

K Street's Supercommittee Splurge

The bipartisan debt panel to nowhere is exactly where K Street lobbyists want it to be: hopelessly deadlocked. A November 23 deadline for agreement on \$1.2 trillion in budget savings is looming, but no real reductions in the size, scope, or spending of government are on the table. Instead, we are witnessing another obscene special-interest splurge to preserve the status quo. All in the name of "reform," of course.

The only thing "super" about the so-called budget-control supercommittee is the size of lobbying muscle exerted on its members. Almost 100 registered lobbyists who are former employees of supercommittee members are now "representing defense companies, health-care conglomerates, Wall Street banks and others with a vested interest in the outcome of the panel's work," the *Washington Post* found in September. This includes two dozen former staffers to Sen. Max Baucus (D., Mont.), including three former chiefs of staff.

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