



APPROPRIATIONS ALERT

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HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS FIRST INSTALLMENT IN THE DEMOCRATS’ 2008 SPENDING SPREE (H.R. 2638)

The Democrats’ Homeland Security appropriation is the first in a series of bills aimed at increasing non-emergency spending by \$81.4 billion compared with 2007 (including \$26 billion for domestic programs) – an increase of more than 9 percent, or more than three times the rate of inflation. This is on top of the \$6 billion Democrats added to the current-year omnibus, and the \$17 billion in non-war non-emergency spending they added to the Iraq supplemental. In addition, *this bill launches a strategy of deliberately circumventing the celebrated House earmark rules*, by refusing to identify earmarks until conference.

Regarding the Homeland Security bill specifically:

- ***Raising the Ante.*** The President’s budget calls for a robust increase of \$2.3 billion, or 7.2 percent, for homeland security discretionary spending – more than twice the rate of inflation. The Democrats’ \$36.3 billion in net discretionary budget authority would double the President’s increase – to 14 percent, or \$4.3 billion.
- ***Taking Advantage of Pre-Funding.*** The Democrats have already used the 2007 supplemental to pre-fund \$1.1 billion in fiscal year 2008 homeland security programs – which lets them free up cap room for other spending. Homeland security spending already enacted in the supplemental includes: \$75 million to accelerate deploying air and marine operations along the Northern Border as well as procuring additional patrol and surveillance equipment; \$285 million for in-line baggage explosive detection equipment; \$80 million for air cargo security; \$100 million for mass transit grants; \$110 million for port security grants.
- ***Dodging Earmark Transparency.*** The Appropriations Committee Chairman has deliberately chosen not to identify earmarks in any of the House bills. This creates the potential for stealth earmarks, inserted in conference, in this and other appropriations *so Democrats can dodge their own House earmark transparency rules*. Under Republican majorities, the Homeland Security appropriations bill was virtually free of earmarks.
- ***Setting Up a Budgetary Train Wreck.*** Again, homeland security is the first installment in more than \$80 billion in spending increases the Democrats are proposing – a plan that will lead to an inevitable veto confrontation with the President before the year is out.