

Endorsements of 2008 Committee Reported Budget Resolution  
(Status as of 3/27/2007)

**Veterans and Military Retirees**

- Independent Budget, March 21
- American Legion, March 21
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, March 21
- Disabled American Veterans News Release, March 21
- Military Officers Association of America, March 26

**Transportation**

- American Public Transportation Association, March 23
- Transportation Construction Coalition, March 23

**Environment**

- Defenders of Wildlife, March 22
- Environmental Coalition (including American Rivers, Audubon, NRDC, Sierra Club, Wilderness Society and many others), March 26
- Trout Unlimited, March 26

**Low-Income**

- National Low Income Housing Coalition, March 26
- Wider Opportunities for Women Letter, March 23

**Disability**

- American Association of People with Disabilities, March 26
- Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, March 26
- United Cerebral Palsy, March 26
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- National Council of Social Security Management Associations, March 27

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**Health**

- Families USA, March 26

- American Academy of Pediatrics, March 27

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

- OMB Watch, March 26

# THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET

*A Budget for Veterans by Veterans*

[www.independentbudget.org](http://www.independentbudget.org)

March 21, 2007

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.  
Chairman, House Committee on the Budget  
207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-6065

Dear Chairman Spratt:

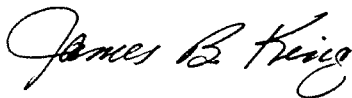
On behalf of *The Independent Budget*, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your unwavering support of our nation's sick and disabled veterans.

We appreciate your efforts as Chairman of the House Committee on the Budget to achieve an excellent mark for total discretionary spending for the Department of Veterans Affairs for this year. Your support for discretionary funding levels consistent with *The Independent Budget* will allow the VA to better address the needs of the men and women returning from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom as well as all veterans who have served in the past.

However, we must note that the projections for modest increases in the out years would be insufficient. We can not expect VA to continue to meet future demand with the minimal increases projected in coming years.

We appreciate your strong advocacy for our nation's service-connected disabled veterans, and all veterans and their families, and we will support you in any way to ensure that the funding levels you have established for this year as a benchmark will be achieved.

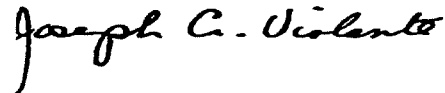
Sincerely,



James B. King  
Executive Director  
AMVETS



Carl Blake  
National Legislative Director  
Paralyzed Veterans of America



Joseph A. Violante  
National Legislative Director  
Disabled American Veterans



Dennis Cullinan  
National Legislative Director  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
of the United States

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A Joint Project of:

AMVETS  
4647 Forbes Boulevard  
Lanham, MD 20706  
(301) 459-9600  
[www.amvets.org](http://www.amvets.org)

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS  
807 Maine Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2410  
(202) 554-3501  
[www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA  
801 Eighteenth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-3517  
(202) 872-1300  
[www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org)

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
200 Maryland Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
(202) 543-2239  
[www.vfwdc.org](http://www.vfwdc.org)

# The American Legion



For God and Country

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★ 1608 "K" STREET, N.W. ★ WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006-2847 ★  
(202) 861-2700 ★ FAX (202) 861-2728 ★

March 21, 2007

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr., Chairman  
Committee on Budget  
United States House of Representatives  
B-71 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6065

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The American Legion and its 2.8 million members applaud the Budget Committee for the Budget Resolution recommendation for \$43.1 billion in discretionary funding for Veterans (Function 700). This represents an increase of \$3.5 billion above the President's budget request for FY 2008 and \$6.6 billion above current funding level for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

As a nation at war, this funding will help cover the ongoing cost of war to care for the men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families. Your recommendations closely parallel the views and estimates submitted by The American Legion earlier this year.

The American Legion urges the Congress to provide the Department of Veterans Affairs with sufficient funding to meet the needs of taking care of America's service members – past, present, and future. We look forward to working with you and your congressional colleagues in ensuring the Department of Veterans Affairs remains a solid agency that meets this nation's obligation to those men and women sent into harm's way.

Sincerely,

Steve Robertson, Director  
National Legislative Commission

CC: Representative Paul Ryan  
Representative Chet Edwards  
Representative Roger Wicker

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
FOUNDED 1899



GARY KURPIUS  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

VFW MEMORIAL BUILDING  
200 MARYLAND AVENUE, NE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002-5799

March 21, 2007

The Hon. John Spratt  
Chairman  
Committee On The Budget  
U.S. House of Representatives  
310 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

On behalf of the 2.4 million men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. (VFW), and our Auxiliaries, I would like to offer our gratitude for the leadership you have demonstrated on veterans' issues through your dramatic increase above and beyond the President's request for fiscal year 2008 funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

We have long argued that the price of health care and benefits for this nation's veterans are the ongoing costs of war. The \$3.5 billion increase above the President's request is a strong acknowledgement that you agree and that this nation must do more to live up to its sacred obligations to those who have defended her. The costs of war are not just about buying bombs or tanks, but about providing for our sick and disabled when they return, and helping these heroes care for their families and dependents.

The dramatic increase in this budget recommendation will help to ensure that all veterans – those from Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom and those from all our previous conflicts – have access to the high-quality health care VA provides, and quicker resolution to their veterans' disability compensation decisions.

The members of the VFW stand firmly behind you, in support of your strong advocacy for this nation's veterans. We thank you for your strong leadership on veterans' health care and benefits, and we look forward to working with you to ensure the success of this budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Kurpius".

Gary Kurpius  
Commander-in-Chief



**DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS**

807 Maine Ave., SW • Washington, D.C. 20024 • Phone (202) 554-3501 • Fax (202) 863-0233

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**Contact:** David E. Autry  
(202) 314-5219

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 21, 2007

## **House, Senate Budget Plans Keep Faith with Veterans**

WASHINGTON—The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is urging lawmakers to support a recommended \$6.6 billion increase in funding for veterans health care and other programs as called for in 2008 budget blueprints being debated in the House and Senate.

