

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET: EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING

After running up the largest deficit in our nation's history, Congressional Republicans are attempting to appear fiscally responsible by cutting \$6.3 billion in domestic discretionary spending as part of their \$2.6 trillion budget resolution. These cuts are not large enough to have any meaningful effect on the projected \$390 billion budget deficit, but they will cause great harm to millions of Americans. This fact sheet summarizes the effect of the Republican budget cuts on public school children, college students and workers attempting to find a job or update their skills.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND. NCLB is the key to closing the achievement gap between the 8 million low-income children in public schools and their higher income peers. Yet, the Republican budget underfunds efforts to provide intensive reading and math education to low-income children (Title I), which is the key to making NCLB education reform a success. In total, the Republican budget provides \$13.3 billion for Title I grants – \$9.4 billion less than promised under NCLB – denying 2.9 million low-income children extra math and reading help.

AFTER SCHOOL CENTERS, CHILDCARE AND HEAD START. Millions of children have parents who work and need pre-school and extended learning opportunities for their children, including 14 million children who are home alone after school each day. Yet, funding for after-school centers would be frozen at about \$1 billion for the fourth straight year under the Republican Budget, about \$1.3 billion less than promised under NCLB. Childcare and existing Head Start centers would receive no additional funding. In fact, Head Start could be forced to deny its services to 25,000 children.

TEACHER QUALITY AND SCHOOL REFORM. In 2004, approximately 11,000 schools – nearly double the number in the previous year – failed for the second consecutive year to make the academic progress required under NCLB. These schools need high-quality teachers. Yet, the Republican Budget freezes teacher quality state grants at \$2.9 billion, \$258 million less than promised under NCLB, denying 56,000 teachers high-quality professional development.

PELL GRANTS AND COLLEGE AID. A college education is critical in the 21st century economy, yet each year over 200,000 qualified high school graduates do not enroll in college because they cannot afford it. Since 2001, the maximum Pell Grant has increased only 8 percent while the cost of attending a four-year public college has increased 26 percent, or \$2,300. Yet the Republican budget would provide only a \$100 increase in the maximum Pell award in 2006 and the purchasing power of Pell Grants would continue to drop over the next 5 years. Moreover, Republicans pay for their small Pell Grant increase by eliminating Perkins Loans, which would result in nearly 500,000 students receiving LESS college financial aid.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Our nation made a commitment that 6.9 million students with disabilities would have full access to a public education and that the Federal government would pay 40 percent of special education costs. Yet, the Republican Budget breaks the Majority's promise to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and freezes the Federal contribution toward special education costs at 19 percent. In total, the Republican budget falls \$12.7 billion short of fully funding special education.

JOB TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. The jobs recovery continues to lag behind with 7.7 million Americans unemployed. Another 5.0 million individuals who want a job are no longer counted as unemployed, and 4.3 million people work part-time because of the weak economy. Yet, the Republican Budget cuts employment and training services by more than \$400 million. If these cuts are enacted, Republicans will have cut nearly \$1.5 billion in real terms from these programs since the start of the Bush Administration.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL TRAINING. Businesses in rapidly growing industries face the prospect that many high-skill, high-wage jobs will go unfilled or be outsourced because they cannot find enough qualified American workers. At the same time, millions of young adults ages 16 to 24 lack the skills needed to secure jobs that pay more than poverty-level wages. Yet, the Republican Budget terminates the entire \$1.3 billion Federal investment in career and technical training in the nation's high schools and community colleges. The nearly half of all high school students and one-third of college students who take vocational courses would be denied this funding, leaving many of them unprepared to enter the workforce.