



# APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE DEMOCRATS

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## A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP

American families face tough challenges – declining wages, the rising cost of healthcare and college, and continued high energy prices. We've been told to "stay the course" in Iraq even as it becomes clearer every day that the President's policy was a colossal mistake. And the threat of terrorism – made worse by the Iraq war – remains a very real and serious threat. Yet, through their actions, and their inaction, President Bush and Republicans in Congress have made clear that they have no solutions.

This has been particularly true on the budget and appropriations this year. The record speaks for itself.

- ✦ **Fiscal Disaster** – President Bush and Congressional Republicans inherited a \$260 billion surplus from President Clinton. In just six years, they turned it into a \$260 billion deficit – a \$565 billion reversal of our fiscal fortunes.
- ✦ **No Budget Plan** – Congressional Republicans failed to pass a budget – something that's happened only four times since 1974 – and they have no plan to balance the budget. Foreign countries now hold nearly 45 percent of our public debt. Foreign held public debt has more than doubled to \$2.1 trillion since President Bush took office.
- ✦ **Critical Programs Left in Limbo** – Of the 11 annual appropriations bills, Congressional Republicans have enacted only two. While they're campaigning for reelection, funding for education and college financial aid, FBI counterterrorism efforts, healthcare access, and energy research and development is on hold.
- ✦ **The Wrong Priorities** – Since President Bush took office household income has declined by \$1,670 while the average CEO makes 821 times as much today as a minimum wage worker. Yet Bush and Congressional Republicans plan deep cuts in No Child Left Behind and job training. Other critical domestic priorities, such as job training, law enforcement, energy research, college financial aid and veterans' health care are all slated for cuts.

## DEMOCRATS OFFER A NEW DIRECTION FOR AMERICA

For the past several years, Democrats have fought to invest in job creation and a stronger economy, to provide every child the chance to achieve the American Dream, to protect Americans from another terrorist attack, and to reinstate fiscally responsible pay-as-you-go budget rules.

This year, the Democratic budget alternative would have provided an additional \$13 billion for targeted investments in college affordability, homeland security, energy independence, veterans' healthcare, education, and job training – and reduced the deficit while providing a substantial tax cut to every American.

The Democratic budget would have paid for its deficit reduction and new investments by providing people making more than \$1 million a year with a smaller tax cut than under the Republican budget. The tax cut for a person making more than \$1 million a year would be \$38,918 instead of \$114,172 as provided under the Republican budget.

Congressional Republicans unanimously opposed this new direction. Instead, they moved ahead without a budget plan of their own and rubber stamped the failed Bush budget priorities that led to record deficits, declining wages, skyrocketing college and healthcare costs, and left American more vulnerable to terrorism.

## REPUBLICANS FAIL TO ADDRESS AMERICA'S TOP PRIORITIES

**Dream of a College Education Fading.** Since 2001, the cost of attending a four-year public college increased \$3,095 – a whopping 34 percent – while the share of these cost paid by Pell Grants has dropped from 42 percent to only 30 percent. Meanwhile, House Republicans froze the maximum Pell Grant for four straight years and now propose only a \$100 increase.

**Limited Access to Healthcare.** Nearly 46 million Americans are without health insurance – 5 million more than in 2000. Under House Republicans, efforts to expand healthcare access have lost 8 percent of their purchasing power compared to two years ago. Health professionals programs aimed at bringing more doctors and dentists to underserved communities were cut by 45 percent in actual dollars compared to 2005. Maternal and child healthcare grants lost 24 percent of their purchasing power compared to 2002.

**American Workers Denied a Raise.** Despite rising healthcare and college tuition costs, as well as high energy prices, House Republicans refuse to allow a floor vote on increasing the minimum wage from \$5.15/hour to \$7.25/hour. Congressional pay has increased \$31,600 since 1997 – the last time Congress increased the minimum wage. The minimum wage is now at its lowest level in real terms since 1968.

**Homeland Security.** America's borders, ports and transit systems remain vulnerable to attack. The Department of Homeland Security is not able to identify roughly 138,000 of the over 300,000 illegal aliens in our nation's prisons due to lack of staffing. Yet the Republican Congress failed to provide sufficient funding to screen 100 percent of criminal aliens, to screen 100 percent of aviation passengers and carry-on bags for explosives, and has provided only 21 percent of the what the Coast Guard says is needed to secure our ports and less than 10 percent of what the transit industry says is needed to secure our transit systems.

**A Nation More Addicted to Foreign Oil.** In 2002, we imported 58 percent of our oil. Last year, we imported 65 percent. Yet we invest only 1/5<sup>th</sup> of what we did 30 years ago in the energy research that can help us break our dangerous addiction to foreign oil. Instead of making a substantial new investment in this research, Republicans handed billions of dollars of subsidies to big energy companies.

**Millions of Workers Denied Training.** Seven million Americans remain unemployed — one million or 17 percent more than in 2001 – and more than 1.3 million Americans have been jobless for more than 26 weeks – nearly double the number in 2001. Yet, in real terms, Republicans have cut job training and employment service efforts by \$1.3 billion in just two years.

**Education Investments Falling Short.** Record public school enrollments, stringent No Child Left Behind mandates, and continuing fiscal pressures are making it difficult for states to invest in schools. Yet, federal funding for No Child Left Behind fell almost \$16.4 billion short of what was promised for 2007. This year, House Republicans cut No Child Left Behind for the second year in a row – nearly \$500 million below last year and \$1.5 billion below two years ago.

**Slashing State and Local Law Enforcement Funding.** September 11<sup>th</sup> showed that first responders, and particularly our nation's law enforcement officers, are the first line of defense in case of a terrorist attack. This lesson seems lost on House Republicans who have cut State and local law enforcement funding by 46 percent since 2001 – from \$4.5 billion to \$2.3 billion for 2007.

**Broken Promises to America's Veterans.** The VA has been unable to keep up with the increasing demand for veterans' healthcare. In 1995, VA treated 2.6 million veterans and their families. In fiscal year 2006, the Department expects to treat more than twice that number – 5.4 million. In addition, many VA hospitals and facilities are old and in need of repair – improvements that could cost billions over the next five to ten years. Yet, House Republicans fell \$1.2 billion in 2004 and \$1 billion short in 2005 of providing enough funding to maintain current services in the VA healthcare system.