

APPROPRIATIONS ALERT

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ILLUMINATING THE DEMOCRATIC PRIORITIES (H.R. 3222)

The fiscal year 2008 Department of Defense appropriations bill provides \$459.3 billion in net new discretionary budget authority, a \$3.5-billion cut from the President's request. The Democratic budget resolution (S.Con Res 21) accommodated the President's requested level, but the Appropriations Committee shifted these resources away from national security to fund other interests. The bill also excludes any 2008 funds for Iraq, even though the President's supplemental request was included in his budget.

Key points about the Defense bill include the following:

- ***The Bill Cuts Defense to Fund Domestic Activities.*** As noted, the bill cuts \$3.5 billion from the President's request. The Appropriations Committee has shifted these funds to domestic spending, even though the Democratic budget already increases domestic spending by \$21 billion compared with the President's request.
- ***The Bill Underfunds Operational Accounts.*** The reported bill is more than \$5 billion below the President's request for the accounts used to fund operations and maintenance [O&M]. It cuts \$2.5 billion from the Army O&M accounts and \$2 billion from the Air Force accounts. The cuts are a gimmick to create room in the bill for domestic spending, and rely on a future emergency supplemental to fund these critical defense accounts.
- ***It Fails to Account for Iraq Operations.*** At the urging of the Budget Committee in the 109th Congress, the President included his 2008 supplemental Iraq funding request in the February budget submission, totaling \$141 billion. (The administration is expected to submit an amendment to this request in the near future.) But the DOD appropriations bill ignores this measure of accountability, with no Iraq funds for 2008.
- ***It Increases Unrequested and Unrelated Research and Development.*** The bill increases funding for Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation by \$1.1 billion above the President's request and \$800 million above the 2007 enacted level. Many of the increases – such as mapping for the discovery of autism susceptibility genes, or funding the Nanoscience Nanotechnology Institute – belong in other appropriations bills. (But then, the Labor-HHS bill is already \$10 billion above the President's request, and Commerce-Justice-Science was \$2 billion higher.)