied to construct six homes on the land. His spokesman said Akin's land had no bearing on his support for the earmarks. "It is going to be helpful as a connector but not helpful for residential property values whatsoever," he said.

Submitted by Shirley Ferante  
02/28/2012  
Item 822  
(date)

The *Post* investigation revealed that Sen. Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) "has supported a Pentagon program called Starbase that teaches science, math and engineering skills to children in dozens of locations around the country." In 2008, he and his colleagues boosted the program's budget by \$4 million. But Johnson's wife benefited:

At the time, Johnson's wife, Barbara, was paid an annual salary of \$80,000 as a contract employee to evaluate the program. From 2005 to September, she worked for the Spectrum Group, a lobbying and consulting firm in Alexandria, that has a \$1 million Pentagon contract to monitor Starbase. A social worker and educator, Barbara Johnson was also assigned to manage its Web site.

Rep. C.W. Bill Young (R-Fla.) has pumped nearly \$75 million into companies that employ his sons. Rep. Norman Dicks (D-Wash.) has sent millions to an environmental agency in his home state, and his son just happened to work there. Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., (D-Ga.) sent money to a program back home that employs his stepdaughter and her husband.

And for years, said the *Post*, Rep. Ed Pastor (D-Ariz.) "has directed [the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration] to send millions to fund the scholarship program for at-risk high school students headed by his daughter in Arizona. She earns \$75,774 a year."

Rep. Kay Granger (R-Texas) has done both: boosted the fortunes of her property and helped a family member with the same pot of cash, noted the paper:

Over the past decade, Granger has helped obtain \$51.9 million in earmarks toward a project to make over downtown Fort Worth and reroute the Trinity River.

Until 2010, Granger co-owned a condominium building with her son about a half-mile south of the project. Her son is director of the group in charge of the project.

"The congresswoman has always given her support to qualified programs in full compliance with the House Ethics Committee and the rules of the House of Representatives," her spokesman said.

Another of the ethically-challenged legislators on the list is Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, (D-Texas). According to the *Post*, this guardian of the public weal "helped secure" more than \$5 million for the University of Houston. Her husband "was vice president of student affairs and vice chancellor of student affairs for the university system."

## Trackback(0)

TrackBack URI for this entry

## Comments (0)

Subscribe to this comment's feed

## Write comment

You must log in to post a comment. Please register if you do not have an account yet.

The Washington Post  
Nov. 20, 2012  
By David G. Savage and Rick Lipton

What is this?



Congress's supercommittee conceded defeat Monday in its quest to conquer a government debt that stands at a staggering \$15 trillion, unable to overcome deep political divisions over taxes and spending. (Nov. 21)

**More On This Story**

- Opinion | Health-care changes signal much-needed shift
- Read more on PostPolitics.com
- Cain reassessing his 2012 campaign
- Who is Ginger White?
- View all items in this Story



the technology," Kasper said.

Sutton declined to comment.

At the time, McCaskill was the only lawmaker to publicly challenge the amendments, saying they made a "charade" out of the moratorium. In a May 26 letter to McKeon, she wrote that the "new earmarking procedure you have instituted not only circumvents the current moratorium, but is actually less transparent than the earmarking process that was in place prior to the moratorium."

McKeon has repeatedly denied that the amendments were earmarks, saying the money would have been granted based on merit.

After 2008, lawmakers had to disclose when they were seeking money for pet projects in their districts, providing a description of the project and the dollar amount. They also had to file paperwork certifying that neither they nor their spouses would benefit financially from the earmark.

McCaskill said the legislation that she and Toomey are proposing would prohibit earmarks and set up a process for challenging such spending.

Under the bill's provisions, any lawmaker would be allowed to contest something that appears to be an earmark. The member advocating for the spending would have to publicly justify it and receive approval from two-thirds of the full Senate.

Staff writer David S. Fallis contributed to this report.

More from [PostPolitics](#):

[Pennsylvania becomes major battleground for Obama in 2012](#)

The defense authorization bill was passed by the House, but Sutton's and Hunter's efforts were shot down, along with the other amendments, when the issue got to the Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee.

