

PRESIDENT BUSH AND NATIONAL SECURITY

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S NATIONAL SECURITY POLICIES HAVE MADE AMERICA LESS SECURE:

Failed to Protect Americans from Terrorism and Make the Homeland Secure:

Bush Received Failing Grades for his Efforts to Improve Homeland Security. The 9/11 Public Discourse Project (formerly the 9/11 Commission) has given the administration failing grades on its efforts to improve homeland security. Thomas H. Kean, former chair of the 9/11 Commission, said that homeland security is “not a priority for the government right now.” [9/11 Public Discourse Project, 12/05]

Katrina Showed We are Still not Prepared. The administration's Katrina response exposed massive gaps in the federal government's emergency response capabilities. Despite the fact that the Bush Administration was warned in advance both about the impact a major storm like Katrina would have on New Orleans and that such a storm was indeed headed toward the Gulf Coast, the Administration was caught flat-footed. Now, the White House refuses to fully cooperate with the Congressional investigation into the federal government's response, even as further evidence materializes showing that the White House had significant advance warning about the risk to the New Orleans levee system. [Statement of Senator Lieberman, Homeland Security Committee, 1/24/06]

Mass Transit Security Neglected. Despite terrorist attacks to the mass transit systems of London and Madrid, the Bush Administration has spent only \$500 million on protecting our mass transit systems since 9/11, a sum we spend in Iraq every three days. [Stephen Flynn, Meet the Press, 7/10/05]

First Responders Underfunded and Unable to Communicate. Men and women on the front lines still don't have interoperable communications equipment or sufficient spectrum for their radios that would allow them to communicate. In addition, although the National Guard is already over-stretched and plays a pivotal role in homeland civil defense as well as combat operations overseas, President Bush is inexplicably proposing to cut some 50,000 troops from the National Guard. [GAO Report, 9/04; Baltimore Sun, 1/27/06]

Critical Infrastructures Unprotected. Chemical facilities, nuclear power plants, and ports remain unprotected. Cargo and containers entering the United States are still not sufficiently screened despite repeated Administration promises and programs to address the problem. [Port Security is Still a House of Cards, Stephen Flynn, January 2006]

Failed to Keep his Commitment to Our Soldiers and Veterans

Failed to Protect Our Soldiers. Despite the fact that we have been at war in Iraq for nearly three years, thousands of Army and Marine Corps personnel still do not have adequate body armor or sufficient armor for their military transport vehicles. Our soldiers and their families have paid a price for the Administration's lack of preparedness. A Pentagon study suggests 80% of Marine fatalities caused by bullet wounds to the torso were likely preventable. [New York Times, 1/6/06]

Army Stretched Too Thin. Another cost of the Bush Administration's failure to plan properly for the war in Iraq has been the fact that the Army has been stretched by frequent troop rotations. A recent

report prepared for the Pentagon concluded that the Army has become a “thin green line” that could snap unless relief comes soon. [Report by Andrew Krepevech, Thin Green Line, 1/06]

Bush Failed to Plan for Post-War Iraq. This Administration has broken faith with the men and women of the military by failing to plan for post-war Iraq, by failing to go into Iraq with sufficient troops, and by failing to provide best equipment needed to complete the mission. As a result, the Army and Marine Corps are facing a recruiting crisis and estimates suggest the Army will need an additional \$50 billion to replace equipment destroyed in the war or pushed beyond its service life. [The U.S. Military: Under Strain and At Risk, 1/06]

Shortchanged our Veterans. The Bush Administration has failed to put adequate resources into the VA health care system, with some estimates suggesting it has been under-funded by \$5 billion. [News Tribune, 6/29/05]

Bush Failed to Account for Returning Veterans. Their management of the VA has been sub-standard. The Bush team sent hundreds of thousands of Americans to war but then failed to anticipate that they would need medical care when they came back home. According to the Bush Administration’s Secretary of Veterans Affairs, his department failed to budget for some 75,000 new veterans entering the VA medical system. [Testimony of Secretary of Veterans Affairs before Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, 6/28/05]

Veterans Facing Higher Fees. As a result of Bush Administration proposals, those who use the VA health care system are facing substantially higher co-payments, annual user fees and waiting times. [The Independent Budget, Critical Issues Report for Fiscal Year 2007; Veterans Institute for Security and Democracy, Review of Veterans Funding, 11/30/05]

Mismanaging the War in Iraq:

Iraq is in a Low Grade Civil War with Deadly Attacks. Iraq is entering into the third year of what some are calling a low grade civil war, and it risks becoming what it was not before the war: a haven and launching pad for international terrorism. Weekly attacks, the lethality of attacks and the attacks on infrastructure have all increased considerably over the past year [Testimony of Director of Central Intelligence Porter Goss before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 2/16/05; Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, Department of Defense, 10/05]

Billions Have Been Wasted in Iraq. Billions in U.S. taxpayer funds appropriated for the reconstruction of Iraq are either unaccounted for or have been misspent. As a result, the reconstruction program has failed to accomplish much of what the Administration promised the American taxpayer and the people of Iraq. [Report of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, 10/05]

The Cost of the War is Enormous. The direct cost of the Iraq war on U.S. taxpayers is more than \$250 billion and estimates indicate ongoing operations are costing roughly \$2 billion per week. Nobel Laureate economists have estimated the direct and indirect costs to our country and our economy at \$2 trillion. [The Economic Costs of the Iraq War, Blimes and Stiglitz, 1/06]

Taking his Eye off of the War on Terror:

Bin Laden is Still on the Loose and Terrorist Incidents are on the Rise. Osama Bin Laden and numerous other key leaders of Al Qaeda are still on the loose. Although some of Al Qaeda’s leaders

have been brought to justice, intelligence reports indicate they have been replaced and Al Qaeda continues to threaten attacks on America. The number of terrorist incidents across the world has increased sharply over the past four years while anti-Americanism in many parts of the world is at an all-time high. [[Washington Post](#), 1/20/06; NCTC Statistics on Significant International Terrorism, 4/05; Pew Global Attitudes Project, 6/26/05]

Recent Elections Show Increased Instability Around the World. The recent Palestinian election that brought to power Hamas, a political party that has not renounced terror, demonstrates that sections of the Middle East seem headed in a more radical direction. In our own hemisphere, South and Central America have been ignored by the Administration. A wave of anti-American populism is sweeping the region, creating instability and giving strength to anti-Democratic movements. [[Washington Post](#), 1/28/06; [Daily Telegraph](#), 1/5/06]

Bush Torture Policy Puts Our Troops At Risk. The Bush Administration's decision to give torture of detainees a green light has put our troops and security interests at risk. [Office of Legal Counsel, 8/1/02; Alberto Gonzales Memorandum to the President, 1/25/02]

Bush Administration Conducts Warrantless Wiretapping of Americans. The Administration's decision to conduct warrantless wiretaps of U.S. citizens has been badly handled. The Administration has circumvented the law and Congress has not been adequately informed. As a result, the American people are badly divided on this issue and the Administration's unconstitutional overreach has made us less safe. [CRS Reports, 1/18/06 and 1/5/06; Letter to the Congress from 14 Constitutional Scholars, 1/9/06]

Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferate on Bush's Watch:

Bush Invaded the One "Axis of Evil" Country without WMD. Four years ago, the President called Iraq, Iran, and North Korea an "axis of evil" requiring preemptive action to eliminate the threat of nuclear "mushroom clouds" over American cities. But four years, 2,300 American lives, and more than \$250 billion dollars later, we have found that Iraq had no nuclear weapons and no established links with Al Qaeda. [Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WMD, 9/30/04]

Iran Now Appears Committed to Developing Nuclear Weapons. Iran – a country that leads the world in its state sponsorship of terror – appears committed to developing nuclear weapons. But the Bush Administration's inability to reach a consensus on how to deal with Iran led to a decision to outsource all matters pertaining to Iran to the Europeans. Iran's President has threatened the United States and Israel. Nuclear weapons in the hands of an extremist President and Iran's mullahs could have devastating consequences for our security and the security of our allies in the region and around the world. [[Washington Post](#), 1/30/06]

North Korea Nuclear Arsenal Greatly Expanded. North Korea, under this Administration's watch, has gone from having perhaps one or two nuclear weapons to having enough plutonium for perhaps more than a dozen nuclear weapons – a 400% increase. And every day that passes, North Korea can pump out more plutonium for more nuclear weapons. Again the inability of the Bush Administration to reach an internal consensus has produced gridlock and no policy for dealing with the dangerous developments in North Korea. The six party talks have been stalled for far too long, and the Administration has done little but wait for China or Japan to bail us out of our troubles. [No Good

Choices – the Implication of a Nuclear North Korea, Congressional testimony of Jon Wolfsthal, 2/17/05]

Dangerous Materials are More Available to Terrorists. Non-state proliferators continue to be problematic due to the failure to fully investigate the AQ Khan network and to fully fund and support Nunn/Lugar measures to secure or eliminate loose nukes, materials and nuclear scientists across the world. [Securing the Bomb 2005, Nuclear Threat Initiative]

