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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

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Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman

May 27, 2004

The report describes an explosion in the use of sole-source and other noncompetitive contracts. The taxpayers are being hit by a double whammy: the Bush Administration has given favored contractors like Halliburton and Bechtel billions in new contracts, and it has done so without providing an opportunity for others to compete. It's a recipe for waste, fraud, and abuse.

The statistics in the report are not as compelling as the image of using private contractors to conduct military interrogations, but they are two sides of the same coin. Increasingly, the Administration is turning over essential government functions to the private sector, and it has jettisoned basic safeguards like competition and supervision that are needed to protect the public interest.

The Administration's approach to government procurement is deeply flawed. We need more competition, not less. And we need to place the interests of the taxpayer ahead of the interests of the contractors.