“The budget recommendations that came out of the House and Senate Budget Committees will make a real difference in the lives of America’s sick and disabled veterans,” said DAV National Commander Bradley S. Barton. “This is especially important as our nation is at war.”

Both budget resolutions reported out of committee call for \$43.1 billion in discretionary spending for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the bulk of which is for veterans health care. That is \$6.6 billion above the fiscal 2007 enacted level and \$3.5 billion above the President’s request. The congressional budget blueprints do not include user fees and higher prescription co-payments contained in the President’s plan.

Commander Barton praised Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad (D-N.D.) and House Budget Committee Chairman John Spratt (D-N.C.) for their support of discretionary funding levels in line with recommendations in *The Independent Budget* authored by the DAV and other veterans service organizations. “This much-needed funding increase will allow the Department of Veterans Affairs to better meet the needs of the men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as all veterans who have served in the past,” he said.

While the draft budget resolutions call for significant increases in spending for veterans programs in fiscal year 2008, the DAV is concerned about future projected funding levels. “Funding must keep pace with rising health care costs and an expected increase in veterans seeking services from the VA,” Barton said. “The DAV will continue working with Congress to ensure that future budgets meet the needs of our nation’s sick and disabled veterans.”

The 1.3 million-member Disabled American Veterans, a non-profit organization founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932, represents this nation’s disabled veterans. It is dedicated to a single purpose: building better lives for our nation’s disabled veterans and their families. For more information, visit the organization’s Web site [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org).

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**VADM Norbert R. Ryan, Jr. USN (Ret)**  
*President*

March 26, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman, Committee on Budget  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the more than 360,000 members of the Military Officers Association of America, I am writing to express MOAA's appreciation for your efforts to address the most pressing needs of the military and veterans' community in the FY2008 Budget Resolution.

In particular, we are grateful to you and your Committee for increasing funding for VA health care and services by \$5.4 billion above the current services level and for rejecting the Administration proposal to triple TRICARE fees for military retirees and reduce the Defense health budget by \$1.86 billion. MOAA very much supports the Committee's priority on keeping health care commitments to our retirees and veterans.

We also note with pleasure that the Committee provided latitude in the Budget Resolution for additional improvements in military pay and benefits to promote and sustain long-term retention and readiness. MOAA looks forward to continued dialogue with the Committee in identifying options to address needs for a military pay raise of at least 3.5% and for additional progress in reducing compensation inequities for disabled military retirees and survivors of members who die of service-connected causes.

Sincerely, *of all the best*  
*Norbert Ryan*

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan



**AMERICAN  
PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION  
ASSOCIATION**

March 23, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman  
House Committee on the Budget  
207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6065

Dear Chairman Spratt:

On behalf of the more than 1,500 member organizations of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), I write to express our strong support for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 House Budget Resolution which provides the resources necessary to fund the federal transit program at the full level authorized and guaranteed by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU, P.L. 109-59). We believe the committee's support of public transportation funding in the resolution is a worthy investment decision among many prudent choices.

Public transportation reduces congestion making roads flow more freely, and it provides mobility to millions of Americans. Transit use also reduces energy consumption and makes our transportation system more efficient. As we invest in transit, it is also critical that we do everything possible to protect riders against terrorist attacks. In that regard, we also appreciate the fact that the FY 2008 House Budget Resolution begins to better address transit security needs.

We thank you for your support of investment in the nation's public transportation infrastructure, and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the years ahead. If you have questions, please have your staff contact Homer Carlisle of APTA's Government Affairs Department at (202) 496-4810 or email [hcarlisle@apta.com](mailto:hcarlisle@apta.com).

Sincerely yours,

William W. Millar  
President

WWM/tjj

Chair  
Howard Silver

First Vice Chair  
Michael S. Townes

Secretary-Treasurer  
Michael J. Scanlon

Immediate Past Chair  
Ronald L. Barnes

Vice Chairs

Richard J. Bacigalupo  
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Allen D. Biehler  
State Affairs

Christopher P. Boylan  
Government Affairs

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Transit Board Members

Thomas J. Costello  
Marketing and Communications

Michael P. DePallo  
Rail Transit

Fred M. Gilliam  
Bus and Paratransit Operations

Kim R. Green  
Business Member-at-Large

Delon Hampton  
Business Members

John M. Inglish  
Research and Technology

Jeanne Krieg  
Human Resources

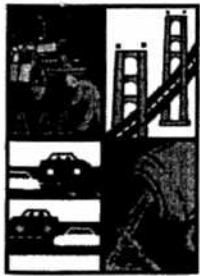
Gary W. McNeil  
Canadian Members

Hugh A. Mose  
Small Operations

David Solow  
Commuter and Intercity Rail

President  
William W. Millar





**TRANSPORTATION  
CONSTRUCTION  
COALITION**

**We're Building A  
Better America!**

American Road & Transportation Builders Association (co-chair) ■ Associated General Contractors of America (co-chair) ■ American Coal Ash Association ■ American Concrete Pavement Association ■ American Concrete Pipe Association ■ American Council of Engineering Companies ■ American Society of Civil Engineers ■ American Subcontractors Association ■ American Traffic Safety Services Association ■ Asphalt Emulsion Manufacturers Association ■ Asphalt Recycling & Reclaiming Association ■ Associated Equipment Distributors ■ Association of Equipment Manufacturers ■ International Slurry Surfacing Association ■ International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers ■ International Union of Operating Engineers ■ Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust ■ Laborers' International Union of North America, AFL-CIO ■ National Asphalt Pavement Association ■ National Association of Surety Bond Producers ■ National Lime Association ■ National Ready Mixed Concrete Association ■ National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association ■ National Utility Contractors Association ■ Portland Cement Association ■ Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute ■ The Road Information Program ■ United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

For More Information:  
202/289-4434 (ARTBA)  
703/548-3118 (AGC)

March 23, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman  
House Committee on the Budget  
207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

The 28 national associations and construction unions of the Transportation Construction Coalition commend you for developing an FY 2008 budget proposal that follows through on the commitments Congress and the Administration made to improve the nation's highway and transit network.

