



APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE DEMOCRATS

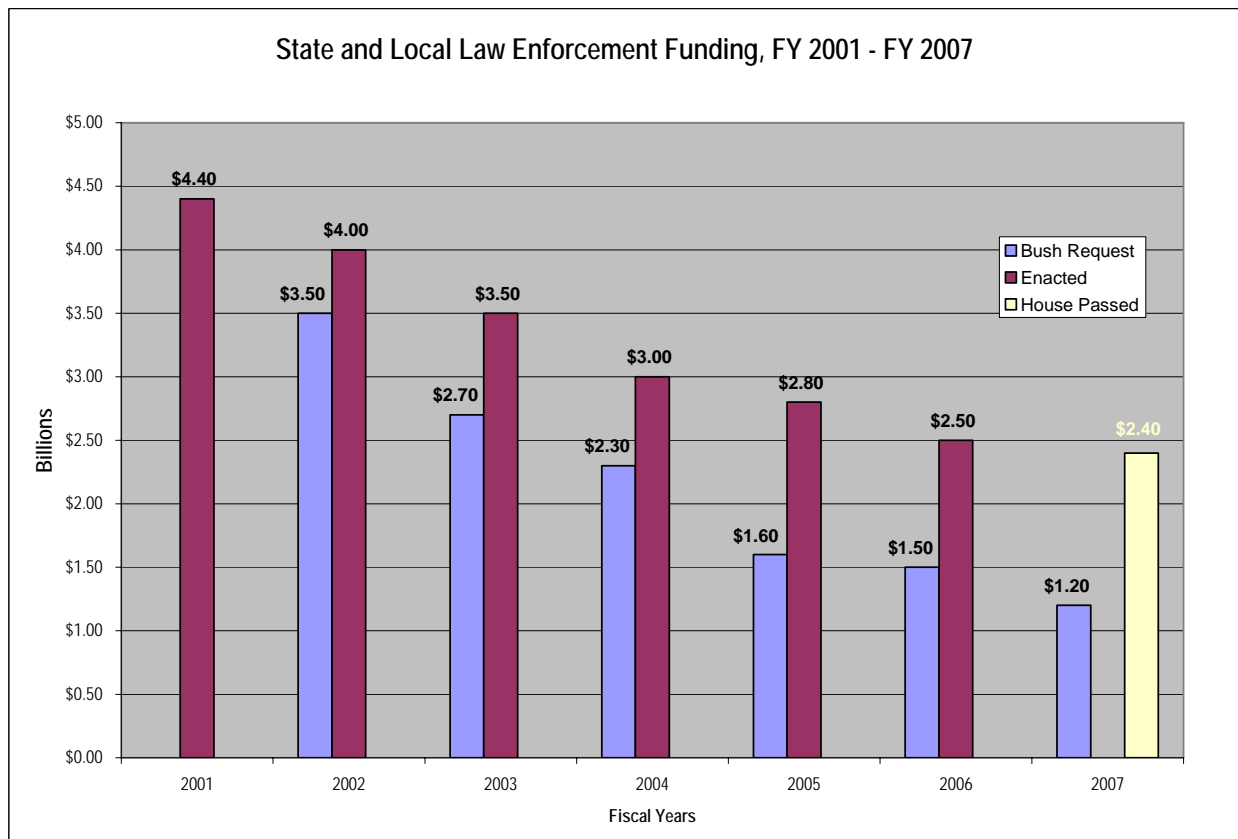
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A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP: LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNDING DOWN, CRIME UP

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.

For example, President Bush and the Republican Congress continue to whittle away at support for State and local law enforcement even as the latest FBI statistics show the number of murders, rapes, and aggravated assaults increased last year.

- **Overall, the Administration and the Republican Congress have cut \$2 billion from State and local law enforcement since 2001.** Last year, the Congress provided \$2.5 billion for law enforcement grants, \$1 billion above the President's request, but \$300 million below the 2005 level. In 2005, funding was \$1.2 billion above the request, but \$200 million below 2004. In 2004, funding was \$500 million below the 2003 level. In 2003, funding was \$500 million below the 2002 level. In 2002, funding was \$400 million below the high-water mark for Federal assistance to state and local law enforcement of \$4.4 billion in 2001.
- This year, President Bush proposed cutting another \$1 billion for State and local law enforcement. While not agreeing to such a large cut, House Republicans still cut this funding by another \$100 million below the previous year. If House Republicans get their way support for State and local law enforcement will have been cut by nearly 46 percent since 2001.



Last year, murders rose 3.4 percent. More than 16,600 people were murdered in 2005. Overall, violent crime increased by 2.3 percent, the largest percentage increase since 1991.

Under the Clinton Administration, the violent crime rate fell steadily. Between 1993 and 2000, the number of violent crimes dropped by 26 percent.

In commenting on the rise in crime, one criminal justice expert blamed the increase on “the abandonment of effective programs that emphasize prevention,” noting that “budgets for policing are being slashed and the federal government has gotten out of that business.”¹

Now is not the time to cut funding that keeps our communities crime and drug-free. Yet, Congressional Republicans are getting out of the business of being tough on criminals and protecting American families.

¹ 'Violent Crime is Up for the 1st Time in 5 Years,' Associated Press, 6/12/2006