PRESIDENT BUSH’S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS WILL OFFER MORE OF THE SAME TOUGH TALKING RHETORIC AND FEAR:

Bush Will Claim his Illegal Spying Program is Legal. “So as I stand here right now I can tell the American people the program is legal, it's designed to protect civil liberties, and it's necessary... And we have briefed Congress -- members of Congress. We'll continue to do that, but it's important for people to understand that this program is so sensitive and so important, that if information gets out to how it's -- how we do it, or how we operate, it will help the enemy. And so, of course, we'll listen to ideas. But, John, I want to make sure that people understand that if it -- if the attempt to write law makes this program -- is likely to expose the nature of the program, I'll resist it. And I think the American people understand that. Why tell the enemy what we're doing if the program is necessary to protect us from the enemy? And it is. And it's legal. And we'll continue to brief Congress. And we review it a lot, and we review not only at the Justice Department, but with a good legal staff inside NSA.” [President Bush Press Conference, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Claim Iraq is Making Progress. “And so the Iraqis are showing incredible courage. When somebody says, if you vote, I'm going to get you, sometimes people maybe say, well, maybe I don't want to vote. Eleven million or so Iraqis went to the polls in defiance of these killers... It's a magical moment in the history of liberty... As the Iraqis stand up, we'll stand down... This is the year that we'll not only continue to focus on the troops, we'll continue to train Iraqi police... Conditions on the ground will dictate our force levels over the next year, but the strategy is what I said it is: We'll stay on the offense, and we'll give these brave Iraqis the skills and training necessary to defend their own democracy.” [Remarks at Kansas State University, 1/23/06]

Bush Will Play Politics with the Patriot Act. “Interestingly enough, the Patriot Act, some of its provisions are set to expire. I like to remind people the Patriot Act may be set to expire, but the threats to the United States haven't expired. And exactly what has changed, I asked out loud, after the attack of September the 11th and today? Those tools are still needed for our law enforcement officers. I want you to know that this Patriot Act is under constant review, and there has been no documented abuses under the Patriot Act... Congress extended this Patriot Act to February 3rd. That's not good enough for the American people... The threat still exists, is my message to members of both political parties.” [Remarks at Kansas State University, 1/23/06]

BUSH’S RHETORIC WILL NOT BE CREDIBLE:

A Bipartisan Majority of the Senate Called for a Change of Course in Iraq. A bipartisan majority of the Senate called for the president to change course in Iraq in order to make 2006 a year of significant transition. 79 Senators called on the president to explain to Congress and the American people his strategy for success in Iraq so that our troops can begin to come home. [RC 323, S. Amdt. 2518 to S. 1042, 11/15/05, 79-19]

Bush's Secret Spying Program Could Be Making America Less Safe. FISA Judges worry that Bush's secret spying program has tainted later FISA warrants. FISA Judge "Robertson indicated privately to colleagues in recent conversations that he was concerned that information gained from warrantless NSA surveillance could have then been used to obtain FISA warrants. FISA court Presiding Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, who had been briefed on the spying program by the administration, raised the same concern in 2004, and insisted that the Justice Department certify in writing that it was not occurring. 'They just don't know if the product of wiretaps were used for FISA warrants -- to kind of cleanse the information,' said one source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the classified nature of the FISA warrants. 'What I've heard some of the judges say is they feel they've participated in a Potemkin court.'" [[Washington Post](#), 12/21/05]

A Bipartisan Group of Senators Thought the Patriot Act should be Mended, not Ended. "Four of the 46 senators using the delaying tactic to thwart the USA Patriot Act renewal are members of Frist's party. It is a pesky, irritating fact for Republicans who are eager to portray the impasse as Democratic obstructionism, and a ready-made rejoinder for Democrats expecting campaign attacks on the issue in 2006 and 2008. The four Republican rebels -- Larry E. Craig (Idaho), Chuck Hagel (Neb.), John E. Sununu (N.H.) and Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) -- have joined all but two Senate Democrats in arguing that more civil liberties safeguards need to be added to the proposed renewal of the Patriot Act." [[Washington Post](#), 12/21/05]

DEMOCRATS HAVE A POSITIVE VISION THAT IS BOTH STRONG AND SMART:

2006 Must be a Year of Significant Transition in Iraq. Make 2006 a year of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty. In addition, we would get our allies and the nations in the region more involved. [RC 323, S. Amdt. 2518 to S. 1042, 11/15/05, 79-19]

Democrats Want to Increase the Size of Our Military. Increase the size of the Army and significantly expand the Special Forces. Rather than cutting the National Guard and Reserves, we would retain the existing forces and ensure that they and their families receive access to quality health care. [S. 11]

Democrats Fight to Provide our Veterans with Health Care. Ensure that all veterans get the health care they deserve by fully funding the VA health care system. [S. 13]

Democrats Would Restore FEMA to a Cabinet Level Agency and Want Real Answers about the Failures During Hurricane Katrina. Enhance this nation's preparedness for the next disaster by restoring FEMA to cabinet-level status, providing our first responders the equipment they need, and conducting a real Katrina investigation. [S. 1622]

Democrats Would Address the Proliferation Threats Posed by Iran and North Korea. We would tackle the proliferation problems in North Korea and Iran through U.S. leadership, not through outsourcing the problem to others. [S. 12]

Democrats Would Fight a More Effective War on Terror. Fight a more effective war on terror; going aggressively after violent extremists who pose a threat to the United States; but also doing more to conduct outreach to the Muslim world to guard against radicalization. We would have a comprehensive strategy to fight terror -- not simply tough talking rhetoric like this Administration. [S. 12]

PRESIDENT BUSH AND CORRUPTION

REPUBLICAN ABUSES PROVE THE NEED FOR SPECIFIC REFORMS:

Republicans' Revolving Door Lead to Criminal Activity. "Abramoff developed a close relationship with [DeLay] deputy chief of staff Tony Rudy. 'For all intents and purposes, Tony worked for Jack,' contends a former Abramoff associate, who tells TIME that Abramoff even bought Rudy a text-messaging pager so that they would never be out of touch... When Rudy left DeLay's staff in 2000, he joined Abramoff at the lobbying firm of Greenberg Traurig." In addition, "Identifying [former Bob Ney Chief of Staff Neil] Volz only as 'Staffer B,' the Abramoff plea agreement suggests he may have lobbied Ney, members of his congressional staff and the House Administration Committee only one month after leaving a staff position on Ney's committee - far short of the one-year cooling off period required by law." [Time, 1/16/06; Copley News Service, 1/5/06]

Michael Scanlon and Ralph Reed Secretly Exploited Voters by Not Disclosing Clients. Abramoff partner and former DeLay aide, Michael Scanlon, paid Ralph Reed \$1.2 million to help oppose a new tribal casino that would compete with the casinos run by Abramoff's tribal clients. Ralph Reed used the money and his Christian Coalition network to raise grassroots opposition to the competing casino without disclosing to his followers that their anti-gambling efforts were being funded by a competing gambling interest. [Washington Post, 8/30/04]

Lobbyists' Gifts Created Unethical Relationships Among Republican Congressmen. "First came the dinner invitations, then the tickets. Staffers in the office of former House Majority leader Tom DeLay could dine -- usually, free of charge -- at Signatures, the expense-account restaurant conveniently owned by lobbyist Jack Abramoff... the DeLay staffers began to think that Abramoff's box at the arena was their box, and, in the cozy way of Washington, it might as well have been." Abramoff also reportedly flew aides to Sen. Burns and Rep. DeLay to the 2001 Super Bowl and, during that trip, provided each with \$500 worth of gambling chips on a SunCruz ship partly owned by Mr. Abramoff. [Newsweek, 1/16/06; Washington Post, 3/5/05; The Hill, 12/7/05]

Republicans Dictated Hiring at Corporations, Trade Associations and Lobbying Firms — and let Special Interests Dominate the Republican Agenda in Return. "DeLay, Santorum, and their associates organized a systematic campaign, closely monitored by Republicans on Capitol Hill and by Grover Norquist and the Republican National Committee, to put pressure on firms not just to hire Republicans but also to fire Democrats. With the election of Bush, this pressure became stronger... Several Democratic lobbyists have been pushed out of their jobs as a result; business associations who hire Democrats for prominent positions have been subject to retribution." In addition, "while it's not uncommon for lobbyists to have a hand in writing legislation on the Hill, the Bush administration has sometimes shifted the locus of executive policy making so far towards K Street that Bush's own appointees are cut out of the process." [New York Review of Books, 6/23/05; Washington Monthly, July/August 2003]

Jack Abramoff Offered Lobbying Jobs to Congressional Staff for Helping his Clients on Legislation; While Members and Executive Officials Took Lobbying Jobs After Regulating Industry. "Rep. W.J. 'Billy' Tauzin, who exercised jurisdiction over the industry as chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, will become president of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America on Jan. 3, when he retires from Congress... As a committee chairman in 2003, Tauzin helped to write the law to provide outpatient prescription coverage under Medicare." Thomas Scully, the former head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, held job

negotiations with the same industries he regulated while also drafting the Medicare prescription drug bill. [[Los Angeles Times](#), 12/16/04; [GovExec](#), 4/9/04]

Frist and Hastert Inserted a Special Interest Liability Provision in the Middle of the Night.