The 2005 reauthorization of the federal surface transportation program, SAFETEA-LU, guarantees an FY 2008 highway investment level of \$40.2 billion and public transportation investment of \$9.7 billion. The proposed budget resolution reported by the House Budget Committee fully adheres to these requirements. These resources will be used for critical surface transportation improvements in every state that will strengthen the nation's economy and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

Congress created statutory funding guarantees for the federal highway and transit programs in 1998 to protect the integrity of the surface transportation financing user fee concept. The House budget resolution's treatment of these programs keeps faith with that concept by ensuring Highway Trust Fund revenues are fully invested in improving the nation's transportation infrastructure network.

We are also pleased the proposed FY 2008 budget would provide critical resources to help alleviate congestion in the nation's air traffic system. The measure assumes \$3.8 billion for the Airport Improvement Program which would support needed expansion and improvement of airport runway capacity.

The members of the Transportation Construction Coalition appreciate the strong message the proposed House budget resolution sends about the importance of transportation infrastructure improvements to U.S. quality of life and economic strength. We urge all House members to support passage of this important measure.

Sincerely,

The Transportation Construction Coalition



March 26, 2007

**RE: Vote "YES" on H. Con. Res. 99, the FY 2008 House Budget Resolution**

Dear Representative:

The Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund is an independent organization committed to giving conservation issues a political voice on Capitol Hill and around the nation. In January 2007, the Action Fund published its fourth annual Conservation Report Card, which highlighted the voting records of Members of Congress on legislation vital to protecting our nation's wildlife and wild landscapes for future generations. The Action Fund will strongly consider including the vote on H. Con. Res. 99, the FY 2008 House Budget Resolution in its next Conservation Report Card. H. Con. Res. 99 would begin to reverse years of budget cuts to programs that protect our environment and natural resources and would provide a significant increase over the President's budget request. The Action Fund strongly urges you to vote "YES" on the Resolution.

Under the leadership of Chairman Spratt, the FY 2008 House Budget Resolution takes an important first step in renewing our nation's commitment to protecting our natural heritage after years of severely inadequate budgets. Programs that protect our wildlife and public lands have suffered significant cuts in recent years; even meager increases that have been given to some programs have failed to keep pace with fixed costs. While additional increases will be needed in the future to meet all the pressing needs, the funding levels in the House Resolution represent a significant down payment that will help us begin to rebuild our deteriorating public land and wildlife agencies.

The Action fund is pleased that H. Con. Res. 99 would provide a total appropriated level of \$31.4 billion for environment and natural resource programs for FY 2008, \$2.6 billion over the President's request and \$1 billion over the final FY 2007 levels. The budget blueprint rejects the President's damaging cuts to endangered species protection, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, many Farm Bill conservation programs, and other important wildlife, habitat and public lands programs. The Budget Resolution also would begin to restore funding for the National Wildlife Refuge System, which has been undergoing a massive restructuring and downsizing in the face of budget shortfalls. In addition, the Resolution includes a deficit-neutral reserve fund that supports an increase of \$20 billion over the next five years for reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

The House Budget Resolution represents an important beginning in the restoration of environmental programs neglected by years of inadequate budgets. The Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund urges you to vote in support of these important programs by voting "Yes" on the House Budget Resolution. Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to working with you throughout the FY 2008 budget and appropriations process. For more information, please contact Mary Beth Beetham in our office at (202) 772-0231.

Sincerely,

Rodger Schlickeisen  
President



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2007

Contact: Deborah Bagocius 202.772.0239

## HOUSE BUDGET BLUEPRINT MAKES DOWN PAYMENT ON ENVIRONMENT Funding Reverses Cuts to Wildlife and Lands

Washington, DC - Defenders of Wildlife today praised the House Budget Committee and its chairman John Spratt (D-SC) for beginning to reverse years of budget cuts to programs that protect our environment and natural resources. The Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Resolution passed late last night by the budget panel would provide a significant increase over the President's budget request.

"Under the leadership of Chairman Spratt, the House Budget Committee has taken an important first step in renewing our nation's commitment to protecting our natural heritage after years of slash and burn budgets by the Bush administration," said Defenders of Wildlife president, Rodger Schlickeisen. "The funding levels included in the House Budget Resolution represent a significant down payment that will help us to rebuild our deteriorating public land and wildlife agencies."

The House Budget Resolution would provide a total appropriated level of \$31.4 billion for environment and natural resource programs for FY 2008, \$2.6 billion over the President's request and \$1 billion over the final FY 2007 levels. The budget blueprint rejects the President's damaging cuts to endangered species protection, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, many Farm Bill conservation programs, and other important wildlife, habitat and public lands programs. The funding provided also would begin to restore the National Wildlife Refuge System, which has been undergoing a massive restructuring and downsizing in the face of budget shortfalls. In addition, the resolution includes a deficit-neutral reserve fund that supports an increase of \$20 billion over the next five years for reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

"Chairman Spratt has taken the first step toward restoring environmental programs that were essentially on life-support following years of cuts by the Bush administration," continued Schlickeisen. "We look forward to working with him, the House and Senate Budget Committees, and Congressional appropriators in the coming years to secure the funding to make them whole again so our children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy a vibrant and healthy environment."

