

## House Committee On Appropriations, Democratic Staff

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# Where in the World is Labor H?

5 Days, 5 Reasons Republicans Won't Bring the Labor, Health, Education Funding Bill to the Floor

## Day 5: Doesn't Work for American Workers

WASHINGTON – In the same month House [Republicans fought](#) an increase to the minimum wage without fighting a cost of living increase for themselves, it's no wonder that they don't want to bring their Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill (Labor H) to the floor.

Who would want to remind the public again just how out of touch they are with American workers?

**With this bill, training and employment services programs will have been cut \$1.3 billion in just two years, when adjusted for rising costs and population growth.**

Wages are down, costs are up, and seven million Americans are out of work. But House Republicans have produced a bill that will make deep cuts into job training and employment services that would help the unemployed and keep American workers competitive.

Key Unemployment Indicators				
	January-01	May-06	Change	
			number	percent
<b>Number of unemployed</b>	<b>5,997,000</b>	<b>7,015,000</b>	<b>1,018,000</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Long-term unemployed</b>	<b>675,000</b>	<b>1,329,000</b>	<b>654,000</b>	<b>97%</b>

**The International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) is cut by \$60.2 million, or 83 %, to \$12.4 million.** The ILAB protects American workers from being undercut by child and slave labor abroad. In recent years, ILAB assistance has removed 250,000 children from exploitive work in more than 60 developing countries.

**Workforce Investment Act Programs that provide locally tailored, employment services for adults, dislocated workers and youth, are cut by \$431 million, \$325 million of which was already disbursed to local communities.** Half of the \$325 million rescission comes from Dislocated Worker funds, taking away the ability of States

and local workforce boards to respond to plant closings, mass layoffs, and natural disasters.

**This bill cuts \$28 million from the U.S. Employment Service, which matches jobless people with potential employers.** Since FY 2001, 5.5 million or 29 % *fewer* people have been served by the Employment Service due to budget cuts.

**Job Corps, a successful program that gives disadvantaged youth an opportunity to gain educational, vocational and social skills, is cut \$41 million,** adding to a \$350 million backlog of repairs to Job Corps dormitories, classrooms and other facilities.

**The Title V senior employment program is cut by \$12.3 million.** Title V provides low-income seniors part-time, minimum wage jobs serving their communities. After four years of funding cuts, program enrollment has dropped from 109,900 in 2002 to 91,500 this year. These cuts mean 3,000 fewer seniors will be able to participate.

**The bill provides \$9 million less than requested for the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), including a cut of \$2.1 million from the request for coal mine enforcement.**

The Republican Attacks on Labor aren't just limited to funding. As we said on [Monday](#), during consideration by the House Appropriations Committee, seven Republicans joined Democrats in voting to attach a minimum wage increase to the Labor H bill. The amendment would increase the minimum wage from its current rate of \$5.15 to \$7.25 by January 1, 2009. The minimum wage has not been increased since 1997. 6.6 million American workers earn the minimum wage. Most are adults over the age of 20 and many are parents with children under age 18. The House Republican Leadership says they won't bring the bill up for a vote as long as they think the minimum wage increase might pass.

Below, please find the Democratic Views on funding for American workers in the Labor H bill reported out of Committee.

[View the bill.](#)

## **Democratic Views on Funding for American Workers Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Bill, FY 2007**

### **Critical Failures in the LHHS Bill for America's Workers**

Under this Administration, we have seen two years of job losses followed by three years of inadequate economic growth. As a result, seven million Americans remain unemployed — one million or 17 percent more than in 2001. More than 1.3 million

Americans have been jobless for more than 26 weeks — nearly double the number in 2001.

<b>Key Unemployment Indicators</b>				
	January-01	May-06	Change	
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Number of unemployed	5,997,000	7,015,000	1,018,000	17%
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.6%	0.4%	10%
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Meaningful job training programs and support for jobless workers should be among our highest priorities. These investments are necessary — not only to help unemployed Americans get back on their feet, but also to increase the skills and competencies of the nation’s workforce for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs. Yet, in real terms, training and employment service programs will have been cut \$1.3 billion in just two years.

**This bill cuts Workforce Investment Act Programs by \$431 million, including \$325 million already disbursed to local communities.** The \$325 million rescinded in this bill would especially undermine the ability of States and local workforce boards to respond rapidly and effectively to unanticipated plant closings, mass layoffs of workers and natural disasters. That is because nearly half of the rescission comes from Dislocated Worker funds. The bill rescinds these funds even though the Government Accountability Office previously determined that the Labor Department consistently underestimates the amounts that States and localities have already committed to job training and other employment services.