According to Congressman David Obey, “The conference committee ended its work with the understanding, both verbal and in writing, that there would be no legislative liability protection language inserted in this bill...But after the conference was finished at 6 p.m., Sen. Frist marched over to the House side of the Capitol about 4 hours later and insisted that over 40 pages of legislation, which I have in my hand, 40 pages of legislation that had never been seen by conferees, be attached to the bill. The Speaker joined him in that assistance so that, without a vote of the conferees, that legislation was unilaterally and arrogantly inserted into the bill after the conference was over in a blatantly abusive power play by two of the most powerful men in Congress...” [Congressional Record, 12/22/05]

No-Bid Contracts Have Bilked American Taxpayers. In March 2003, in what the top Army Corps contracting officer at the time has called the worst case of contracting abuse she ever witnessed, the Pentagon awarded Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root a no-bid contract to rebuild Iraqi oil fields and conduct “operation of facilities and distribution of products.” The initial deal was thought to be worth as much as \$7 billion dollars. Halliburton is the largest private contractor in post-war Iraq, with potential deals totaling well over \$11 billion. It continues to receive major federal contracts despite over \$1.4 billion in disputed billing charges and numerous other abuses. Before becoming Vice President, Dick Cheney served as Halliburton’s Chairman. [[Los Angeles Times](#), 5/7/03; [Washington Post](#), 2/10/04; AP, 9/26/03]

Cronyism Has Led to Incompetence in Key Agencies. Michael Brown was appointed to run FEMA without the requisite experience — and he may not be alone. According to [Time](#), “this [second] Bush Administration had a plan from day one for remaking the bureaucracy, and has done so with greater success. As far back as the Florida recount, soon-to-be Vice President Dick Cheney was poring over organizational charts of the government with an eye toward stocking it with people sympathetic to the incoming Administration...Bush has gone further than most Presidents to put political stalwarts in some of the most important government jobs you’ve never heard of, and to give them genuine power over the bureaucracy. Some of the appointments are raising serious concerns in the agencies themselves and on Capitol Hill about the competence and independence of agencies that the country relies on to keep us safe, healthy and secure.” [[Time Magazine](#), 10/3/05]

BUSH WILL TRY TO CLAIM THAT CORRUPTION IS A BIPARTISAN PROBLEM:

Bush Will Call for a Cleanup of Corruption. “If there is corruption, I’m not surprised that people say, let’s get rid of corruption. If government hadn’t been responsive, I’m not the least bit surprised that people said, I want government to be responsive.” [President Bush Press Conference, 1/26/06]

THE CULTURE OF CORRUPTION IN WASHINGTON IS A REPUBLICAN CREATION:

The White House is Stonewalling the Public’s Demand for Answers About Jack Abramoff.

“[Bush said] that he will not release official White House photos of himself with former Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff. Facing repeated questions, Bush distanced himself from Abramoff, who is at the center of the biggest political corruption and bribery scandal in a generation. Bush said he does not recall having his picture taken with Abramoff or ever meeting him. Abramoff was a member of the exclusive club of Bush’s \$100,000 fundraisers known as Pioneers.” [[Washington Post](#), 1/27/06]

The Abramoff Scandal is a Republican Scandal. “Although Abramoff hasn’t personally given to any Democrats, Republicans, including officials with the GOP campaign to hold on to the Senate, have seized on the donations of his tribal clients as proof that the saga is a bipartisan scandal...But the [independent] Morris and Associates analysis, which was done exclusively for *The Prospect*, clearly shows that it’s highly misleading to suggest that the tribes’s giving to Dems was in any way comparable to their giving to the GOP. The analysis shows that when Abramoff took on his tribal clients, the majority of them dramatically ratcheted up donations to Republicans. Meanwhile, donations to Democrats from the same clients either dropped, remained largely static or, in two cases, rose by a far smaller percentage than the ones to Republicans did. This pattern suggests that whatever money went to Democrats, rather than having been steered by Abramoff, may have largely been money the tribes would have given anyway. [[The American Prospect](#), 1/27/06]

DEMOCRATS OFFER A PLAN FOR REAL REFORM, WHILE REPUBLICANS PROPOSE TINKERING AT THE MARGINS:

Democrats Create an Independent Office of Public Integrity; Republican’s Don’t. The McCain bill relies on the existing Office of Public Records, which is toothless by design and a guarantee of business as usual. The Hastert/Dreier “proposal” includes no details. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Impose Criminal Sanctions for Lobbyists Who Lie on Their Disclosure Forms; Republicans Don’t. The McCain bill fails to impose criminal penalties, meaning those who break the rules — if they’re even caught — could pay a fine and continue on their merry way. The Hastert/Dreier “proposal” includes no details. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats End the K Street Project; Republicans Don’t. Neither the McCain bill nor the Hastert/Dreier “proposal” addresses the K Street project. Perhaps not surprisingly, Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Cut Off the Flow of Lobbyist Gifts; Republicans Don’t. The McCain bill does nothing to ban gifts. The Hastert/Dreier “proposal” claims to include a ban, but with exceptions that they were too rushed to define. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Ban All Privately Funded Travel with Limited Exceptions for 501(c)(3)’s with No Lobbyist Involvement; Republicans Have No Clear Plan. The McCain bill does nothing to ban privately funded travel. The Hastert/Dreier “proposal” claims to include a ban, but was light on both details and Republican support. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Make All Lobbyist Disclosure Information Available on a Public Website; Except for Senator McCain, Republicans Don’t. The McCain bill, to its credit, does create a public database. The Hastert/Dreier “proposal” includes no details. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Close the Revolving Door by Requiring Disclosure of Job Negotiations by Members of Congress, Senior Congressional Staff and Executive Branch Officials; Republicans Don’t. The McCain bill addresses neither public disclosure nor Executive Branch job negotiations. The

Hastert/Dreier “proposal” doesn’t touch the issue. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Require Disclosure of Grassroots and Coalition Lobbying; Except for Senator McCain, Republicans Don’t. The McCain bill has similar provisions, but with a broad exception that would exempt many lobbying coalitions. The Hastert/Dreier “proposal” doesn’t touch the issue. Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

Democrats Open All Conference Committee Proceedings to the Public, Guarantee Members a Chance to Vote, and Make All Conference Committee Reports Available for 24 Hours; Republicans Don’t. The McCain bill doesn’t touch the issue, and neither does the Hastert/Dreier “proposal.” Senator Santorum has yet to offer a plan. [S. 2180; S. 2128]

PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE ECONOMY

BUSH'S FAILED ECONOMIC RECORD:

Increasing Costs for Middle-Class Families

While Working Families Work Harder, their Wages Continue to Decline. Working families are working harder and earning less today than they were at the start of this administration. Hourly and weekly wages for working families when adjusted for inflation were \$46,058 in 2000 and have declined to \$44,389 today. At the same time, they have seen their real wages decline, the productivity of the American worker is up 13.5%. Therefore, Americans have worked harder – and better – over the past five years and received none of the benefits for their hard work. [Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics]

Health Care Premiums Have Increased by Over 71 Percent Since Bush Took Office. Average family premiums for health insurance have increased 71 percent during the Bush presidency, rising from an average of \$6,348 in 2000 to \$10,880 in 2005. [Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research & Education Trust, 9/05]

Heating Costs have Risen by \$438, or 79%, Since President Bush's First Full Winter in the White House. The cost of heating fuels has skyrocketed, leaving American families unprepared to deal with unprecedented increases in heating bills. The cost of heating a home for the winter has increased by \$438, or 79 percent, since the winter of 2001-2002. [Energy Information Administration, Short Term Energy Outlook, 1/10/06]

Transportation Costs for Families have Increased by \$1,322. Prices at the gas pump have jumped 55 percent from \$1.44 per gallon in January 2001 to \$2.33 in late January 2006, while the price for a barrel of oil has more than doubled from \$29.26 in January 2001 to over \$65 in January 2006. The average household with children spent about \$3,225 on transportation fuel costs in 2005, an increase of 69 percent over 2001 costs. [Energy Information Administration, Household Vehicle Energy Use: Latest Data and Trends, 11/05 and Weekly Retail Gasoline and Diesel Prices]

College Tuition Continues to Skyrocket. Tuition and fees at four-year private universities have increased by almost \$1,200 or 5.9 percent in 2005 and 32 percent since 2001. At four-year public universities, tuition and fees increased by 7.1 percent this past year and 57 percent since President Bush took office. [College Board, 10/05]

Bush Tax Cuts Benefit the Wealthy. President Bush pushed through tax cut legislation in 2001 and 2003, the benefits of which went primarily to the wealthy. The average tax cut in 2005 for those with \$1 million or more of income was \$103,086 while a middle class family with income between \$40,000 and \$50,000 received an average tax cut of \$874. [Urban Institute/Brookings Institution's Tax Policy Center]

