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Pork-barrel spending is wrong

To the Editor:

I'm sure the wealthiest in Morris County appreciated Assemblyman Michael Patrick Carroll's admonition to "hold onto your wallets" because a big bad Democrat is asking you to pay your "fair share." Which leads me to my admonition: The next time a far right-winger tries to scare you about taxation, beware of his spin. Billionaire Warren Buffett recently pointed out that his receptionist pays a greater proportion of her income in taxes than he does. He recently railed on hedge fund manager in particular for lobbying hard for their interests, leaving him with the question, who lobbies for the average person?

To clarify for Carroll, that is what I meant by "fair share." A re-establishment of the same progressive taxation advocated by Adam Smith when he said, "The rich should contribute to the public expense, not only in proportion to their revenue, but something more in proportion."

I will agree with Carroll on several points. Yes the Alternative Minimum Tax is a mess. But abolishing it without counterbalancing such a cut in the short term is fiscal insanity, and again leaves the burden to your kids. Yes, we do have serious spending problems -- one of which is an open-ended foreign policy strategy in Iraq that bleeds billions a week from our Treasury. Yes -- pork-barrel spending is a problem, undertaken by any party.

The difference between myself and Carroll is that I can call my own party out on the practice, and assure you that the practice can end when you start sending people to Washington who think differently than your current incumbent, who happily engages in the practice himself.

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