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*Defenders of Wildlife is recognized as one of the nation's most progressive advocates for wildlife and its habitat. With more than 500,000 members and supporters, Defenders of Wildlife is an effective leader on endangered species issues.*

**AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY • AMERICAN RIVERS  
• AUDUBON • CLEAN WATER ACTION • DEFENDERS  
OF WILDLIFE • EARTHJUSTICE • FRIENDS OF THE  
EARTH • MARINE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY  
INSTITUTE • NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST •  
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION •  
NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL • OCEAN  
CONSERVANCY • OCEANA • SIERRA CLUB • U.S.  
PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP • THE  
WILDERNESS SOCIETY**

March 26, 2007

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the millions of Americans our organizations represent, we write to urge you to support the House Budget Resolution offered by Chairman Spratt. The House budget recognizes the urgent need for investment in the nation's environment and natural resources. The programs that safeguard our environment and public health have suffered significant cuts in recent years with even the programs receiving increases failing to keep pace with inflation. While additional funding will be necessary in the future, by providing \$2.6 billion more in appropriated funds for function 300 than the President's budget the House budget takes an important step toward reversing this trend and better protecting our air, water, public lands, parks, and wildlife. We urge you to support the resolution and look forward to working with you going forward to continue to improve the prognosis for our environment and natural resources.

Enacting the President's fiscal year 2008 budget request would have serious impacts for the environment and natural resources on which our health and economy depend. For example, the President proposed: slashing \$500 million from the Environmental Protection Agency's State and Tribal Assistance Grants that fund crucial state programs to protect air and water quality; shortchanging land conservation by proposing record-low levels for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and continuing to starve the land management and wildlife agencies; and providing insufficient resources to improve the health of our oceans.

By rejecting the President's proposed cuts and providing a down payment of additional resources to address high priority needs, the House budget takes a crucial step toward restoring these essential programs and protecting the environment and public health.

We urge you to support these critical programs, and we look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the 2008 budget and appropriations process.

Sincerely,

Perry Plumart  
Director, Conservation Advocacy  
American Bird Conservancy

Michael Woodbridge  
Director of Government Affairs  
National Wildlife Refuge Association

Peter Raabe  
Policy Director for Budget and  
Appropriations  
American Rivers

Karen Wayland  
Legislative Director  
Natural Resources Defense Council

Brian Moore  
Assistant Director, Government  
Relations  
Audubon

Dana Wolfe  
Legislative Program Manager  
Ocean Conservancy

Lynn Thorp  
National Campaigns Coordinator  
Clean Water Action

Beth Lowell  
Ocean Wildlife Advocate  
Oceana

Mary Beth Beetham  
Director of Legislative Affairs  
Defenders of Wildlife

Debbie Sease  
National Campaigns Director  
Sierra Club

Marty Hayden  
Legislative Director  
Earthjustice

Anna Aurilio  
Legislative Director  
U.S. Public Interest Research Group

Sara Zdeb  
Legislative Director  
Friends of the Earth

Sarah Neimeyer  
Director, Budget and Appropriations  
The Wilderness Society

William Chandler  
Vice President  
Marine Conservation Biology Institute

Karen Steuer  
Vice President, Government Affairs  
National Environmental Trust



March 26, 2007

Dear House Member:

On behalf of Trout Unlimited's 155,000 members in 36 states, I am writing to request that you support the House Budget Resolution offered by Chairman Spratt. The House budget recognizes the urgent need for investment in the nation's environment and natural resources. The programs that conserve and restore our environment have suffered significant cuts in recent years. While additional funding will be necessary in the future, by providing \$2.6 billion more in appropriated funds for function 300 than the President's budget, the House budget takes an important step toward reversing this trend and better protecting our water quantity and quality, public lands, fish, and wildlife.

Trout Unlimited (TU) is North America's largest trout and salmon conservation organization. On average, our members donate well more than 1000 hours of volunteer time each year to stream improvement and watershed restoration work on both public and private lands. Our members recognize that investing in these resources makes good fiscal sense too. For example, recreational fishing on our National Forest System's 220,000 miles of streams contributes more than \$8.5 billion to the nation's economy.

Enacting the President's fiscal year 2008 budget request would have serious impacts to the resources that TU members cherish. For example, more than 50 percent of all of the nation's blue ribbon trout streams flow across national forests. Nonetheless, the President proposed slashing \$18 million from the Forest Service's Fish and Wildlife account.

I hope that you will support these critical programs. Trout Unlimited members and staff look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Kira Finkler  
Government Affairs Director

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# **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release: March 22, 2007**

## **HOUSE BUDGET RESTORES CONSERVATION FUNDING**

*President's Deep Cuts Rejected in Renewed Commitment to Conservation.*

*Numerous Popular Conservation Programs to Benefit.*

WASHINGTON—In a repudiation of the Bush administration’s abandonment of America’s historical commitment to conservation, Congress yesterday restored essential funding to popular conservation programs deeply cut in the President’s FY 2008 budget request. The budget resolution released yesterday by the House Budget Committee under Chairman John Spratt (D-SC) provides \$32.8 billion for protecting and restoring the environment. This renewed support for conservation effectively ends the downward spiral of investment in the environment allowed by recent Congresses, and represents an increase of \$1.48 billion over FY 2007 levels and \$2.6 billion more than the president requested in his budget earlier this year.

“With this budget, the House has provided a breath of fresh air to all of us who care about the environment,” said Sarah Neimeyer of The Wilderness Society. “This increase in funding represents a real commitment to reinvest in protecting the air, water, wildlife, and public places that we will care about. After years of deep cuts in conservation funding, it is a relief to see Congress taking this step.”

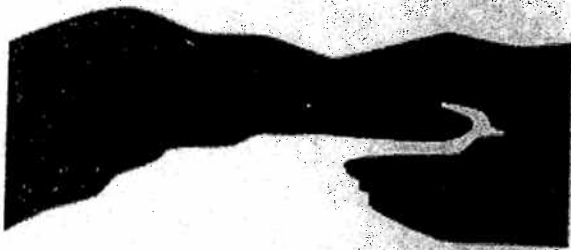
The House budget blueprint will restore funding for such popular programs as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, endangered species protection, National Wildlife Refuge System, and other critical land management and wildlife programs.