Historic Deficits and Debt without Significant Economic Growth

President Bush Turned Record Budget Surpluses into Record Deficits and Debt. When President Bush took office, he inherited a unified budget surplus of \$236 billion, the largest in American history, and surpluses were projected for years to come. These surpluses quickly disappeared under the weight

of his budget busting tax cuts. By 2002 the unified budget deficit was \$158 billion. Last year, the deficit reached \$318 billion, higher than in any year before President Bush took office, and is likely to grow to well over \$350 billion this year. When President Bush took office, the total national debt was \$5.7 trillion. After three debt limit increases under the Bush Administration, the debt has swelled to \$8.2 trillion and the Administration is seeking to raise this figure to almost \$9 trillion. [Office of Management and Budget; Congressional Budget Office; U.S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Public Debt; Senate Budget Committee]

Twin Deficits Leave America Vulnerable. The huge trade and budget deficits run by President Bush have forced the U.S. to accumulate more debt to foreigners in just 5 years, about \$1.1 trillion, than in the entire first 224 years of the country's history. As of October 2005, U.S. taxpayers owed \$682 billion to Japan and \$245 billion to China. This debt makes America vulnerable to the whims of foreign investors and limits America's ability to make critical investments to keep America competitive. [Federal Reserve; FMS Treasury Bulletin, 12/05]

Bush's Expensive Tax Cuts Failed to Produce a Strong Economy. The 2001 and 2003 tax cut bills totaled \$1.7 trillion, the largest tax cut in our nation's history in nominal dollars. Yet despite all of these tax cuts, this recovery has been woefully substandard. Despite these massive, budget busting tax breaks, median household income has fallen from \$46,129 in 1999 to \$44,389 when adjusted for inflation. The unemployment rate today is 4.9 percent, nearly 20% higher than when President Bush took office. Job creation under President Bush has been the slowest in 70 years. Job growth in previous recoveries has been much more robust. At the same point following the 1990-1991 recession, the economy had created nearly 5 million more jobs [Joint Economic Committee, Democratic staff; Census Bureau]

Bush has Failed to Make Real Investments in Research and Development or Innovation. Bush has made major cuts to research and development programs throughout his time in office. Since Bush became president, the U.S. has fallen from fourth to 16th in the world in broadband penetration and Singapore has displaced the United States as the top economy in information technology competitiveness. [American Association Advance Science R&D Funding Update 1/4/06; International Telecom Union; "2004/2005 Global Information Technology Report," World Economic Forum]

BUSH WILL CLAIM HIS ECONOMIC POLICIES ARE HELPING AMERICAN FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES:

Bush Will Mislead on the Economy to Claim Credit for a Poor Performance. "Our economy is growing, it is strong. This economy has created millions of new jobs, yet it's an economy that is changing rapidly. And we live in a competitive world. And so policies must be put in place to recognize the competition of the global economy and prepare our people to be able to continue to compete so America can continue to lead. Of course, we'll talk about fiscal policy in my State of the Union, talking about the Congress to be wise about how we spend the people's money and to make the tax cuts permanent." [President Bush Press Conference, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Use Empty Rhetoric about the Competitive World. "And we live in a competitive world. And so policies must be put in place to recognize the competition of the global economy and prepare our people to be able to continue to compete so America can continue to lead." [President Bush Press Conference, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Use the Same Rhetoric on Fiscal Discipline. “Of course, we'll talk about fiscal policy in my State of the Union, talking about the Congress to be wise about how we spend the people's money and to make the tax cuts permanent.” [President Bush, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Call for Spending Restraint. “I'll present a – in the process of laying out a budget that'll continue to eliminate programs that don't work or that are duplicative in nature, one that says we can cut our deficit in half by 2009 and make sure the American people still get their tax relief. It's – we don't need to be running up the taxes right now in my judgment. And I think it is -- you know, people say, ‘Well, let's raise the taxes and balance the budget.’ That's not how it works.” [President Bush Press Conference, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Claim ‘Reforms’ to Education Programs. While discussing historic cuts to student loan and other education programs, Bush will describe cuts as reforms. “Actually, I think what we did was reform the student loan program. We're not cutting money out of it. In other words, people aren't going to be cut off the program. We're just making sure it works better. Part of the reconciliation package, I think she's talking about. Yes, it's a reform of the program to make sure it functions better. It is -- in other words, we're not taking people off student loans, we're saving money in the student loan program because it's inefficient.” [Remarks at Kansas State University, 1/23/06]

BUSH’S POLICIES ARE NOT CREDIBLE AND BENEFIT SPECIAL INTERESTS AND HURT MIDDLE-CLASS AMERICANS:

Working Families Will Not Benefit from Extending Tax Cuts. Permanently extending the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts will provide far greater benefits for the wealthy than middle class working families. The average tax cut in 2015 for taxpayers with \$1 million or more of income will be \$169,620, whereas a family with income between \$40,000 and \$50,000 will receive a tax cut of \$910. Nearly half of the benefits of tax cuts on capital gains and dividends will go to those earning over \$1 million. In 2009, the average benefit from reducing taxes on capital gains and dividends for those with more than \$1 million in income is \$32,111. The average tax cut for families with \$50,000 in income or less is \$20. Large deficits and debt brought about by tax breaks will saddle future generations with staggering interest costs and undermine federal government’s ability to keep its commitments to our seniors. [Urban Institute/Brookings Institution’s Tax Policy Center]

Any Claim to Fiscal Responsibility Undercut by Support for Making Bush Tax Breaks Permanent. At the same time President Bush is trying to assert he supports fiscal discipline, he will be proposing that Congress make permanent his budget busting tax breaks at a time of record deficits and war. Total cost of this proposal could exceed \$2 trillion, most of which will provide little relief to working families. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities]

Bush’s Claim that Cuts to Domestic Spending Will Reduce the Deficit is Wrong. Bush may argue that we need to cut domestic discretionary programs (such as education, veterans and law enforcement) by falsely claiming that the cost of those programs has exploded in recent years. In fact, between 2001 and 2006, spending on domestic programs fell as a share of our economy -- from 3.4% to 3.1% of GDP. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities]

Bush’s Tax Cuts Will Not Produce Greater Revenues. Any claim that extending the Bush tax cuts will produce greater revenues is just not credible. According to CBO, “increases [in revenue

projections] occur mainly because of a rise in projected GDP, which derives from higher prices in the economy, not real economic activity.” [CBO, “Budget and Economic Outlook”, page 83]

Bush Claims of Reforms to Education Will Mean Cuts to Student Aid. The cost of a public higher education has increased by a staggering 46% since 2001, making it no wonder that more than 5.3 million students depended on Pell Grants in the 2004-2005 academic year. Instead of helping students succeed, the Republicans have responded by making the largest education cuts in history -- \$12.7 billion from the student loan program -- and imposing higher fees on students and parents. Instead of increasing the Pell Grant amount, the Republicans’ Labor-HHS appropriation bill held the maximum Pell grant at \$4,050 for the fourth year in a row. [House Budget Committee Democrats; College Board; Labor-HHS Appropriations Conference Report]

DEMOCRATS WANT TO STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY WHILE PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY TO AMERICAN FAMILIES:

Increase Wages: Democrats worked to increase the federal minimum wage to restore the power of the minimum wage for working Americans. The federal minimum wage has not been increased since 1997. During that same time, members of Congress passed seven pay increases for themselves, equivalent to a raise of \$28,500 or nearly three times the income of a worker earning the federal minimum wage. Senator Kennedy introduced an amendment that would increase the federal minimum wage by \$1.10 to \$7.75 an hour. The amendment was rejected by Senate Republicans. [RC 257, S. Amdt. 2063 to H.R. 3058, 10/19/05, 47-51]

Cut the Cost of Prescription Drugs: Democrats have proposed to reduce the cost of prescription drugs by allowing Medicare to negotiate for better prices. Washington Republicans have blocked these proposals on behalf of the pharmaceutical industry. [RC 60, S. Amdt. 214 to S. Con. Res. 18, 3/17/05, 49-50; RC 302, S.AMDT.2371 to S. 1932, 11/3/05, 51-48]

Make College Tuition More Affordable: Democrats have proposed to expand student aid and make college tuition deductible. Instead, Washington Republicans just voted for the largest student aid cut in our nation’s history, so that the savings can be used for special interest tax breaks. [RC 363, S. 1932, 12/21/05, 50-50 (Vice President Cheney Cast the Tie-breaking Vote)]

Cut the Cost of Gas Prices: Democrats have proposed to crack down on price gouging and market manipulation, but Washington Republicans have blocked such efforts on behalf of the oil and gas industry. [S. 1735]

Provide Relief from Skyrocketing Home Heating Prices: Democrats proposed to provide relief to Americans struggling with rising home heating costs, through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and were rejected three times by Republicans. However, while Washington Republicans have approved a variety of new subsidies for the energy industry, during last minute budget negotiations they dropped an increase in LIHEAP assistance that would have helped ordinary families. [RC 250, S. Amdt. 2033 to H.R. 2863, 10/5/05, 50-49; RC 261, S. Amdt. 2077 to H.R. 3058, 10/20/05, 53-46; RC 270, S. 2194 to H.R. 3010, 10/26/05, 54-43]

Restore Fiscal Responsibility: While supporting fiscally responsible middle-class tax relief, Democrats have opposed massive new tax breaks for special interests and multi-millionaires that would increase the deficit. In addition, Democrats have pushed to reestablish “pay as you go” rules that require all new tax cuts and spending to be offset to prevent further increases in the budget deficit.

