

**Transcript of Remarks by Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND)
at Press Conference Following House & Senate Adoption
of the FY2008 Budget Conference Report
May 17, 2007**

Thank you Speaker Pelosi and Leader Reid.

I was just delighted by the vote, 52 to 40. It turned out to be a bipartisan vote.

We have put up here the key elements of this budget. We have now broken a long chain of deficits and debt, and instead are moving in a new direction:

- balancing the budget by 2012 with a surplus of some \$41 billion in that year;
- we extend the middle-class tax cuts;
- we provide for no tax increase – there is no tax increase assumed in this budget.

At the same time we fund the country's priorities:

- a strong national defense;
- expansion of children's health care so that we can have the potential of covering every child;
- investments in education to maintain our strong position in the world; and,
- I think in many ways the most important value, increasing the funding of veterans health care. We have all witnessed the scandal of Walter Reed. We're saying in this budget document, "Never again." We are going to keep the promise to this nation's veterans.

So I could not be more proud of the budget document than what we have advanced. And, I want to thank my colleague, the outstanding Chairman of the House Budget Committee, Congressman Spratt.