

Obama budget spurs liberal-centrist snipes

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Liberal advocacy groups are airing ads urging moderate Democratic lawmakers to get firmly behind U.S. President Barack Obama's budget priorities.

The commercials, by non-profit MoveOn.org and Americans United for Change, drew immediate counterattacks by moderate Democrats in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate who accused the advocacy groups of myopia.

"The liberal groups need to understand that we are not elected to represent the president," Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., told Thursday's edition of the Washington publication Politico. "We're elected to represent our states, and we are trying to reflect the attitudes and values of the people who sent us to Washington."

Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., attacked as "standing in the way of President Obama's reforms" for saying a group of centrist Democrats had come together to negotiate with the White House as a bloc, responded: "We literally have no agenda. How can they be threatened by a group that has taken no policy positions?"

But MoveOn Executive Director Justin Ruben said: "We are going to need almost every Democratic vote to pass the budget. Our ads ensure the voices of our 5 million members and the millions of other Americans who support this budget can be heard over the army of lobbyists."

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