Subcommittee Chairman C.W. Bill Young (R-Fla.) honored the moratorium and refused to allow any special provisions. But earmark critics such as McCaskill say the episode highlights how the moratorium rises and falls with the whim of each chairman.

"One way you can look at it is you can say people are trying to make an end run around the rules any way they can," said Steve Ellis, vice president of the watchdog group Taxpayers for Common Sense. "But on the flip side, you can say that they did get slapped down. Maybe it came out of indignation. 'If I can't play the earmarks game, you shouldn't be able to either.' But the rules held."

Hunter spokesman Joe Kasper said the lawmaker does not consider his amendment to be an earmark because the money would have been awarded based on merit. He said Hunter is hopeful that the funding will come through in the next few weeks when the House and the Senate meet in conference to hammer out a final version of the defense authorization bill. "Mr. Hunter made the request because he feels very strongly about

**The Post Most: Politics**

**Most Popular**

1. Out of the spotlight, Mitt Romney shines
2. Thinking of having a baby solo? Don't.
3. Underrated president: George H.W. Bush wins
4. The claim that 98 percent of Catholic women use contraception: a media foul
5. Santorum aide: I 'misspoke' on Obama's 'radical Islamic policies'

Top Videos

Top Galleries

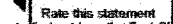
**Fact or Fiction?**

"We are the only people on the earth that put our hand over our heart during the playing of the national anthem. It was FDR who asked us to do that."

- Mitt Romney

**How accurate is this statement?**

Choose a Pinocchio rating to find out how the Fact Checker graded this statement.



Track all the Campaign 2012 fact checks

**Campaign 2012 tools**

**Republican primary tracker**  
Explore the state of the 2012 race in key early states.



**Mad Money: Campaign ads**  
Watch the latest campaign ads and track how much candidates spend.



**Campaign Finance Explorer**  
See who's raising and spending the most money.



**2012 Presidential Candidates**



Mitt Romney



Newt Gingrich



Ron Paul



Rick Santorum



Barack Obama

See All

Earmarks have long been controversial, with the focus on spending that unduly favors campaign donors or constituents. *The Post's* review is the first systematic effort to examine the alignment of earmarks with lawmakers' private interests. Earmarks are a fraction of the federal budget, and the numbers uncovered by *The Post* are relatively small in the scheme of the overall Congress, but the behavior by lawmakers from both parties points to a larger issue at a time when confidence in Capitol Hill is at an all-time low.

The congressional financial disclosure system obscures certain relationships. Lawmakers are not required to disclose the addresses of their personal residences or the employment of their children and parents. The lawmakers are also allowed to put properties in holding companies without disclosing the properties' locations. Current versions of the Stock Act would not change that. To provide a fuller portrait of congressional connections, *The Post* compared the disclosure forms with the public record to track spending on projects near legislators' properties or on programs employing their relatives.

In interviews, lawmakers said their earmarks were needs brought to them by the city and state officials they represent to help pay for safer roads, nicer neighborhoods or improved local economies. They characterized questions about the nearby locations of their own holdings as irrelevant, insisting there is no conflict. Any potential personal benefit — financial or otherwise — is nonexistent, minimal or secondary to the needs of the public, they said.

Mere proximity to a lawmaker's property does not establish that an earmark was unwarranted. In some cases, the public benefit of the spending was large, improving life for thousands. In others, the benefit appeared narrower. In some cases, the work was within a mile or two of the properties; in others, it was directly in front of the lawmaker's land. Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) secured a \$900,000 earmark that was used to resurface about two dozen roads in Mississippi in 2010. One of those was LC Turner Circle, a quarter-mile residential loop in the small town of Bolton, where Thompson and his daughter own two homes. Thompson said it was one of numerous paving earmarks he secured for his district. "I didn't say, 'Do the street that I live on,'" Thompson said. "The earmark went to the county. It had no designation on it whatsoever, and that was it."

Bolton Mayor Lawrence Butler said city leaders chose to repave the street, where about 48 families live, because "it had gone to the dogs." Butler described Thompson as a close friend but said the lawmaker "didn't have anything to do with where the asphalt went."

