

# THE MARK OF REPUBLICAN FAILURE



## *WHO PAYS THE PRICE? VETERANS, FIREFIGHTERS, THE TRAVELING PUBLIC AND OTHERS*

By virtually any measure, the record of the Republican Majority is an appalling failure. In 2004, the House of Representatives has worked the *fewest* number of legislative days – 93 as of September 29th – of any Congress since 1955.

While taking it easy, this Republican Congress has failed to enact a budget, intelligence reform, comprehensive energy reform, a transportation reauthorization bill or a tax bill that will stop billions of dollars in European Union sanctions against American manufacturers.

And now, this Republican Congress must pass a Continuing Resolution to keep the federal government from shutting down at midnight on September 30<sup>th</sup> (the beginning of the new fiscal year) because it has enacted only one of the 13 annual spending bills that fund government agencies and programs.

The following examples demonstrate who bears the brunt of the Republican Party's failures:

**FIREFIGHTERS AND OUR HOMELAND SECURITY:** Because Congressional Republicans have failed to enact the Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, critical funding for the "Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response" (SAFER) Program is not available. This funding (\$50 million in the House Bill, \$100 million in the Senate Bill) will help career and volunteer fire departments across the nation hire, recruit and retain firefighters, relieving thousands of fire stations that are currently under-staffed. The events of September 11, 2001 made clear how important firefighters are to our homeland security.

**AMERICA'S VETERANS:** Because Congressional Republicans have failed to enact the Veterans Administration-Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill, \$458 million in construction funds for veterans' medical facilities throughout the nation is not available. Several veterans' facilities have

major safety code deficiencies that must be corrected; others must be expanded to relieve overcrowding.

**FAMILIES OF OUR SOLDIERS:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact a Military Construction Appropriations Bill, \$400 million in additional funding for military family housing is not available. The House and Senate version of this bill each provides \$4.2 billion for Fiscal Year 2005, compared to \$3.8 billion in 2004.

**OUR EMBASSY WORKERS OVERSEAS:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact the Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations Bill, \$658 million in worldwide security upgrades at U.S. facilities (especially in Kabul, Afghanistan) is not available.

**COMMUNITIES VULNERABLE TO GANGS AND VIOLENCE:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact the CJS Appropriations Bill, \$349 million for local communities across the nation who sponsor youth violence prevention programs, alternatives to gangs, drug programs and mentoring services is not available.

**THE TRAVELING PUBLIC:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact the Transportation-Treasury Appropriations Bill, \$983 million in airport security and improvements grants will not be available. This funding is earmarked for, among other things, perimeter security fencing and construction of airport rescue and firefighting stations.

**VICTIMS OF GENOCIDE:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill, humanitarian assistance (\$311 million in the House Bill, \$690 in the Senate Bill) will not be available to assist Sudanese civilians who are the victims of genocide at the hands of government forces and Arab militias.

**THE UNINSURED:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations Bill, a \$218 million increase in funding for community health centers is not available. This funding will help provide services for an additional 1.6 million people and is supposedly a priority of President Bush and Republicans.

**AMERICANS' FOOD SAFETY:** Because this Republican Congress has failed to enact the Agriculture Appropriations Bill, increases in funding to protect America's food supply through surveillance and testing are not available. The Food Service Inspection Service (FSIS) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) would receive an additional \$46 million and \$115 million, respectively, over last year's funding level to monitor and protect our food safety.