

Appropriations: Clear Differences

How 2 Months Spending In Iraq Could be Put to Better Use

Example 8: Homeland Security Grants to Help States and Local Communities

\$ 2 billion = 6 Days in Iraq

WASHINGTON – Even as the President presents Congress with his nearly \$200 billion request covering the \$10 billion a month we are spending in Iraq (paid for with borrowed money), he is trying to masquerade as fiscally responsible by manufacturing a fight over \$22 billion (roughly 2 months in Iraq) in investments that will make this a stronger and better country.

What would that \$22 billion achieve? Every day we're going to bring you one specific example of how Congress and the President differ on appropriations.

Example 8: Homeland Security Grants to States and Local Communities **\$2 billion above the President's Request = The cost of 6 days in Iraq**

A year after September 11th, the Hart-Rudman Commission released the report [America - Still Unprepared, Still in Danger](#). The following year they had a follow-up report [Emergency Responders - Drastically Underfunded, Dangerously Unprepared](#). A year after that, in 2004, the [9/11 Commission Report](#) identified serious vulnerabilities in our national security, and made its own recommendations. Despite these warnings, the [National Intelligence Estimate](#) released in July found that we are no safer today than we were in 2001.

Even as our country continues to be under constant threat from terrorists, the President would have us cut efforts to help state and local governments prevent and prepare for terrorist attacks and natural disasters like the one we have in California today.

The **President's Budget cuts first responder (the firefighters, police, and emergency medical personnel first at the scene) and port security grants by \$1.1 billion below last year**, slashing our investments in grants for:

- Planning, equipping, and training **first responders to respond to terrorist attacks** and catastrophic incidents by \$650 million;
- **Addressing communication, equipment and staffing problems** facing local fire departments (**including SAFER**) by \$362 million; and
- Preparing **medical responses to mass casualty incidents** such as terrorism, epidemics, and natural disasters in high threat communities are eliminated (\$50 million).

His budget also freezes high need grant programs that:

- **Protect critical ports;**
- **Provide emergency managers with all-hazard assistance;** and
- **Protect critical infrastructure**, including rail and ferry systems, in high-threat areas.

The House Bills reject those cuts, investing \$2 billion above the President's request, roughly the cost of 6 days in Iraq, for first responders and port security around the country.

The differences couldn't be clearer.