

SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE

KENT CONRAD, CHAIRMAN

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STATEMENT BY SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN KENT CONRAD (D-ND) RESPONDING TO REPUBLICAN DEFICIT CLAIMS

“The idea that this year’s record deficit can be blamed on anyone other than President Bush and his Republican backers is utterly preposterous. I’ve never seen such a blatant and cynical effort to rewrite history and divert attention from the failure of their own fiscal policies.

“The Bush administration, with the support of Republicans, has been the most fiscally irresponsible in the nation’s history. The facts speak for themselves. This President has turned record surpluses into record deficits. While the last Democratic White House put the country on track to pay down all publicly-held debt; this Republican White House has exploded our debt. Americans know that we had the strongest economy in three decades under the previous Democratic White House. Compare that to President Bush and his Republican allies who are overseeing an economy slowing sharply, with record home foreclosures, eight straight months of job losses, and energy and food prices that are going through the roof.

“We ought not be surprised by the Republicans’ poor fiscal track record. That’s what happens when the Vice President believes that “deficits don’t matter.” And when Democrats reached out to the administration to address the long-term fiscal imbalance, Vice President Cheney scuttled attempts to jump start discussions.

“Despite Republicans’ feeble attempts to blame others for their own fiscal misdeeds, no one has forgotten that Republicans have been in the White House for the last seven-and-a-half years. No one has forgotten that it was Republicans who wiped out the surplus and plunged us into this hole with huge tax cuts for the wealthiest and hundreds of billions of dollars spent in Iraq. The American people won’t forget. Instead of blaming others, Republicans ought to own up to their own fiscal failures.”

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