**CONTACT:** Craig Culp, The Wilderness Society, (202) 429-3941, (301) 509-0925 (mobile)

\*\*\*\*\*  
Craig W. Culp  
Communications Director  
Eastern Forest Program  
(202) 429-3941  
[craig\\_culp@tws.org](mailto:craig_culp@tws.org)

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BRINGING RIVERS TO LIFE



*American Rivers*

FOUNDED 1973

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**For Immediate Release**

21 March 2007

Contact: Brad DeVries, National Media Director  
(202) 243-7023

**HOUSE BUDGET INVESTS IN CONSERVATION**

**Additional Funds Would Boost Clean Water & River Restoration**

3/26/2007



**WASHINGTON** — American Rivers applauded the important investments in the environment reflected in today's House budget resolution, which provides \$32.8 billion for protecting and restoring the environment. This represents an important reversal of the previous Congress' chronic neglect of conservation funding and an increase of \$1.48 billion over the FY 07 level and \$2.6 billion more than the president's request.

"The resources the House is committing to the environment will begin to reinvest in our children's health and the world that they will inherit from us. For too long, our environmental future has been just an after thought for the federal government," said Peter Raabe, American Rivers' policy director for budget and appropriations. "Much like the money we spend on roads, investment in clean water and river restoration creates jobs, drives local economies and helps our communities thrive."

The House budget resolution will give the Congressional appropriators the needed flexibility to reduce the amount of raw sewage in our streams by funding the Clean Water State Revolving Fund at \$1.35 billion. The budget makes room for \$48 million to adequately manage the 168 Wild and Scenic Rivers in our country. Raabe said the House budget will also allow appropriators to allocate funds to begin removing some of the country's most obsolete, dangerous dams by funding the Open Rivers initiative at \$12 million.

#####

*Founded in 1973, American Rivers is a national non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring healthy natural rivers for the benefit of people, wildlife and nature. American Rivers has more than 65,000 supporters nationwide, with offices in Washington, DC and the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Midwest, Southeast, California and Northwest regions. [www.AmericanRivers.org](http://www.AmericanRivers.org).*



**NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION**

*Dedicated solely to ending America's  
affordable housing crisis*

March 26, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman, House Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt,

On behalf of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, I want to thank you for your leadership in developing the FY08 budget resolution and, in particular, for your efforts in shifting budget priorities to human needs including low income housing.

By increasing domestic discretionary spending by \$12.3 billion more than the FY07 domestic spending level, the Committee has signaled a commitment to ensuring that low income housing programs are protected from further cuts. Moreover, this year these programs might be able to be expanded to address the long neglected shortage of housing that the lowest income people can afford. Today, there is a shortage of 2,835,000 homes affordable for extremely low income renter households, those with incomes at or below 30% of area median income.

We are especially pleased with the inclusion of funding in the FY08 budget resolution for an Affordable Housing Fund in the Government Sponsored Enterprises legislation that Congress is considering. The Affordable Housing Fund, targeted to extremely low income families, is the first step in helping to solve the affordable housing crisis in our country.

The FY08 budget resolution that the House Budget Committee has approved shows the nation that the priorities of this Congress include helping all families obtain decent, safe and affordable housing. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sheila Crowley  
President



## **Wider Opportunities for Women**

March 23, 2007

Dear Representative:

Wider Opportunities for Women urges your support the 2008 budget resolution reported by the House Budget Committee. The measure makes a significant first step to restore funding for programs that help families and seniors attain a self-sufficient income through employment and/or gap-filling assistance in the form of health care, child care, Food Stamps and other programs.

WOW works to achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity for women and girls. For more than 40 years, WOW has helped women learn to earn, with programs emphasizing literacy, technical and nontraditional skills, the welfare-to-work transition and career development. Since 1964, WOW has trained more than 10,000 women for well paid work. WOW leads the National Family Economic Self Sufficiency Project and the Elder Economic Self Sufficiency Project.

WOW endorses the committee resolution's pay-as-you-go approach to proposals that either increase spending or decrease revenue by requiring offsets that do not increase the deficit. We are also aware that if Congress fails to approve a budget resolution this year, the House will be bound by the budget that passed the House in 2006 even though it was never conferenced.

We are pleased that the committee budget rejects the harsh cuts the Administration proposed for domestic programs and reverses the trend of the past six years. Nevertheless, to address mounting needs, we would have preferred that the committee had gone further than the \$12.4 billion after-inflation increase it allows for non-defense discretionary programs.

The resolution assumes a \$3 billion increase over current services for education, training and social services. Between fiscal 2002 and 2006, adult training under the Workforce Investment Act was cut by 18 percent after inflation. The President's request for 2008 would have reduced WIA programs by another 22 percent below current spending. While we believe the committee resolution is still not sufficient to restore service levels and meet growing needs, it does represent a turn-around from recent years.

The resolution creates a \$50 billion reserve fund to expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program to expand coverage. It also permits new Head Start and child care spending, as long as an equal amount of revenues or savings is secured. This will help restore assistance for the 150,000 children who have lost child care in the last five years. In WOW's calculation of self-sufficiency standards in 36 states and the District of Columbia, we have found that in most places, child care is the most expensive part of the family budget for those who have pre-school children.

For example, in 2006 a working adult with one pre-schooler and one infant in Erie, PA, would have needed \$1,009 for child care per month, or 35 percent of her total monthly self-sufficiency budget of \$2,843. Child care is essential for women in school or skills training programs preparing for jobs sufficient to support their families.

We are pleased that the budget resolution contains a "sense of the House" statement that part of the \$20 billion in new funding for farm bill reauthorization would go to food stamps and other food security programs.

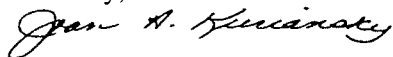
The resolution protects Medicare beneficiaries from premium increases, a major worry of low-income elders across the nation. In Boston, the Elder Economic Security Standard developed by WOW and the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston, seniors need to pay between \$269 and \$313 per month for adequate Medicare coverage including Medicare premiums, co-pays, and out-of-pocket costs. The Elder Standard demonstrates that, on average, health care costs consume over 20 percent of the income elders need to meet their most basic costs. With the average annual Social Security income at \$12,024 and three out of ten elders relying solely upon Social Security as their retirement income, many are already forced to make difficult decisions between putting food on the table and paying for much need health care services.

