

Appropriations: Clear Differences

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

Example 3: Improving Transportation Infrastructure & Creating Jobs

\$2.4 billion = 1 Week in Iraq

WASHINGTON – As Congress waits for the President to send over the rest of his nearly \$200 billion request to cover 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 example of how Congress and the President differ on appropriations.

Example 3: Improving Transportation Infrastructure & Creating Jobs Healthcare Access **\$2.4 billion above the President's Request = The cost of 1 week in Iraq**

We have an economy that depends on a strong transportation system, but that system is in crisis. This year, travelers in our Nation faced some of the [worst flying conditions](#) in U.S. history – with record delays, cancellations, and lost luggage. The Minnesota bridge collapse reminded everyone of the dangers posed by our nation's crumbling highway and [bridge](#) infrastructure. And congestion on our roads left American drivers wasting 4.2 billion hours and 2.9 billion gallons of gas [a year](#) sitting in traffic.

The President's Budget:

- Proposes funding **highway infrastructure programs** at \$631 million below the level guaranteed in SAFETEA-LU, the highway authorization bill (passed by the Republican Congress, signed into law [by President Bush](#)). Under House rules if the bill does not meet those guarantees it can (and will) be struck on the House floor.
- Cuts **Airport Modernization, Safety and Efficiency** Grants that would improve flying conditions by \$765 million. Hardest hit are 2,986 airports that serve fewer than 10,000 passengers a year - mostly in small, rural communities - which would lose formula funding.
- Cuts **Amtrak** by \$494 million and grants for **commuter rail and light rail** that would help reduce traffic would be cut by \$167 million.

The House Bill rejects those cuts, making **\$2.4 billion** above the President's request, the cost of 1 week in Iraq, for key investments to improve our country's transportation infrastructure and create jobs. The bill:

- Fully meets **highway infrastructure** funding to improve roads and bridges as guaranteed in SAFETEA-LU.
- Increases funding for **Airport Modernization, Safety and Efficiency** by \$850 million above the President's request, to ease congestion and increase safety at our nation's airports.
- Rejects the cuts to **Amtrak** and provides \$300 million above the President's request for **commuter and light rail** to increase public use of mass transit, reduce traffic, use less gas, and save commuters money while reducing pollution. The increase above the President's request for these grants is expected to generate as many as 17,400 new jobs.

The differences couldn't be clearer.

