

## Lesson Idea: The President and the Line-Item Veto

On Monday, May 24 President Obama submitted submitted to Congress the [Reduce Unnecessary Spending Act of 2010](#). If approved by Congress, the proposal would give him the power to extract a package of cuts from congressional spending bills and then send the package of suggested cuts to Congress for expedited approval.

The Reduce Unnecessary Spending Act of 2010 follows a series of attempts made by other presidents to gain greater latitude over congressional spending deemed unnecessary. President Clinton was the first President to be given the power of a line-item veto. Congress passed the [Line Item Veto Act in 1996](#), which granted President Clinton the authority to unilaterally veto specific portions of spending bills. Like regular vetoes, Congress could override President Clinton's line-item vetoes, but would need the required two-thirds vote to do so. He [signed the legislation](#) into law on April 9, 1996. However, in 1998, the U.S. Supreme Court deemed the law unconstitutional in [Clinton v. City of New York](#).

In 2006, President George W. Bush asked Congress to consider similar legislation that would have allowed him to veto certain items in a bill, but unlike The Line Item Veto Act of 1996, Congress would have the authority to approve the items he vetoed by a simple majority. That legislation, called the [Legislative Line Item Veto Act of 2006](#) passed the House on June 22, 2006. It was then sent to the Senate and placed on its legislative calendar, where it was never brought to a vote.

According to [Peter Orszag](#), Director of the Office of Management and Budget, President Obama's proposal would give the president the power to remove earmarks from legislation that are "wasteful and duplicative.". Review [Article I, Section 7 of the U.S. Constitution](#) that discusses the President's Power of veto.

### Vocab Words:

Veto                                      Line-Item Veto                                      Rescission                                      Checks and balances

### Resources:

The Line Item Veto Act passed in 1996: TEXT  
[http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=104\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h2eh.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=104_cong_bills&docid=f:h2eh.txt.pdf)

President Bill Clinton signs the Line Item Veto Act: VIDEO  
<http://www.c-spanarchives.org/program/ID/155471&start=94&end=369>

The U.S. Supreme Court's Ruling in *Clinton v. City of New York*: TEXT  
<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=us&vol=000&invol=97-1374>

Legislative Line Item Veto Act of 2006 (H.R.4890): TEXT  
[http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h4890pcs.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&docid=f:h4890pcs.txt.pdf)

The Clerk reads President Obama's legislative proposal to the House: VIDEO  
<http://www.c-spanarchives.org/program/ID/224809&start=5783&end=6037>

Text of President Obama's legislative proposal to the House: TEXT  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/blog/Unnecessary\\_Spending\\_Act.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/blog/Unnecessary_Spending_Act.pdf)

Letter about the Reduce Unnecessary Spending Act of 2010 posted on the Office of Management and Budget website: TEXT  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/blog/10/05/24/Reducing-Unnecessary-Spending/>

Washington Post Economic Policy Reporter explains President Obama's proposal: VIDEO  
<http://www.c-spanclassroom.org/Video/660/Presidential+Rescission.aspx>

Washington Post article about President Obama's proposal: NEWSPAPER ARTICLE  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/24/AR2010052403836.html?hpid=moreheadlines>

Article I, Section 7 of the U.S. Constitution  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html)