By design, ethics rules governing Congress are intended to preserve the freedom of members to direct federal spending in their districts, a process known as earmarking. Such spending has long been cloaked in secrecy and only in recent years has been subjected to more transparency. Although Congress has imposed numerous conflict-of-interest rules on federal agencies and private businesses, the rules it has set for itself are far more permissive. Lawmakers are required to certify that they do not have a financial stake in the actions they take. In the cases *The Post* examined, not one lawmaker mentioned that he or she owned property that was near the earmarked project or had a relative who was employed by the company or institution that received the earmark. The reason: Nothing in congressional rules requires them to do so, and the rules do not address proximity.

1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Next

**More from the Web**

- **Unthinkable Poised to Happen on Wall Street. See Disturbing Charts.** (Moneynews)
- **7 little-known Social Security benefits** (BankRate.com)
- **Celine Dion Is Surprisingly Frank About Whitney Houston's Death** (The Stir By CafeMom)
- **US Dollar Poised for Breakdown versus Euro, Aussie as Vols Drop** (DailyFX)
- **Vitamin D Affects Genes for Cancer, Autoimmune Diseases** (HealthCentral.com)

[what's this]

**We Recommend**

- **How Clinging to Mommy and Daddy Is Ruining a Generation** (The Fiscal Times)
- **8 Things You Didn't Know about Payroll Tax-Cut Deal** (The Fiscal Times)
- **China Warns of Syrian Civil War** (The Fiscal Times)
- **Romney Struggles For Right Pitch** (The Fiscal Times)
- **Obama's Broken Deficit Promise Gives GOP New Anamo** (The Fiscal Times)

**Recent Activity**

**Sign Up** Create an account or log in to see what your friends are doing.

**Obama's Budget Process He Should Not Be Mocked**  
112 people recommend this.

**Obama's Budget Process He Should Not Be Mocked**  
88 people recommend this.

**The Dark Side of a Divided White America**  
30 people recommend this.

Facebook social plugin

Ads by Google

**Top 10 Stocks for March 2012**

These 10 stocks are set to crush the market in 2012.

In fact, Warren Buffett just bought 9.3 million shares of one of these stocks.



[Click here for more on these stocks.](#)

**Guess The Candidate**

More



[View Photo Gallery](#)



**Rep. Robert E. Andrews** (D - N.J.)

**Spending with family connections: \$3.3 million**

Andrews has helped secure \$3.3 million over the past decade for a scholarship program at Rutgers School of Law in Camden, N.J., where his wife is an associate dean in charge of scholarships and special legal programs, according to the school's Web site. Andrews sought an ethics opinion, and the committee concluded his wife had no "ownership interest" in the law school and the earmarks did not "affect the spouse's salary." The congressman said the earmarks help to provide legal services to the poor and his wife has no direct oversight of the program.



**Rep. Roscoe G. Bartlett** (R - Md.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$4.5 million**

Bartlett, since 2005, has helped secure about \$4.5 million toward improving Interstate 270 and Buckeystown Pike. From there, Buckeystown Pike leads south and west to Bartlett's home, his farm and rental properties that earn the lawmaker up to \$150,000 a year. "His personal benefit was no different than that of tens of thousands of his constituents," Bartlett's spokeswoman said. "Coincidentally, this was around two miles from his farm."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Rep. Joe Barton** (R - Tex.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$3 million**

In recent years, Barton helped secure about \$2.98 million toward widening about three miles of the U.S. 287 bypass in Ennis, where Barton owns two homes. Barton said his homes have no bearing on his support for the earmarks. The work, he said, is critical to traffic safety. "I have put as much effort into 287 between Midlothian and Fort Worth and Arlington as I have around Ennis," Barton said. "There is no personal benefit to me ... it is a general benefit to the community."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Rep. Rob Bishop** (R - Utah)

**Spending with family connections: \$1.5 million**

From 2007 to 2009, Bishop requested earmarks worth more than \$1.5 million for Weber State University in Ogden, Utah. His son, Shule, was hired there in 2010 as a state government lobbyist. The congressman said he asked for the earmarks before his son was hired and they posed no conflict. A university official said the school ensures that Shule Bishop does not work on federal matters to avoid any conflicts.