Washington Republicans have made deficit-increasing tax breaks their top priority, while defeating proposals to reestablish fiscal discipline through the “pay as you go” rules. [RC 53, S. Amdt. 186 to S. Con. Res. 18, 3/16/05, 50-50; RC 283, S. Amdt. 2351 to S. 1932, 11/3/05, 50-49]

Democrats Support Fiscally Responsible Tax Cuts for Families. Democrats continue to support tax cuts for workers that are fiscally responsible. In 2001, Democrats offered an alternative tax cut package that increased the child tax credit and addressed the marriage tax penalty. Democrats also support fixing the Alternative Minimum Tax, a tax originally targeted at the wealthy but whose reach is increasingly affecting middle class families. Left unchecked, the Alternative Minimum Tax will hit 30 million taxpayers in 2006. [CBO]

Democrats Are Committed to Maintaining the Nation’s Global Competitiveness. Democrats have introduced bipartisan legislation to preserve the United States’ competitive edge in science and technology. The legislation includes provisions that would provide scholarships for future math and science teachers, provide training for math and science teachers, increase the number of students taking advanced placement courses in math and science, offer grants to establish high schools specializing in math and science, and provide scholarships and fellowships for future scientists. Democrats support expanding the R&D tax credit and making it permanent, providing tax incentives to achieve nationwide broadband access, increasing funding for R&D programs with proven track records like the Advanced Technology Program and the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program and reforming America's high schools through increased focus on a more rigorous curriculum, improving access and affordability to higher education, and encouraging more students to pursue degrees in or teach math, science, engineering, and foreign languages. [S. 14; S. 15]

PRESIDENT BUSH AND HEALTH CARE

THE BUSH RECORD OF RISING COSTS AND MORE UNINSURED:

Health Care Costs have Skyrocketed. Average family premiums for health insurance have increased 71 percent during the Bush presidency, rising from an average of \$6,348 in 2000 to \$10,880 in 2005. The average deductible for the most common type of health plan has grown 85 percent for single coverage, growing from \$175 in 2000 to \$323 in 2005. [Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research & Education Trust, 9/05]

Under Bush the Number of Uninsured Americans has Grown by Six Million. Nearly 46 million Americans lack health insurance coverage, an increase of six million since the Bush Administration took office. In addition to the uninsured, about 16 million people are under-insured, meaning their health coverage does not adequately protect them from catastrophic health expenses. [U.S. Census Bureau, 8/05; Schoen et al, Health Affairs, 6/14/05]

Bush has Slashed Health Care Funding. Bush has cut vital safety net programs that ensure our most vulnerable citizens get care, slashing Medicaid and supporting increased cost-sharing and cuts in benefits for children, pregnant women, senior citizens, and people with disabilities. [Multiple Bush budgets]

Bush has Left American Vulnerable to an Avian Flu Pandemic While Providing Sweeping Liability Protection to the Drug Industry. Top administration officials have warned that it is only a matter of time before the H5N1 strain of avian influenza mutates to a new strain that will allow for sustained human-to-human transmission and cause the next pandemic. The President approved a funding measure that included less than half the \$8 billion proposed by Senate Democrats and approved by the Senate, and \$3.3 billion less than the \$7.1 billion the President stated was necessary to prepare our nation for a pandemic. And under the guise of protecting Americans against the threat of an avian flu pandemic, the President supported a law that provides sweeping liability protections for drug companies from the consequences of reckless wrongdoing without a meaningful compensation program for the victims. [P.L. 109-148; P.L. 109-148]

Bush's Policies Block Promising Medical Research. At a time when we are the verge of major new breakthroughs in disease prevention and treatment, the President approved a funding bill that cuts the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for the first time since 1970, which will hamper promising medical research and disease prevention initiatives. The President has also instituted a stem cell policy that is hindering scientific progress toward possible cures and treatments for a wide range of diseases, including Parkinson's disease, juvenile diabetes, and spinal cord injuries. After signing a bill into law intended to promote cord blood research, Bush cut funding in half for the National Stem Cell Cord Blood Banking Program [P.L. 109-149 and P.L. 109-148; P.L. 109-129]

BUSH WILL CLAIM NEW PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH CARE CRISIS:

Bush Will Claim Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) Will Increase Coverage and Make Health Care Less Affordable. "An interesting product available is called health savings accounts. I strongly urge small business owner here to look at them. It's an innovative product that enables the small business owner and the employee to combine, to work together to come up with a plan where the employee owns it. It provides for a high deductible catastrophic plan, coupled with tax-free contributions in the plan, basically gives the consumer control over his or her medical decisions. The

plan can grow tax-free, which is an encouragement for people to make wise decisions about how they treat their body. If you have a catastrophic event, the insurance kicks in and covers it. It's portable. If you change jobs, you can take it with you." [Remarks by President Bush, 1/19/06]

Bush Will Call for Association Health Plans for Small Businesses. "I think that -- I know that small businesses should be allowed the same affordability of health care that big businesses get by being able to pool across jurisdictional boundaries, pool your risk...But they should be allowed to pool their risk across jurisdictional boundaries. In other words, the larger the risk pool, the more employees you're able to get in a risk pool, the easier it is to manage your costs when it comes to health insurance. You can't do that now. And Congress should encourage you to be able to pool risk." [Remarks by President Bush, 1/19/06]

Bush Will Claim to Have Taken Action to Protect Americans from the Avian Flu. [White House, 12/19/06]

Bush Will Claim to Support Medical Research. President Bush stated that he will "assure that medical research is conducted in a manner that recognizes every dignity of life." [White House Press Conference, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Claim Medical Malpractice Reform Will Cut Costs. "One goal is legal reform. Mr Bush has already pushed (unsuccessfully) for laws that cap payments for medical malpractice lawsuits. He will keep trying." [The Economist, 1/28/06]

BUSH'S PROPOSALS INCREASE COSTS AND LIMIT COVERAGE:

Health Savings Accounts Will Increase Costs for Most Americans. A recent survey showed that people with coverage like the high-deductible plans associated with HSAs delay health care because of the cost and are more likely to spend more on health care than people in comprehensive plans. Furthermore, providing a tax deduction for high-deductible plans would increase premiums on comprehensive health plans. Even worse, providing such a tax deduction would actually increase the number of uninsured Americans by 350,000. [EBRI/Commonwealth Fund, 12/05; Commonwealth Fund, 4/05; Gruber, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 5/10/05]

Bush's Proposals Will Create a Tax Nightmare. According to Douglas Holtz-Eakin, former Bush economic advisor and Director of the Congressional Budget Office, this is "really bad tax policy," and could lead people to treat almost all their spending as health-related: "I could make an argument that my running shoes are a health expense," he said. "They're preventive medicine." [Los Angeles Times, 1/23/06]

Association Health Plans (AHPs) would make Most Small Business Employees Worse Off. Bush touts AHPs as aiding small businesses afford health care, but enactment of his AHP proposal would actually increase premiums for the vast majority of small business employees and would leave those in the new plans without adequate protection from fraud and insolvent insurers. [Congressional Budget Office 1/00; Kofman, Summer 05]

Bush's Avian Flu Plan is Underfunded and Lacks Key Priorities. "Without full funding, there will be insufficient resources for the vital protections, ranging from vaccine development and surge capacity in the U.S. health care system to global disease surveillance, that are needed to identify, contain and treat pandemic flu should an outbreak occur. Funds must also be budgeted to support

federal agencies beyond the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to plan for business, transportation, economic and other interruptions that could result from a pandemic.” [Trust for America’s Health, 12/19/05]

Bush’s Medmal Proposal Hurts Victims. President Bush wants to impose a cap of \$250,000 on non-economic damages in medical malpractice cases. While doing little to reduce the skyrocketing cost of health care, this proposal would undermine the legal rights of seriously injured victims of medical negligence and unfairly punish the worst afflicted patients. The Institute of Medicine has estimated that between 44,000 and 98,000 people die each year in hospitals as a result of medical errors.

DEMOCRATS WORK TO MAKE HEALTH CARE MORE AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE FOR ALL AMERICANS:

Make Health Insurance Coverage Affordable and Accessible for all Americans. Senate Democrats believe that the best way to promote affordable and accessible care is through group health coverage that uses strong purchasing power to negotiate lower premiums and better coverage. For example, Democrats believe we should use the federal employees’ health program as a model for giving small businesses more choices and access to more affordable coverage.

