

Flip Flopping House Dems were for HB 412 revenue reform bill ...
before they were against it.

Flip Flopping.

First they were for it ...

That was before they were against it.

They voted for HB 412, a so-called comprehensive tax reform bill.

YES, yes, yes, yes, *and more yesses* ... the House chamber voting machine buttons were flipping lickety-split for comprehensive tax reform, or at least that's what they called it on March 8th at 10:04 PM.

Sixty-three in favor and NOT ONE opposed.

Thirty-Three Democrats joined Thirty Republicans in passing along to the Senate a bi-partisan bill to reform how revenue is raised to run state government.

Did any of the Democrats actually read HB 412 during the sixty days they were passing the green chile cheeseburger bill and other important bills?

Well now they say it would be irresponsible to attempt to address comprehensive tax reform, according to the same Democrats who supported HB 412, *then*.

Also, let's not forget the fact that Democratic leaders of both branches either participated with, or looked the other way, as their party colleagues helped Republicans kill an increase in cigarette and booze taxes, and requiring the 'one-percenters' to pay their fair share.

The measures the Democrats helped kill would have raised more than \$250 million for healthcare and education and other needed services for New Mexicans.

These same leaders, who charmed their way into the good financial graces of progressive donors and raised about \$6 million to win back the House and increase their numbers in the Senate, are now looking for cover for their poor decisions back in March, and are suggesting the Governor is irresponsible because she has asked them to continue from where these same legislators left off regarding HB 412.

In an article written by Dan McKay of the Albuquerque Journal and published on Monday, the Democrats are now talking as though they don't know enough about the complex measures for which they threw their support at some seventy or eighty days ago. McKay reports (click here for full story):

"But House Speaker Brian Egolf, D-Santa Fe, said Monday that it simply isn't reasonable to pass a tax overhaul this week. The final proposal is expected to run 400 pages, underscoring its complexity and the need to scrutinize the changes closely, he said.

"It's irresponsible to try to do something like this right now," Egolf said.

Oh, and then there is Representative Candie Sweetser (D - Deming) who also voted for HB 412, but wrote in her op-ed article in the Journal on Sunday (click here for full Op Ed):

"There is no way to properly tackle tax reform in a short special session. Sufficient time is needed to analyze different proposals and amendments, hold public hearings and legislative debates, and provide New Mexicans with adequate opportunity to monitor the issue and express their opinions to their legislators. At the very least, that process would take weeks."

One could reasonably wonder how many 'weeks' the Representative spent 'processing' the bill during the regular session before she voted for it and sent it along to the Senate?

It could be one of those legislative things where 'she was for it, before she was against it.'

The Speaker as well as colleagues such as Representative Sweetser, argue that the reform efforts should take place in the 'interim' committee process, and be further addressed next year in the formal session.

While sounding like a good idea, interim actions have been very slow in producing anything significant.

It's been thought by some that if the Second Continental Congress had been held in Santa Fe instead of Philadelphia back in 1776, it would have ended up in an interim committee, and they would still be drafting the Declaration of Independence.

Flip Flopping House Dems were for HB 412 revenue reform bill ...
before they were against it.

There is no time like the present ... everyone is focused on reform, so why not get to work? And if people are concerned about the expense of a special session costing \$50,000/day, shouldn't they also be concerned about the cost of kicking proverbial can down the road, and the New Mexico economy reaching new national lows?

New Mexican working families should be outraged that Democratic legislators have not advanced a progressive plan on revenue.

The land of enchantment is categorically at the bottom of every list of socio-economic measures used to assess the quality of life in American states.

Social advocacy organizations and unions expected these Democrats to change things, or at least put up a good fight, once they won back the House in November of 2016.

But so far, with not enough people on the left asking their legislators why they have refused to advance a serious revenue reform package of their own, the Democrats seem to be getting away with having it both ways - saying one thing and doing another.

It is not fair to anyone in New Mexico for the Democrats to simply complain about the Governor's proposal when they won't offer a reform plan that they claim to favor.

So this is what **The Candle** will ask those legislative leaders who claim to be on the side of working people:

Where is the progressive reform, Mr. Speaker, Madam President Pro Tempore, and Mr. Majority Floor Leader?

Why not step up and take advantage of the special session and show us what you really believe in, or will fight for?

Or have you already shown us?