**Rep. Sanford D. Bishop Jr.** (D - Ga.)

**Spending with family connections: \$200,000**

News organizations in Georgia reported that Bishop helped secure nearly \$200,000 in 2008 and 2009 for a middle school mentoring program that employed Bishop's stepdaughter and her husband. Bishop told reporters that he did not know his stepdaughter and her husband worked for the program, and once he found out, he ended the earmarks. "It happened, he's been cleared by the ethics committee, and he's moved on," a Bishop spokesman said.



**Rep. Corrine Brown** (D - Fla.)

**Spending with family connections: \$23.7 million**

Between 2005 and 2010, Brown helped secure \$21.9 million for six clients of a lobbying firm where her daughter works. The clients paid the firm more than \$1 million to represent them before Congress. Brown was the sole sponsor of \$1.79 million in earmarks sent to a seventh client, the Community Rehabilitation Center, while her daughter worked as a lobbyist on behalf of the center, the Florida Times-Union reported in 2010. The congresswoman declined requests for an interview. Her daughter did not respond to requests for comment.

**Rep. G.K. Butterfield** (D - N.C.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$817,500**

Butterfield has helped obtain \$817,500 over the past few years toward revitalizing buildings in Wilson, N.C. The

[View this earmark on a map](#)

[Tweet](#)



Over the past decade, Granger has helped obtain \$51.9 million in earmarks toward a project to make over downtown Fort Worth and reroute the Trinity River. Until 2010, Granger co-owned a condominium building with her son about a half-mile south of the project. Her son is director of the group in charge of the project. "The congresswoman has always given her support to qualified programs in full compliance with the House Ethics Committee and the rules of the House of Representatives," her spokesman said.



**Rep. Doc Hastings** (R - Wash.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$750,000**

In 2009, Hastings secured a \$750,000 earmark to replace an outdated railroad underpass with a new bridge in Pasco, Wash. Columbia Basin Paper & Supply, a janitorial business that Hastings owned and ran until he was elected, is about three blocks to the west. His brother now operates the company, but Hastings and his wife still own the land and the building. Hastings said the location of his property had no bearing on his support for the project. "Every business in Pasco will benefit," he said.

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey** (D - N.Y.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$1.8 million**

In Saugerties, a village in upstate New York, Hinchey in 2005 earmarked \$960,000 to upgrade downtown streets. In 2009, he secured \$800,000 to overhaul sewer lines. Hinchey is a partner in a hotel development in the heart of the village and values his interest at \$250,000 to \$500,000. Hinchey's spokesman said "the congressman has a less than 1 percent stake" in the project and it "is several blocks from the crosswalks and does not connect to the sewer lines set to be repaired .... There is no conflict of interest."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



[Full statement provided by Rep. Hinchey](#)



**Rep. Rubén Hinojosa** (D - Tex.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$665,000**

In 2009, Hinojosa obtained a \$665,000 earmark to help widen a road next to a 3.7-acre commercial property that his family partnership was developing and near the family food processing plant in Mercedes, Tex. Hinojosa said he saw no conflict in securing an earmark for work next to his property or the plant. "It helps everybody," he said. "The only way it made sense to handle this tremendous population growth and avoid problems for the school buses that go through that intersection was to widen it."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Sen. James M. Inhofe** (R - Okla.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$1.8 million**

Inhofe's wife, through a family company, co-owns a commercial property in Owasso, on the edge of Tulsa. The office building sits on a local road near U.S. 169. Since 2008, Inhofe has helped secure about \$1.8 million in earmarks to study the widening of the road, including the stretch that passes near his wife's property. An Inhofe spokesman said local officials requested the earmarks and the widening "is a highly beneficial project that will create new jobs and do much to strengthen Oklahoma's economy."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



[Full statement provided by Sen. Inhofe](#)

**Rep. Steve Israel** (D - N.Y.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$490,000**

In 2008, Israel earmarked \$490,000 to study a bypass road

[View this earmark on a map](#)

[Tweet](#)



president. Latta said he sought an ethics opinion. "I didn't want to hurt the university because of my wife's employment," he said, adding that the ethics committee concluded there was no conflict. "She was a fundraiser raising private dollars. That's completely different than water quality or wind research."