The budget also enables the Congress to establish an affordable housing fund targeted at the critical housing needs of the Gulf Coast. Housing is also among the largest single costs for both elders and families that do not need pre-school child care.

WOW is mindful that a group of moderate Republicans has endorsed increases beyond inflation for health care, education, vocational education and economic development. We are also aware that budget substitutes are expected to be introduced that provide more than the budget committee resolution for non-defense discretionary programs. We believe these are encouraging signs.

In the end, we will appreciate your support for the budget resolution reported out of the House Budget Committee as well as any substitute that goes further in the directions described above.

Sincerely,



Joan A. Kuriansky  
Executive Director



---

March 26, 2007

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Chair  
U.S. House of Representative Committee  
on Budget  
1401 Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Spratt:

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), the largest national nonprofit cross-disability member organization in the United States, writes to urge you and every Member of the House of Representatives to support the Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Resolution as drafted and adopted by the House Budget Committee. The spending priorities articulated in this Budget Resolution signal that Congress understands the importance of addressing the needs of people with disabilities and the consequences of perpetuating existing deficiencies in the disability service system.

Under this Budget Resolution, vital programs and supports for people with disabilities are aided rather than neglected or eliminated. This Budget Resolution will strengthen special education funding, facilitating school systems to better identify qualified educators. It will help sustain critical job training programs during a time in which staggeringly high unemployment rates persist for people with disabilities. And it will protect HUD disability housing programs from budgetary elimination.

AAPD urges you and every Member of the House of Representatives to take a leadership role in supporting the Budget Resolution as adopted by the Budget Committee. In so doing, you send an unmistakable message that you are concerned about the needs of people with disabilities and their families and are committed to starting in a direction to address them.

Thank you for your support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew J. Imparato". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew J. Imparato  
President and CEO

**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

March 26, 2007

Dear Chairman Spratt,

We write on behalf of the of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Fiscal Policy Task Force in support of your proposed Fiscal Year 2008 House budget resolution that will be considered this week.

The House proposal provides significantly more money than the President's Budget request for discretionary and mandatory programs that help people with disabilities participate fully in the community, such as discretionary employment and education programs as well as important mandatory health and long term services and supports programs. The proposal rejects cuts proposed in the President's budget to numerous programs that support individuals with disabilities, such as supported employment, assistive technology, and the Social Services and Maternal and Child Health Block Grants, just to name a few. The House plan also rejects attempts to use reconciliation instructions that have been used in past budget plans to make further cuts to entitlement programs on which so many low-income individuals and families with disabilities depend.

The CCD is a coalition of national disability organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

We thank you for crafting a plan that is fiscally responsible and contains the right priorities for the over 54 million Americans with disabilities and other low-income populations. We look forward to working with you in urging the Congress to adopt this budget.

Respectfully,



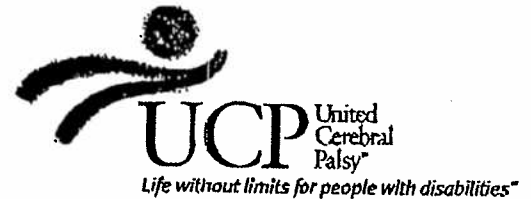
Donna Meltzer  
Epilepsy Foundation



Janna Starr  
The Arc and UCP Disability  
Policy Collaboration



Kim Musheno  
Association of University  
Centers on Disabilities



March 26, 2007

1660 L Street, NW • Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036  
TEL 800.USA.5UCP/202.776.0406  
TTY 800.872.5827  
FAX 202.776.0414

Dear Member of Congress;

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) is one of the nation's leading organizations serving and advocating for the more than 54 million Americans with disabilities. Its mission is to advance the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with disabilities through an affiliate network. Over half of UCP consumers are people with disabilities other than cerebral palsy. Through its nationwide affiliate's network, UCP provides job training and placement, physical therapy, individual and family support, early intervention, social and recreation programs, community living, and other services and supports to individuals with disabilities and their families.

We write you today in support of the Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Resolution that was crafted by the House Budget Committee. This Budget Resolution, for the first time in over a decade, provides hope for our families that their federal government is serious about starting to meet their needs. The spending priorities contained in this resolution now come much closer to addressing the many shortcomings in the disability service system. Medicaid will grow, not be attacked. Job training programs, in a time of huge unemployment rates for people with disabilities, are not slated for elimination. HUD disability housing programs will be protected from the budget axe. School systems will be better able to find qualified teachers through an increase in special education funding.

United Cerebral Palsy urges every Member of the House of Representatives to support the Budget Resolution as adopted by the Budget Committee. Your vote would send a clear signal to the millions of individuals with disabilities and their families: This Congress cares about you and will begin to address your needs.

Thank you so much for considering our views and for your support.

Stephen Bennett  
President and CEO



## The Arc of the United States

*People First, Visionary Leadership,  
Community Participation, Diversity, Integrity and Excellence*

Reply to:

1010 Wayne Ave., Suite 650  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 665-3842 (301) 665-3843 Fax

Reply to:

1600 L Street, NW, Suite 701  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 783-2229 (202) 783-8280 Fax

March 27, 2007

Dear Member of Congress:

The Arc of the U.S. is our nation's largest and leading national organization working on behalf of children and adults with intellectual disabilities and their families. Our 850 state and local chapters provide vital services such as housing, job training, and leisure time activities as well as helping to secure their civil rights. There are over 7 million individuals with this condition in our country. Many require life long supports to survive. Most of these supports are financed through federal/state partnerships such as Medicaid, special education and vocational rehabilitation. Unfortunately, due to severe funding constraints, several hundred thousand of our constituents remain on waiting lists for vital services, putting immense pressure on their families.