Cut Costs Through Increased Use of Health IT. Senate Democrats worked to pass bipartisan legislation, the “Wired for Health Care Quality Act” that will expand and improve the use of life-saving health information technology in hospitals in doctors’ offices. This legislation will help to improve the quality of health care, lower health care costs and reduce medical errors. The President needs to work with the House Leadership to make enactment of this bill into law a priority. [S. 1418]

Invest in Life-Saving Medical Research. Senate Democrats support investing in promising medical research and disease prevention initiatives. Senate Democrats support expanding the President’s stem cell policy to allow for federal funding for stem cell research that has the potential to lead to cures for a wide range of diseases and conditions. Senate Democrats support strong ethical guidelines for stem cell research and support a ban on reproductive cloning. [RC #350, Motion to Instruct Conferees re. H.R. 3010, 11/18/05, 58-36; H.R. 810]

Prepare and Protect Americans for a Pandemic. Senate Democrats passed an amendment that would have provided almost \$8 billion for pandemic flu preparedness. Democrats support comprehensive legislation that would help to prepare and protect Americans from the potentially devastating impact of an avian flu pandemic. These initiatives include key provisions that would spur on the development, production, and distribution of vaccines and strengthen our public health infrastructure. [S. Amdt. 2283 to H.R. 3010; S. 1821 and S. 1880]

Democrats Want Real Medical Malpractice Reform. Democrats are committed to developing real solutions for medical liability reform that protects patients and good doctors. The most effective way of dealing with malpractice is to prevent medical mistakes from happening in the first place. Democrats also want to strengthen federal oversight of insurance industry practices that contribute to high malpractice insurance premiums. [Commonwealth Fund]

PRESIDENT BUSH AND MEDICARE

THE BUSH RECORD OF SPECIAL INTEREST GIVEAWAYS:

Bush's Medicare Bill Gave Billions to Special Interests While Shortchanging Seniors. The President's 2003 Medicare law includes a \$10 billion slush fund for HMOs and protects drug company profits by actually prohibiting Medicare from negotiating lower drug prices. At the same time, this law contains a doughnut hole in coverage that makes seniors and people with disabilities continue to pay premiums even though while have no drug coverage. [P.L. 108-173, signed by the President 12/8/03]

Bush has Failed to Adequately Implement the Drug Bill. The Bush Administration's poor stewardship over the drug program has resulted in the lowest-income beneficiaries leaving pharmacies without drugs, creating such havoc that states have had to step in to clean up the mess. In addition, by approving hundreds of private plans to offer the new drug benefit, the Bush Administration has created mass confusion among seniors and people with disabilities. Not surprisingly, then, enrollment in the benefit is less than half of what Bush Administration officials projected. [New York Times, 1/8/06; New York Times, 12/5/05; Kaiser Family Foundation, 1/06]

BUSH WILL CLAIM SUCCESS AND SOLUTIONS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS:

Bush Will Claim Seniors are Getting their Drugs and that Problems are Being Addressed. President Bush will claim millions of Americans have enrolled in the drug benefit program and are now getting the drugs they deserve. "As scrutiny from lawmakers mounts, Medicare officials Tuesday assured states they will be reimbursed for the costs of stepping in and picking up the tab for prescription drugs not covered because of problems with the new Medicare drug benefit, but they warned such reimbursement would end Feb. 15." [CongressDaily, 1/25/06]

BUSH PROVIDES MORE CONFUSION TO SENIORS, STATES AND PHARMACISTS:

Bush's System to Reimburse States Creates a New Bureaucracy. The Bush administration's proposal to reimburse states and pharmacies that have covered the cost of prescriptions for seniors and people with disabilities creates a new federal bureaucracy that complicates the reimbursement process. It also ignores the other problems with implementation. [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services]

DEMOCRATS OFFER REAL SOLUTIONS TO FIX THE DRUG BILL:

Get Seniors their Drugs. Legislation must ensure that seniors and people with disabilities immediately receive the drugs they need at prices they can afford under the terms of coverage they have been promised. [S. 2183, the Requiring Emergency Pharmaceutical Access for Individual Relief Act]

Reimburse Seniors, States and Pharmacies. Legislation must also fully reimburse states, pharmacies, and beneficiaries who have been forced to pay more than they should have during this botched transition. This should be done without a complicated new bureaucracy so states can be reimbursed directly without forcing them to go to dozens of insurers and then navigate the red tape waiver process [S. 2183, the Requiring Emergency Pharmaceutical Access for Individual Relief Act]

Extend the Enrollment Period and Create Flexibility. Legislation must give seniors and people with disabilities the time they need to navigate the confusing enrollment process and allow them to change plans once during this first chaotic year. [S. 1841, the Medicare Informed Choice Act]

Prevent Insurers from Changing Drugs and Prices During the Year. Beneficiaries are locked into the private plan they choose for the full year. Democrats will prevent insurers from changing the drugs they cover and the prices they charge so that seniors don't face a bait and switch.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND ENERGY

BUSH RECORD OF RISING PRICES, RECORD PROFITS, AND GREATER DEPENDENCY ON FOREIGN OIL:

Energy Prices have Increased Dramatically Since Bush Started his First Term. Since 2001, the average monthly price of regular unleaded gasoline rose from \$1.43 per gallon to \$2.27 per gallon at the end of last year – a 58% increase; while diesel fuel rose from \$1.40 per gallon to \$2.40 in the same time period – a 71% increase. The Energy Information Administration projects that these prices will hold steady or rise over the course of the next two years. [Energy Information Agency]

Heating Costs have Risen by \$438, or 79%, Since President Bush's First Full Winter in the White House. The cost of heating fuels has skyrocketed, leaving American families unprepared to deal with unprecedented increases in heating bills. The cost of heating a home for the winter has increased by \$438, or 79 percent, since the winter of 2001-2002. [Energy Information Administration, Short Term Energy Outlook, 1/10/06]

Transportation Costs for Families have Increased by \$1,322. Prices at the gas pump have jumped 55 percent from \$1.44 per gallon in January 2001 to \$2.33 in late January 2006, while the price for a barrel of oil has more than doubled from \$29.26 in January 2001 to over \$65 in January 2006. The average household with children spent about \$3,225 on transportation fuel costs in 2005, an increase of 69 percent over 2001 costs. [Energy Information Administration, Household Vehicle Energy Use: Latest Data and Trends, 11/05 and Weekly Retail Gasoline and Diesel Prices]

Major Oil Companies Reaped Record Breaking Profits, more than \$100 billion in 2005. Despite record profits, Exxon and the major oil companies have no plans to build significant, new refining capacity in the U.S to increase supply of finished products and thereby reduce consumer prices. [Reuters, 1/25/06; Answers to Questions for the Record, Joint Senate Energy and Commerce Committees Hearing, 11/05]

America Has Become More Dependent on Foreign Oil. Although the war in Iraq and the war on terror should serve to remind the Administration about the national security dangers of relying on foreign oil, America's dependence on foreign oil has increased since this Administration took office. In 2000, 58.2 percent of the oil consumed in the United States was imported. That has increased to 61.7 percent today. [EIA, "Overview of US Petroleum Trade"]

Solid Scientific Evidence of Manmade Global Warming Grows. Over the last five years, all credible climate scientists in the United States and around the world have published mounting and comprehensive evidence that manmade global warming is occurring and may be accelerating. The last decade of the 20th Century was the warmest in the entire global instrumental temperature record, starting in the mid-19th century and in 2005 we witnessed the highest global surface temperature in more than a century. [Washington Post, 1/29/06]

BUSH WILL CLAIM PROGRESS ON ENERGY SECURITY:

Bush Will Use His Passed Energy Bill to Tout Success While Promoting Warmed Over Failed Policies. "Rising energy costs are also a concern for small businesses, so we're going to continue to

work to develop new technologies and alternative and renewable fuels that will make us less dependent on foreign sources of energy.” [President Bush’s Radio Address, 1/21/06]

Bush Will Claim to Support New Technology. “We’re spending over a billion now on technology, and I’m going to remind the American people that the way to achieve a national objective, which is less dependency on foreign oil...is for the government to encourage research and development and new technologies that have got marketplace applications.” [Wall Street Journal, 1/26/06]

Bush Will Promote New Plan to Promote Reprocessing of Nuclear Materials. Despite the fact that experts agree there is no urgent need to reprocess spent nuclear fuel at this time, the Bush administration is expected to announce a new push for reprocessing domestic and international spent nuclear fuel in the State of the Union. [American Physical Society, Jungmin Kang and Frank von Hippel, Science and Global Security; Washington Post, 12/26/06; Wall Street Journal, 1/26/06; Energy Washington Week 1/18/06]

BUSH’S POLICIES WILL NOT MAKE US MORE SECURE BY REDUCING ENERGY DEPENDENCE OR HELP CONSUMERS BY REDUCING PRICES:

Bush’s Hydrogen Proposal Will Take Years to Impact Energy Markets and Undermines Other Beneficial Programs. The Bush focus on hydrogen has payoffs too far in the future and will undermine other programs that can get more energy benefits sooner. “Although significant research and development are being conducted through the FreedomCAR Program, a co-funded partnership between the Federal Government and private industry, those efforts are not expected to have a significant impact on the market for fuel cell vehicles before 2030.” [EIA, Annual Energy Outlook 2006 with Projections to 2030, 12/05]

Bush Rhetoric on Renewables Not Matched by Real Action. Although the Bush Administration talks a lot about renewables, it doesn’t walk the walk. Bush budget negotiators opposed providing tax incentives for renewable energy like wind and geothermal and energy efficiency for the same duration as conventional energy sources. The Bush Administration also opposed a renewable portfolio standard. Both steps would have greatly enhanced this nation’s ability to generate more energy from wind, geothermal, solar, and other renewable sources. [S.Hrg. 109-27 - page 26]

Bush’s Policies Have Had no Impact on Consumption. The Bush energy policy is not working to promote energy efficiency or conservation. Energy consumption between 2001 and 2005 remained unchanged – approximately 339 MBtu per person. [CRS Report for Congress #RL31849, Energy: Useful Facts and Numbers - Updated January 10, 2006]

Bush Administration Rejected Anti-Price Gouging Legislation. The Bush-appointed Chair of the Federal Trade Commission claims that no Federal price gouging law is necessary to protect consumers, in testimony before a joint meeting of the Senate Committees on Energy and Natural Resources, and Commerce, Science and Transportation. November 9, 2005 “...the Commission remains persuaded that federal price gouging legislation would unnecessarily hurt consumers.” [Testimony of FTC Chairman, 11/9/05]

Bush and Republicans Rejected Home Heating Funding. Bush and Congressional Republicans have repeatedly opposed or cut funding for energy bill assistance to working families. In four separate Senate votes in 2005, Democrats, supported by a handful of Republicans, unsuccessfully sought to obtain full funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). [RC 250, S.

Amdt. 2033 to H.R. 2863, 10/5/05, 50-49; RC 261, S. Amdt. 2077 to H.R. 3058, 10/20/05, 53-46; RC 270, S. 2194 to H.R. 3010, 10/26/05, 54-43]

Bush Reprocessing Plan Threatens National Security and Cost Hundreds of Billions. The reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel has inherent nuclear proliferation risks. The U.S. stopped reprocessing in the 1970's after India used plutonium that the U.S. had separated for it for "peaceful purposes" to develop a nuclear bomb. William Magwood, Director, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy, said, "[W]e're not sure that it's possible to use this chemical technology to separate the plutonium in combination with a few other things, in a fashion that will make it both proliferation resistant and economically viable." Moreover, estimates show reprocessing spent nuclear fuel in the United States could cost from \$105 billion to \$317 billion, much of which would have to be subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. [House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies Hearing, 3/15/05; American Physical Society; Nuclear Energy Institute; National Academy of Sciences; U.S. Department of Energy.]

Bush Breaks Promise to Address Global Warming and Muzzles Government Scientists Who Raise Concerns about Global Warming. In March 2001, he reversed his campaign pledge to address global warming after lobbying by campaign donors and special interests. Instead, Bush created a voluntary program to reduce "emissions intensity" which actually increases greenhouse gases over time. "We believe that by 2012 [under the Bush program], rather than being seven percent below 1990 levels...we would be about 30 percent above 1990 levels." In fact, the President's advisors issued a veto threat against Senate Democratic proposals requiring mandatory reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from major industrial sources, a climate-focused research and development program, a renewable portfolio standard, and the advice of Congress that he should be working toward a binding global treaty. While he was Chief of Staff at the Council on Environmental Quality, Phil Cooney, a non-scientist and former lobbyist for the American Petroleum Institute, "...repeatedly edited government climate reports in ways to downplay links between [greenhouse gas] emissions and global warming..." [New York Times, 3/01; NPR, 2/15/02; White House Statement of Administration Policy, 3/02; New York Times, 6/28/03]

DEMOCRATS HAVE OFFERED SOLUTIONS TO MAKE AMERICA ENERGY INDEPENDENT BY 2020 AND REDUCE PRICES:

Reducing Dependence on Foreign Oil Boosts National Security and Helps Consumers.

Independence from foreign oil sources could protect America and save consumers money. According to some analysts, up to \$50 billion annually in taxpayers' money now spent to protect the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. Better strategic reserves of crude oil (and gasoline, jet fuel, diesel and heating oil) can reduce the impact of oil supply disruptions. [Democrats' Energy Independence 2020 Agenda]

Create a New Energy Industry, Exports and Jobs. An Apollo Project-like commitment focusing Federal research and development on applying advanced energy technology will create millions of new highly skilled, well-paid jobs. Improved energy science and technology education and training will make America the leader in energy efficient product manufacturing and exporting. Real Federal leadership in procuring only very efficient and advanced alternative fuel vehicles and green buildings and products, will help American companies innovate. [Democrats' Energy Independence 2020 Agenda]

Make Energy more Affordable for Residential and Manufacturing Use. A national commitment to efficiency, renewably generated electricity and a massive investment in advanced energy technology will reduce consumers' electricity and fuel bills by more than \$60 billion per year in 2020. Extending energy efficiency and renewable incentives will lower the demand for natural gas now freeing up high-priced natural gas for other uses. Smarter, more efficient and flexible electricity infrastructure will increase reliability and consumers' options and ability to save or generate their own electricity. [Democrats' Energy Independence 2020 Agenda]

Better Protect Consumers. More than 7 million Americans will have better access to home heating and weatherization assistance in times of economic trouble. Strong and well-enforced Federal price gouging laws will prevent oil companies from taking advantage of consumers. Accurate and accessible information on vehicle and appliance energy efficiency will help consumers save on energy bills. [Democrats' Energy Independence 2020 Agenda]

Promote Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel Backed by Sound Science and Security Experts. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission says that spent nuclear fuel can be safely stored using dry cask storage on-site at the nuclear power plants for approximately 100 years. Already, dry casks safely store spent nuclear fuel at 34 sites throughout the country, and the Nuclear Energy Institute has projected 83 of the 103 active reactors will have dry storage by 2050. "Spent fuel is safe for decades where it's stored at plants today," said John Kane, Senior vice president, Nuclear Energy Institute. [U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Nuclear Energy Institute; [NewsObserver](#), 1/15/06]

Begin to Address Global Warning Now. Democrats supported a 2002 energy bill that included mandatory reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from large industrial sources, a renewable portfolio standard, a comprehensive set of energy efficiency standards, a more results-focused climate research program, and a sense of the Congress that the President should negotiate a binding global treaty to reduce emissions. All these steps would have resulted in major reductions and paved the way for the US to act responsibly. Democrats also blocked the President's "Clear Skies" proposal, in part because the bill did not address growing carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. Finally, Democrats supported a Sense of the Senate amendment to the 2005 energy bill resolving that Congress should enact a comprehensive and effective national program of mandatory, market-based limits and incentives on emissions of greenhouse gases that slow, stop, and reverse the growth of such emissions at a rate and in a manner that (1) will not significantly harm the United States economy; and (2) will encourage comparable action by other nations that are major trading partners and key contributors to global emissions.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND IMMIGRATION

THE BUSH RECORD OF EMPTY RHETORIC AND NO RESULTS:

President Bush has been Unable to Advance Immigration Reform Through Republican-controlled Congress. For the third year in a row, the President will use the State of the Union address to call for immigration reform. Caught between the conservative, anti-immigrant right-wing of his party and more moderate, pro-business Republicans, President Bush has not provided the leadership or dedication necessary to advance realistic, workable reform in Congress. [Multiple State of the Union Addresses]

The Border is Less Secure. Between 1999 and 2004, the number of agents in the Tucson sector of the Border Patrol increased by 56 percent, while the number of arrests increased by 4 percent. The number of Border Patrol agents on the U.S.-Mexico border over the last two decades tripled while the immigration enforcement budget increased by a factor of ten, but, during approximately that same period, the probability of catching immigrants illegally crossing the border has fallen from about 33 to 5 percent. [Tucson Citizen, 11/4/05; CATO Institute, Center for Trade Policy Studies, 6/13/05]

More Deaths. Increased enforcement near urban centers has not stopped the illegal flow, but merely encouraged immigrants to cross in more remote areas where they would be more difficult to catch and more likely to die. This last year, a record 460 undocumented immigrants died crossing the U.S.-Mexico border between October 1, 2004 and September 30, 2005. [Chicago Tribune, 10/2/05]

Lax Enforcement on Employers Raises Concerns. Between 1999 and 2004, the number of notices of intent to fine an employer for employing undocumented immigrants dropped from 417 to fewer than 5, according to the G.A.O. In fact, in fiscal 2004, the Department of Homeland Security issued just three notices of intent to fine employers and actually fined none. In 2005, the administration targeted only one employer for an enforcement action, Wal-Mart. [New York Times, 12/2/05; Los Angeles Times, 12/28/05; San Jose Mercury News, 12/29/05].