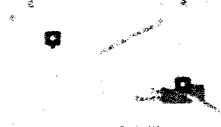


**Rep. Jerry Lewis** (R - Calif.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$2.7 million**

Lewis helped secure \$2.7 million from 2004 to 2008 to redevelop the historic Barracks Row, which is four blocks from Lewis's D.C. home. The money will be used to improve the Eastern Market Metro stop and two parks. The earmarks were reported by media outlets. A Lewis spokesman said the congressman requested the money on behalf of D.C. officials, adding, "He did not purchase his home as an investment property, and gave no consideration at all to whether this project would improve his property value."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



[Full statement provided by Rep. Lewis](#)



**Rep. Daniel Lipinski** (D - Ill.)

**Spending with family connections: \$2.5 million**

Lipinski cosponsored \$2.5 million in earmarks since taking office in 2005 for rail projects overseen by the Chicago Transit Authority. The Chicago Sun-Times reported that the CTA is a lobbying client of his father, William Lipinski, a former congressman. The CTA has paid William Lipinski \$766,330.20 in lobbying fees since 2007. "His father does not lobby him on behalf of his clients on transportation or any other issues," a Lipinski spokesman said. "In these, as in other areas, Congressman Lipinski is focused on doing what is best for his constituents."

[Full statement provided by Rep. Lipinski](#)



**Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo** (R - N.J.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$4.7 million**

Since 2008, LoBiondo has helped secure \$4.68 million for beach monitoring and nourishment along the shores of Ventnor City, N.J., where he and his wife own a home about 850 feet from the beach. LoBiondo's spokesman said the congressman earmarked funds for work on that beach years before moving there and has secured greater amounts of funding for other beaches along the Jersey Shore "without consideration of the financial impact to himself."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



[Full statement provided by Rep. LoBiondo](#)



**Rep. Stephen F. Lynch** (D - Mass.)

**Spending with family connections: \$2.3 million**

Since 2003, Lynch has earmarked \$2.3 million to two community programs in Boston connected to his wife. She is the director of marketing and development for one of the programs, the South Boston Community Health Center, which received \$1.2 million in earmarks to help teens with substance abuse problems. Lynch said he received an ethics opinion permitting the earmarks. "That funding is program specific," Lynch said. "Her salary comes from the Health Center's general operating budget."

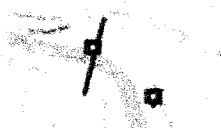


**Rep. Candice S. Miller** (R - Mich.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$486,000**

Miller secured a \$486,000 earmark in 2006 to help add a 14-foot-wide bike lane to a new bridge over the Clinton River, about 900 feet from her home. "People earmark for all kinds of things," Miller said. "I'm pretty proud of this; I think I did what my people wanted. Should I have told them, 'We can never have this bike path complete because I happen to live by one section of it?' They would have thrown me out of office."

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Rep. Gary G. Miller** (R - Calif.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$1.3 million**

Tweet



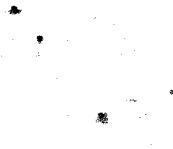
**Rep. Nick J. Rahall II** (D - W.Va.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$20.1 million**

In 2005, Rahall helped secure \$20 million toward a parking garage with a bus and taxi facility in downtown Beckley. The project is about a half-mile from his son's home, less than one mile from a commercial property owned by the lawmaker, and a little more than a mile from his residence. A Rahall spokeswoman said: "Neither his home, nor rental building on Harper Road, nor his son's home on Prince Street, have any connection to, nor gain economically from, the Beckley Intermodal facility."

Full statement provided by Rep. Rahall

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Sen. Harry M. Reid** (D - Nev.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$21.5 million**

In 2004 and 2005, the Senate majority leader secured \$21.5 million to build a bridge over the Colorado River, linking the gambling resort town of Laughlin, Nev., with Bullhead City, Ariz. Reid owns 160 acres of undeveloped land in Bullhead City. The earmarks were previously reported by the Los Angeles Times. "As has been stated before, Senator Reid's support for the bridge has absolutely nothing to do with the property he owns and is based on the fact that the project is good for southern Nevada, and nothing else," a Reid spokeswoman said.

