

U.S. Rep. Lee Terry celebrated part of his Independence Day at an anti-tax rally in Omaha, saying government spending is "eroding our freedom."

Doug Kagan, chairman of Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom, said the group's "tea party" Saturday was in response to Mayor Jim Suttle's proposed tax hikes to address a city budget shortfall and President Barack Obama's proposed government-run health care plan.

Terry didn't mention Suttle, a Democrat, or the city's financial troubles. Instead, the Republican Terry focused on Obama and his Capitol Hill allies.

Terry told the crowd of about 300 at Walnut Grove Park, 150th and Q Streets, that Obama, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats "love to tax. They love to spend."

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The tea party theme of Saturday's rally alludes to the Boston Tea Party, when American colonists rose up against the oppressive taxation of England in 1773.

Tea parties have been held across the country this year, fueled by political conservatives. Democrats say the people upset now with federal spending policies were silent during the Bush administration when deficit spending grew.

"Taxation is the taking of our freedom," Terry said. "Today, we celebrate the freedoms that are inherent to being an American."

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