Bush Supported an Extreme, Anti-Immigrant Bill in the House of Representatives. In December, the White House announced its support for a mean-spirited, extreme, anti-immigrant bill in the House of Representatives that has very little to do with securing our borders and instead demonizes and punishes our nation's hardworking immigrant community. [Statement of Administration Policy, 12/15/05; Miami Herald, editorial, 12/15/05; Seattle Times, editorial, 1/2/06]

BUSH WILL SAY NOTHING NEW:

Bush Will Repeat the Same Rhetoric. Bush is not expected to state anything new or fill out any details of his proposals, but will once again call for more border enforcement and a temporary worker program. He will likely reiterate his opposition to some undefined notion of "amnesty" and his support for a program that would require all undocumented immigrants currently in the United States, even those who participate legally in a temporary worker program, to eventually leave the country. [Washington Times, 1/24/06; Washington Post, 10/22/05]

BUSH'S POLICY WILL NOT WORK:

Enforcement Alone Does not Work. Clearly the federal government must work to shut down the flow of illegal immigration across our borders. It is crucial to our national security that we do so. But enforcement alone does not work. Unless we address the gap between our immigration laws and reality, illegal immigration will not stop and the situation on the border will continue to be chaotic. [[San Antonio Express-News](#), editorial, 12/23/2005]

The President's Temporary Worker Plan Will not Work. The President's temporary worker program is unrealistic and won't solve the problem. Immigrants won't emerge from the shadows to participate in a "report to deport" program. Many will simply stay here and go underground when their visas run out. [[New York Times](#), editorial, 12/5/05; Statement of Sen. John McCain before the Senate Judiciary Committee, 7/26/05]

Bush Would Create a Permanent Underclass. The President's plan would create a permanent American underclass, undercutting the wages and rights of U.S. citizens and permanent residents. It is bad public policy to create a class of people without a stake in our society or incentives or opportunities to advance within it. The children of this underclass of workers will have been raised as Americans, but will have none of the rights or opportunities of full citizenship. [[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), editorial, 12/4/05; [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), 1/8/04]

DEMOCRATS SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM:

Realistic Reforms to Protect American Values. Democrats support bipartisan, realistic, and workable immigration policies that will reunite families, provide for continued American economic growth, protect the rights of American workers, and honor the values of the United States of America as a nation of immigrants. [Reid letter to Bush, 11/28/05]

Effective Enforcement Plus Smart Reform. Democrats believe we can solve our immigration crisis by combining tougher and more effective enforcement of our immigration laws with realistic reforms. [Reid letter to Bush, 11/28/05]

Protect Americans from Terrorism. Immigration reform is a national security issue. The federal government needs to know who is living in our country and who is crossing our borders. We need to bring undocumented immigrants out of the shadows so that we can conduct background checks on them and have records of who is in our country. We should be focusing our resources on capturing terrorists and criminals, not tracking down and deporting the millions of immigrants in our country simply trying to support their families. [[New York Times](#), op-ed, 9/16/02; [Palm Beach Post](#), editorial, 8/30/05]

PRESIDENT BUSH AND KATRINA

BUSH RECORD OF INITIAL FAILURES FOLLOWED BY BROKEN PROMISES:

Bush Administration's Initial Response was Disastrous. Although the Bush Administration had long known of the vulnerability of New Orleans and other coastal areas to a large hurricane and it became aware of Katrina's severity well before the storm hit, the Administration was woefully unprepared and its initial response was disastrously inadequate. For example, the Administration failed to pre-position government personnel and assets, delayed for more than a full day after landfall to make the declaration necessary to trigger a full federal response under the National Response Plan, waited four days after landfall to evacuate the Superdome, and waited eight days after landfall to deploy the active duty military to assist. Even House Republicans have described the White House response as clouded by a "fog of war." [New York Times, 9/13/05]

President Bush Broke his Promise to Quickly Rebuild New Orleans. In the wake of his Administration's dreadful performance before and immediately after the storm, President Bush spoke to the nation from New Orleans on September 15, 2005 and promised "one of the largest reconstruction efforts the world has ever seen...Our goal is to get the work done quickly." Yet nearly five months after Katrina hit, Bush's promise to "do what it takes" to make the city rise from the waters has not been matched by action." Most recently, the Administration rejected a bipartisan rebuilding plan developed by Congressman Richard Baker and Senator Mary Landrieu, while refusing to provide an alternative. [Washington Post, 1/28/06].

BUSH WILL MAKE MORE FALSE PROMISES TO THE GULF COAST:

Bush Will Claim Credit for Progress and Make More False Promises. "The Congress has appropriated \$85 billion to help rebuild the Gulf Coast. And that is a good start; it's a strong start; it's a significant commitment to the people whose lives were turned upside down by that -- by those -- by that hurricane. Secondly, we have said that we look forward to the time when each state develops its recovery plan. I, early on in the process, said it's important for the folks in Mississippi to come forward with a recovery plan. And it's important for New Orleans and the state of Louisiana to work together to develop a state recovery plan. And the reason I said that is because I was aware that folks in Congress will want to spend money based upon a specific strategy...Now, having said that, I recognize there were some early things we needed to do to instill confidence. One of them was to say that we will make the levees stronger and better than before, and study further strengthening of the levees...A lot of the money we're spending is prescribed by law, but we also went a step further and proposed to Congress, and they accepted, the CDGB money so that monies can actually go directly to individual families that need help. We'll continue to work with the folks down there. But I want to remind the people in that part of the world, \$85 billion is a lot, and secondly, we were concerned about creating additional federal bureaucracies, which might make it harder to get money to the people." [President Bush Press Conference, 1/26/06]

BUSH ADMINISTRATION FAILS TO KEEP PROMISES TO GULF COAST AND BLOCKS GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF RESPONSE PROBLEMS:

No Commitment to Adequate Hurricane Protection. Many businesses and residents understandably are afraid to return to New Orleans and other coastal communities without assurances that the government will ensure adequate protections from future major hurricanes. However, while Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid has made clear his support for doing what it takes to protect against the

most serious hurricanes, the President has refused to make a comparable commitment. [[Times Picayune](#), 11/22/05]

Housing Needs Going Unmet. Hurricane Katrina produced the largest dislocation of Americans since the 1930s. Despite Bush's promise to meet victims' housing needs, 75,000 survivors still live in hotels, while as of January 16, 18,943 applications for rental help had yet to be processed. Meanwhile, many homeowners face the imminent threat of foreclosure and SBA reports that 190,000 of 363,000 applications for disaster loans to homeowners and businesses are still pending. [[Washington Post](#), 1/28/06]

Health Care Needs Going Unmet. The Bush Administration and its allies have blocked the bipartisan Grassley-Baucus bill, S.1716, to temporarily expand health coverage to victims through Medicaid. As a result, many victims, such as childless adults, lack coverage. At the same time, President Bush supporting enactment of budget legislation that jeopardizes health care coverage of 3 to 5 million US citizens, including many Katrina survivors. Meanwhile, a major health crisis is emerging in the region, with hospitals and other providers lacking sufficient resources. [[USA Today](#), 12/5/05; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities]

Cleanup Effort a Mess. The cleanup effort in much of the Gulf Coast is not going well. "Thirty million cubic yards of debris remain uncollected -- enough to build a five-sided column more than 50 stories tall over the Pentagon -- provoking environmental concerns, fears of runaway spending abuses and a spirit-sapping despair." [[Washington Post](#), 1/28/06]

Bush is Blocking a Bipartisan Investigation into Governmental Failures to Respond to Hurricane Katrina. Despite the need to understand how the federal government failed so badly in Hurricane Katrina so we better prepare for the next disaster, the Bush Administration is stonewalling congressional inquiries. "The Bush administration, citing the confidentiality of executive branch communications, said Tuesday that it did not plan to turn over certain documents about Hurricane Katrina or make senior White House officials available for sworn testimony before two Congressional committees investigating the storm response... 'There has been a near total lack of cooperation that has made it impossible, in my opinion, for us to do the thorough investigation that we have a responsibility to do,' Senator Joseph I. Lieberman." [[New York Times](#), 1/25/06]

DEMOCRATS ACTED EARLY AND REMAIN COMMITTED TO REBUILDING THE GULF COAST:

Democrats Immediately Developed Katrina Relief Plan. Immediately following Hurricane Katrina, Senate Democrats introduced comprehensive relief legislation to facilitate a swift and effective federal response. The bill included provisions to address the region's needs for health care, housing, education and financial relief. However, Senate Republicans have refused to act on the bill and have ignored many of the issues addressed by the legislation. [S.1637]

Democrats Pushed for an Independent Commission to Find the Facts and Improve Disaster Response. Led by Senator Hillary Clinton, Senate Democrats have pushed for an independent commission to evaluate the Administration's response to Katrina and to help improve disaster response in the future. However, Republicans have blocked the measure and have done little to oversee the Administration's Katrina's response. [S.1622]