We write you today in support of the Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Resolution that was crafted by the House Budget Committee. This Budget Resolution, for the first time in over a decade, provides hope for our families that their federal government is serious about starting to meet their needs. The spending priorities contained in this resolution now come much closer to addressing the many shortcomings in the disability service system. Medicaid will grow, not be attacked. Job training programs, in a time of huge unemployment rates for people with disabilities, are not slated for elimination. HUD disability housing programs will be protected from the budget axe. School systems will be better able to find qualified teachers through an increase in special education funding.

The Arc of the U.S. urges every Member of the House of Representatives to support the Budget Resolution as adopted by the Budget Committee. Your vote would send a clear signal to the millions of individuals with disabilities and their families: This Congress cares about you and will begin to address your needs.

Thank you so much for considering our views and for your support.

Sue Swenson  
Executive Director





## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS, INC.

418 C STREET, NE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002  
TELEPHONE: (202) 547-8530  
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[www.ncssma.org](http://www.ncssma.org)

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[rachele@greystone-group.com](mailto:rachele@greystone-group.com)

March 27, 2007

The Honorable John M. Spratt  
Chairman  
House Committee on Budget  
Room 207  
Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt,

I am writing to you on behalf of the 3,400 members of the National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA). NCSSMA is a professional organization that represents Field Office and Teleservice Center management nationwide throughout the Social Security Administration.

We are very supportive and appreciative of the efforts of your committee to recommend additional resources for the Social Security Administration (SSA). We specifically agree with your committee's proposal to appropriate \$9.9 billion in discretionary funding for Fiscal Year 2008 for SSA – as well as the \$213.0 million dollar cap adjustment as called for in the President's Budget Request.

These additional resources will play a crucial role in addressing a critical and growing backlog of disability hearings cases. This backlog is currently almost three-quarters of a million cases and is projected to grow to one million cases by 2010 if something is not done now to address the situation. The average time to process a hearings case is now 506 days, and that processing time continues to increase. Nearly 300,000 cases have been pending over one year.

The efforts of your committee will also help many veterans. It is estimated there are nearly 125,000 veterans that have pending disability claims -- of which about half of these have pending hearings claims.

Many SSA Field Offices throughout the country are reaching a point where they cannot provide satisfactory service to the American public. They are being overwhelmed by the number of people visiting their offices in person and by telephone calls from the public that they cannot answer. In a survey of NCSSMA

members this past few weeks in which over 2,000 responded, over 80.0% stated that their office waiting times for the public had increased in the past two years. About a third said that waiting times were significantly longer. In addition, about 80.0% of the respondents stated they did not have enough staff to keep their workloads current.

SSA Field Offices have lost over 2,300 positions in the last eighteen months. Nearly 1,200 interviewing positions have been lost in the past six months alone. These losses are accelerating as the agency doesn't have funding available to hire new employees. I have heard from hundreds of our NCSSMA members regarding the growing challenges they are facing. Here is just one example:

*"It is discouraging to keep being asked to do more with less and embarrassing to see the service you provide erode before your very eyes. Although we manage to keep our heads above water, the constant interviewing and long lines of people waiting to be seen are also impacting our staff. Even my most energetic staff members seem to be demoralized and anxious wanting to take care of their workloads and dealing with irate visitors who want to know what's taking so long to clear their cases."*

We are also reaching another critical period at SSA as we are on the very edge of the first group of baby boomers filing for retirement benefits. Next year will mark the beginning of a massive increase in the number of claims being filed. We are expecting an additional million people to be eligible for Social Security benefits per year, due solely to the baby boomers.

The situation at SSA is due in large part to a lack of funding. Our organization realizes that Congress faces many challenges in the current budget environment, but funding for SSA must be addressed if we are to provide appropriate levels of service to the American public. On behalf of our NCSSMA members nationwide and the constituents we serve, thank you for your leadership regarding additional funding for SSA. Increased resources for our agency would allow us to restore services that are so vital to the American public.

Sincerely,

Rick Warsinskey  
President



Reg Weaver  
*President*

Dennis Van Roekel  
*Vice-President*

Lily Eskelsen  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

John I. Wilson  
*Executive Director*

March 26, 2007

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Education Association's (NEA) 3.2 million members, we urge your support for the fiscal year 2008 Congressional Budget Resolution. Votes associated with these issues may be included in the NEA Legislative Report Card for the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The federal budget should reflect the priorities of our nation, and ensuring all of our children a quality education should be a top priority. Additional investments in proven programs such as Title I and IDEA special education as well as higher education programs such as Pell Grants are essential if we are to close achievement gaps and maximize the academic potential of every student. Many key education programs are currently underfunded and unable to fully serve all eligible students.

Given these critical needs, we are pleased that the proposed budget provides for a significant increase in funding for education programs over the level requested by the President. The proposal represents an essential down payment toward meeting the needs of underfunded programs and fulfilling every child's basic right to a great public school.

Again, we urge your support for the Budget Resolution.

Sincerely,

Diane Shust  
Director of Government Relations

Randall Moody  
Manager of Federal Advocacy

---

**Subject:** FW: another letter of support - FW: AASA Support of House Budget

**Attachments:** image001.jpg; image003.png; image002.jpg; image004.jpg



March 27, 2007

Congressman John M. Spratt Jr.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Spratt:

On behalf of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), representing more than 14,000 school superintendents and local educational leaders, we urge you to support the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 99, the FY 2008 House Budget Resolution. This budget resolution takes an important step towards recognizing the importance of the federal investment in education. The House budget resolution would add \$7.9 billion over President Bush's FY 2008 budget proposal for education and workforce spending. While the proposed increase in education funding would make an important impact on local school district budgets, it would not fully meet the needs for school districts given the increased federal mandates.

As Congress moves forward on setting the funding levels for FY 2008, AASA strongly urges you to address the overwhelming need for funding in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act. Over the past several years, Congress has slipped backward in its commitment to fully fund IDEA. When IDEA was created in 1975, Congress recognized that school districts were going to face increased costs to serve students with disabilities. They promised to pay for 40 percent of the National Average per Pupil Expenditure for every child in special education. The federal share of IDEA has fallen steadily since reaching a high of 18.6 percent instead of the promised 40 percent in FY 2005.

