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New Features Added to Earmarks Database at www.earmarks.omb.gov

WASHINGTON - Today, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) posted new information to its earmarks database, which is publicly available at www.earmarks.omb.gov.

The first change is that the database will now show earmarks as they move through the FY08 appropriations process. The number of earmarks and the dollar value of those earmarks can be viewed as a bill moves through the legislative process.

The second change is that earmarks for selected authorization bills resulting in expenditures in 2005 have been posted to the database. This is an expansion beyond appropriations legislation, recognizing that while most earmarks appear in annual appropriations bill, some appear in authorization legislation. These new authorization bills include the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002.

"American taxpayers deserve to know how and where government spends their money. Earmarks have more than tripled in the last decade – and have resulted in billions of dollars in inefficient or unnecessary spending," said OMB Director Rob Portman. "Today's update is part of the ongoing effort to bring greater transparency to federal spending and to restrain earmarking."

Background

On January 3, 2007, President Bush called on Congress to reform earmarks, including cutting their number and cost by at least half. To establish a clear benchmark for measuring progress on this goal, OMB posted data on the earmarks for FY2005 appropriations showing there were 13,492 earmarks totaling $18.9 billion.

Launched on March 12, 2007, the database at www.earmarks.omb.gov provides more information on earmarks in one place than has ever been available through the Federal Government. Visitors to the database are able to search data by keyword.

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