



REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

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Ryan Amendment to Highlight and Fight Waste, Fraud and Abuse at the CDC

- A recent and troubling report entitled *CDC Off Center*, which was produced under the direction of Senator Tom Coburn of Oklahoma, shows that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has not been a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars.
- Instead of using its resources to fight life-threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS and cancer, the CDC has instead spent money on needless luxury items and non-governmental functions.
- For example, the CDC's Office of Health and Safety recently provided its employees with a new, extravagant fitness center that includes such items as rotating pastel "mood" lights, zero-gravity chairs, and \$15,000 dry-heat saunas.
- The CDC has also spent over \$1.7 million on a "Hollywood Liaison" to advise TV shows like *E.R.* and *House* on the medical information included in their programming – clearly an expense that should be covered by successful for-profit television shows, not by hard-earned taxpayer dollars.
- The CDC is further squandering taxpayer dollars on an office intended to help improve employee morale. This program, which currently costs \$250,000 per year, has fielded just 98 complaints since it was created last year. At this rate, it is costing the taxpayer \$2,809 per complaint. Despite the program's lack of use, CDC is planning to spend at least \$1 million more to expand it.
- In a time when we are facing an increasing risk of bioterrorism and disease, these are hardly the best uses of taxpayer dollars.
- My amendment to the Fiscal Year 2008 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act would ensure that CDC would not be able to spend any more federal funding on the three boondoggles described above.
- It is my hope that by further highlighting these instances of waste, we can ensure that CDC gets back to its vital mission of "promoting health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury and disability."
- Other examples of wasteful spending at the CDC include the following:
 - \$128,000 in bioterrorism funds spent on magnets, whistles, and pens.
 - \$45 million to send hundreds of employees to conferences, some of which featured prostitutes, protests and beach parties.