**This bill cuts \$28 million (3.7 percent) from the U.S. Employment Service, which matches jobless people to employers seeking workers.** Since FY 2001, 5.5 million or 29 percent *fewer* people have been served by the Employment Service due to budget cuts.

**This bill eliminates America’s Job Bank.** Thousands of job seekers find work through America’s Job Bank and thousands of employers use it. It is the backbone for more than 20 state job banks as well as the electronic version of a national employment service, but this bill terminates this important service.

**This bill cuts \$145 million from programs to help at-risk youth find work.** Nearly four million youth are high school dropouts who face a limited future with little hope of obtaining the skills they need to become a productive part of the workforce.

- The successful **YouthBuild** program puts unemployed young men and women to work building affordable housing while providing them with education and job training assistance. Plans to transfer this program from HUD to the Department of Labor will cost \$50 million. Rather than provide a direct appropriation for YouthBuild, the funds for this program would come out of appropriations for formula grants that help localities provide basic education and occupational skills

for at-risk and troubled youth. As a result, these **youth training formula grants** would be cut by \$55 million (5.8 percent).

- **Job Corps**, a highly successful residential program that gives disadvantaged youth an opportunity to gain the educational, vocational and social skills needed to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, is cut \$41 million (2.6 percent) in this bill. While Job Corps operating expenses receive a small \$8.7 million increase, the bill cuts nearly in half appropriations for Job Corps dormitories, classrooms and other facilities, from \$108 million FY 2006 to only \$58 million in FY 2007 — which would exacerbate a \$350 million backlog of needed facility repairs and renovations.
- The **youthful offenders training program**, which helps only a small fraction of some 120,000 juvenile offenders get necessary basic education and occupational skills, is eliminated.

**The bill eliminates Title V community service jobs for nearly 3,000 seniors.** Nearly 10 million, mostly female, seniors scrape by with incomes barely sufficient to meet their essential needs. They are eligible for the part-time, minimum wage community service jobs that the Title V senior employment program provides. Four years of funding cuts to this program have resulted in a 16.7 percent drop in the number of participants, from 109,900 in FY 2002 to 91,500 in FY 2006. Although the program provides needed income and allows low-income seniors to serve their local communities, the bill cuts the Title V program again, by \$12.3 million (2.8 percent).

**The bill cuts the International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) by \$60 million (83 percent) to \$12.4 million.** ILAB promotes core labor standards, removes children from hazardous labor, and strengthens social safety nets for disadvantaged workers around the world. In recent years, ILAB assistance has removed 250,000 children from exploitive work in more than 60 developing countries, and helped impoverished children enter and complete school in such countries as Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, Ecuador and Bolivia. ILAB has supported labor law enforcement in Central America and the Dominican Republic and other developing countries.

**The bill fails to provide a meaningful increase to protect the safety and health of over 111 million Americans.** The 2.9 percent increase in the bill for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will not reverse an 8.6 percent decline in OSHA positions, from 2,370 in FY 2001 to 2,165 in FY 2006. While not eliminated as proposed by the Administration, OSHA's Susan Harwood training grants are cut in half to \$5 million. Industry groups, unions, and nonprofits use these grants to train workers and employers on ways to prevent workplace safety and health hazards. The bill also continues the current prohibition on OSHA regulations requiring annual testing of respiratory protection for occupational exposure to tuberculosis.

**The bill provides \$9 million less than requested for the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), including a cut of \$2.1 million from the request for coal**

**mine enforcement.** This cut will partially negate the \$25.6 million FY 2006 supplemental appropriation MSHA recently received in order to reverse a loss of 217 coal mine inspector positions since FY 2001, a drop of 17.6 percent.

**The bill inexplicably denies \$10 million requested for enforcement of wage and hour laws.** Most of these funds were requested for 39 new positions to support Labor Department-initiated investigations to help low-wage workers receive the pay to which they are entitled and for employer compliance assistance under the Fair Labor Standards Act. While cutting these funds to protect worker wages, the bill approves 22 new positions for expanded enforcement actions under the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) regarding union financial reporting. LMRDA enforcement positions will have increased 40 percent since FY 2001.

**The bill freezes the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program and the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program at \$7 million and \$22 million, respectively.** In addition, the **Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program**, which supports 2,000 specialists in local communities to provide outreach and employment services, is frozen at \$161 million.

From the Democratic Views of the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2007  
Report of the Committee on Appropriations  
Report 109-515

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