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Senate Passes Payroll Tax Package

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Senate Passes Payroll Tax Package

By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Senate on Saturday approved a two-month extension of the payroll tax cut, virtually ensuring another partisan fight early next year over President Obama's favored tax break while teeing up a separate battle over a controversial pipeline.

The Senate voted 89-10 in support of the package, which will likely be taken up by the House next week.

Lawmakers decided on a two-month extension after they were unable to agree on how to pay for a package that would extend the tax cut through the next election.

Final passage would mean American families would continue to enjoy a 2 percentage point cut from their Social Security tax. In addition, weekly jobless payments averaging about \$300 for millions of people who have been out of work for six months or more would be continued.

U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.) released the following statement today regarding the passage of an expedited review process for the Keystone XL Pipeline and the two-month extension of the payroll tax cut and extension of unemployment benefits:

"I was proud to vote to move forward on the Keystone XL Pipeline today, which will create 20,000 jobs at no cost to American taxpayers. This bill calls on President Obama to make a decision within 60 days on the single largest shovel-ready project in America, which should not be delayed by politics or elections.

"I'm also glad this package, which provides a two-month extension of the payroll tax cut and extension of unemployment benefits, will not lead to a tax increase as President Obama originally requested. While I don't believe short-term holidays are a long-term solution in fixing our economy, I applaud the leaders on both sides for reaching an agreement on credible pay-fors without tax hikes on families and job creators who are already struggling to make ends meet.

"President Obama's policies have only served to worsen our economy to date, which is why we must continue to work together in Congress to implement long-term policies that will help put more Americans back to work. The Keystone XL Pipeline is a good example of a project that will move us toward that goal, and I urge President Obama to put

politics aside and authorize this important infrastructure project immediately.”

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