[View this earmark on a map](#)



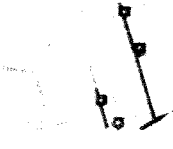
**Rep. Harold Rogers** (R - Ky.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$7.1 million**

Rogers has helped earmark \$7.1 million since 2002 to a project that made over a half-mile strip of College Street where Rogers has his residence. The project narrowed parts of the street to slow traffic, buried overhead utilities, rebuilt sidewalks, paved streets and installed new driveway aprons, curbs and decorative lamps. "Congressman Rogers sees no conflict of interest in helping local leaders achieve their goals for growth at large or in this case in particular," his spokesman said.

Full statement provided by Rep. Rogers

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Rep. Mike Ross** (D - Ark.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$2.6 million**

In 2005, Ross helped secure about \$2.6 million toward the construction of a railroad trestle in Prescott about one-third mile from a building he owns. "In no way did Congressman Ross benefit financially from the overpass nor was that ever a factor in his support for the project," the spokesman said. "Congressman Ross supported the project, as had local and state officials for years before him, because emergency responders could not get from one side of town to the other in emergency situations when a train was passing through."

Full statement provided by Rep. Ross

[View this earmark on a map](#)

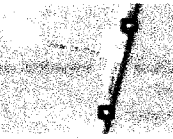


**Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger** (D - Md.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$187,000**

Ruppersberger helped obtain \$187,000 in 2008 toward a beach replenishment survey of the Ocean City shoreline. He and his wife own two condominium units there. He said the beach is critical to tourism. "That's a stretch to say that thing's going to benefit me," he said.

[View this earmark on a map](#)



**Rep. Bobby L. Rush** (D - Ill.)

Tweet

roundtrip, 14 football fields away, would be a serious disservice to the residents of Salem," she said.

[Full statement provided by Rep. Tierney](#)



**Sen. Roger Wicker** (R - Miss.)

**Earmark near personal property: \$1.5 million**

While a member of the House in 2003, Wicker helped secure \$1.5 million to study the relocation of railroad tracks at an intersection in downtown Tupelo, Miss. Wicker's home is less than a half-mile northwest of the intersection. Wicker said in a statement: "City leaders requested the funding to begin to address the traffic congestion caused by a major railway switch that is located near a major street intersection. I requested funds for a similar rail study for Greenville and several highway studies throughout the state."

[View this earmark on a map](#)

[Full statement provided by Sen. Wicker](#)

**Spending with family connections: \$45 million**

As a congressman and then a senator, Wicker has helped secure more than \$45 million for the University of Mississippi since 2008. His wife has been employed there since 2006 as coordinator of student services at the Tupelo campus. Wicker said in a statement: "I have supported funding for sensible studies at each of Mississippi's four research institutions, Ole Miss, Mississippi State University, Southern Miss, and Jackson State. These projects have led to improvements in health care, education, and other critical areas."



**Rep. C.W. Bill Young** (R - Fla.)

**Spending with family connections: \$73.2 million**

Over a decade, Young helped secure \$73 million for companies that employed his sons, according to the St. Petersburg Times. One worked as a security administrator in the St. Petersburg office of Science Applications International Corp., a defense contractor; the other as an outreach specialist for the National Forensic Science Technology Center. Young's spokesman did not respond to requests for comment. Young told the Times in a 2008 story that the earmarks were based on merit, not because the programs employed his sons.

[↑ Back to top](#)

SOURCE: Property records, annual financial disclosure forms, OMB and Taxpayers for Common Sense earmark databases, Google Maps. [Read more about how this project was reported.](#)  
LAWMAKER PHOTOS: CQ-Roll Call, Inc.  
GRAPHIC: Wilson Andrews, David Fallis, Scott Higham, Laris Karklis, Kimberly Kindy, Bobbye Pratt and Karen Younsh - The Washington Post. Published Feb. 6, 2012.

**Where public projects meet private interests**



Read about the 33 members of Congress who have directed more than \$300 million in earmarks within about two miles of the lawmakers' own property.

**More Coverage**

**Sen. Richard Shelby earmarked money for project near his building**

**About the Capitol Assets series**

**What is an earmark?**

**Bringing home the earmarks**

**Full coverage**

Loading... **Comments**

**Weigh In**

[Discussion Policy](#) | [FAQ](#) | [About Discussions](#), [Badges](#)

**Read what others are saying**

[About Badges](#)

Ways you can get us

The Washington Post

Web site

Advertise