As Congress reduces its commitment to special education, the cost burden for providing necessary special education services is passed on to the states and local school districts. For FY 2008, this cost shift to local school districts is over \$15 billion. This cost burden at the local level significantly impacts local school budgets. Because special education services must be provided regardless of cost, school districts are forced to steal from their general education budgets to cover the federal shortfall. It is time for Congress to live up to its commitment to school districts and the students they serve.

AASA also would like to see the additional education funding dedicated to increasing Title I and the education of our nation's poorest students. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, currently known as No Child Left Behind, continues to advocate for a disproportionate federal role in the daily

operation of local school districts based on the proportionate federal share in a local school district's budget. AASA strongly advocates for federal involvement in education as it relates to the highest poverty students. Therefore, AASA is asking for increased resources to be dedicated to Title I. This will ensure that local school districts have the greatest resources available to serve students in poverty.

Despite the positive efforts taken by this budget, AASA remains concerned about the potential elimination of school-based Medicaid claiming being proposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. We strongly urge the House Budget resolution to take into account funding for HR 1017, the *Protecting Children's Health in Schools Act*, which would help counteract any administrative action by CMS and reiterate the right of school districts to claim for administrative and transportation services related to providing health care services to Medicaid eligible students.

Finally, as priorities are established within the FY 2007 Congressional Budget Resolution, AASA asks you to remember that extension of the tax cuts does not always translate into tax cuts for localities. Federal tax cuts often diminish state revenue, placing additional pressure on local districts to raise taxes to cover the federal and state funding shortfalls. AASA would also oppose any amendments considered during the budget debate that would be offset based on across the board cuts. These amendments would require robbing Peter to pay Paul.

In closing, AASA strongly urges your support for House Concurrent Resolution 99 because it makes an important effort of recognizing the importance of a federal investment in education.

Sincerely,



Mary Kusler  
Assistant Director, Government Relations

March 26, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman  
House Budget Committee  
309 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Ranking Member  
House Budget Committee  
B-71 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Chairman Spratt and Ranking Member Ryan:

I am writing in support of the fiscal 2008 budget resolution passed by your committee last week, and urge its adoption on the House floor. The resolution makes a commitment for \$50 billion over the next five years in new funding to the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

Since 1997, in conjunction with Medicaid, SCHIP has contributed to a one-third decline in the uninsured rate of low-income children. Today, over six million children benefit from this effective health care program. To continue the success of SCHIP it is essential that the program is reauthorized later this year with enough funds to move towards the widely-shared goal of ensuring that all children have health insurance coverage.

More than 9 million children still lack health insurance in the United States. That is more than the total number of kids enrolled in the first and second grades in U.S. public schools. Four out of five of these children have parents who work but cannot afford health insurance coverage.

Congress must make covering American's children a top priority for 2007 and your fiscal 2008 budget resolution is the critical first step. With \$50 billion in new funding, states will be able to enroll more children who are currently eligible. In addition, this amount of money will ensure that no child who is enrolled in SCHIP today will lose coverage because of a shortfall in funds.

Sincerely,

Ron Pollack  
Executive Director

# American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



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March 27, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman, Budget Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Room 207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6065

Dear Chairman Spratt:

Thank you on behalf of the 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists, who comprise the membership of the American Academy of Pediatrics, for the leadership you have shown in funding the State Children's Health Insurance Program in the FY 2008 budget. The budget you have reported out of your Committee includes a significant commitment to infants, children, adolescents and young adults through its funding of SCHIP and Medicaid.

In February, more than 60 organizations signed onto a letter requesting that the Congress set aside \$60 billion over the next 5 years in new funds for children's health. These organizations recognize that since SCHIP was enacted in 1997, the country has made notable progress toward insuring all children. Despite swimming upstream against rising health care costs and declines in employer-based coverage, SCHIP and its larger companion program, Medicaid, have reduced the uninsured rate of low-income children by a third.

The reauthorization of SCHIP comes at just the right moment. The public strongly supports efforts to cover children, and many states across the nation are pursuing initiatives to build on the success of public programs. Some are working to enroll more of the uninsured children already eligible for SCHIP or Medicaid, while others are seeking to expand coverage to more children through the federal funds that will be made available to them.

Although the Academy would like to see even more expansive changes in the way that health care is provided to children in this country, we believe that your budget provides the necessary tools for Congress to take the next critical step forward in providing health care to the most vulnerable Americans. Thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,

E. Jackie Noyes, MA



March 26, 2007

The Honorable John C. Spratt  
Chairman, House Committee on the Budget  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

OMB Watch, a nonprofit government watchdog organization that promotes open government, accountability and citizen participation, is writing to express its support for House passage of the Fiscal Year 2008 budget resolution adopted last week by the House Budget Committee.

We applaud its commitment to restoring fiscal responsibility by seeking to eliminate federal budget deficits by 2012, adopting the pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) principle requiring that any new tax cuts and mandatory spending be paid for, barring fast-track reconciliation to pass legislation that adds to the deficit, and closing wasteful and unfair tax loopholes and shelters.

Furthermore, the House resolution begins to address long-standing inequities in the federal budgets of recent years. Its non-defense discretionary spending increase of \$19 billion over the president's budget and the proposed increase of \$50 billion to expand children's health insurance to cover millions of additional uninsured children are important steps in the right direction of providing the investments in our communities that have been lacking. Nonetheless, we believe that still more needs to be done to address chronically under-funded human needs.

We hope that the House will defeat any amendments seeking to weaken the resolution's fiscal responsibility resolve and its efforts to restore balance in terms of the nation's spending priorities. We appreciate the effort you and the Budget Committee have made to produce this resolution, which represents a distinct improvement over recent past budgets, and hope we can be helpful in ensuring its passage.

Sincerely,

Gary Bass  
Executive Director

cc: Speaker Nancy Pelosi

---

*Celebrating 20 years: Promoting Government Accountability and Citizen Participation - 1983 - 2003*

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