

**WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) delivered remarks today at a press conference urging Republicans to pass the Senate compromise bill to extend middle-class tax cuts, extend unemployment insurance, and fix the Medicare physician payment rate as we continue to work on a longer-term extension. Below are his remarks as prepared for delivery:**

“It has now been two days since House Republicans said an emphatic no to the bipartisan compromise and walked away from America’s working people. While Democrats have spent that time trying to get a vote to avoid the tax hike, Republicans have been arguing about process and politics.

“If we don’t get this done before January 1, taxes will go up for 160 million middle-class, working Americans. Unemployment benefits will expire for 2.3 million Americans by mid-February, and 48 million seniors on Medicare will have their access to doctors put at risk. We ought not to be creating that kind of uncertainty and anxiety among the American people. The stakes are too high to be arguing about politics and process.

“The Republicans’ contention that the two-month compromise is somehow ‘unworkable’ is simply untrue. If it were, we wouldn’t see a new and desperate Republican proposal today to settle on a three-month extension. Speaker Boehner says he and his Members want a one-year extension. We want that too.

“Let’s enact this bipartisan compromise to eliminate uncertainty for American families and then get right to work on a one-year version. Not wait until February. Not walk away and hold off until the last minute. Start hashing out a year-long agreement as soon as the Senate compromise passes.

“The American people are waiting. They are watching – closely and intently. They will judge each of us for how we act in this critical moment. They can see clearly who is standing up and fighting for them and who is simply dodging and walking away. I ask my Republican friends: will

you stop the games and do what is right for the American people?”