



# COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

DAVE OBEY (D-WI), CHAIRMAN

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Contact:

Kirstin Brost

202-225-2771

## Clear Differences: How the President and Congress Differ on Labor, Health and Education

### UPDATE: Conference Report

WASHINGTON - Even as the President is asking for nearly \$200 billion to cover the \$10 billion a month we are spending in Iraq (paid for with borrowed money), he is trying to masquerade as fiscally responsible by manufacturing a fight over what we spend in roughly 2 months in Iraq (\$22 billion) in investments that will make this a stronger and better country.

At the center of that fight is funding for the Departments of Labor, Health and Education. The conference report considered in the House today provides \$150.7 billion, \$6.2 billion (4.3%) above 2007 and \$9.8 billion above the President's request (roughly the cost of 1 month in Iraq) for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education.

What would that \$9.8 billion achieve? Here are some specific examples.

AT ISSUE	THE PRESIDENT	THE CONFERENCE REPORT
<p><b>HEALTHCARE ACCESS</b></p> <p>One in six Americans is without health insurance – that's 47 million Americans. Fresh off his recent veto of the bill to extend healthcare coverage to 10 million children in families struggling to make ends meet, the President stands poised to veto the bill that would expand healthcare access for over a million underinsured Americans.</p>	<p>... cuts funding for one of the primary federal agencies responsible for increasing healthcare access, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), by <b>\$595 million</b> below 2007.</p> <p>This includes a 50% cut to rural health programs (from \$282 million to \$140 million).</p>	<p>... rejects those cuts and provides <b>\$1.5 billion</b> above the President's request for programs to improve healthcare access, roughly the cost of 5 days in Iraq</p> <p><b>\$1.4 billion is used at HRSA</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide 1.2 million more underinsured Americans access to Community Health Centers;</li> <li>• Invest \$166 million more for rural health programs, area health education centers, and the National Health Service Corps. These programs support more than 1,200 small, at-risk rural hospitals in underserved communities; and</li> <li>• Expand health care coverage to targeted groups through State Health Access Grants, a new initiative.</li> </ul> <p>\$95 million is provided for two new initiatives including: High risk insurance pools to create affordable insurance for almost 200,000 people and Health insurance counseling to help Medicare beneficiaries understand their benefits.</p>

AT ISSUE	THE PRESIDENT	THE CONFERENCE REPORT
<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>On September 26<sup>th</sup> the President <a href="#">vigorously defended</a> the No Child Left Behind law.</p> <p>He called on Congress to improve education saying, “Don't go backwards when it comes to educational excellence... We've come too far to turn back.”</p> <p>He talks the talk, but what about walking the walk?</p>	<p><b>... cuts funding for the Department of Education by \$1.2 billion.</b></p> <p>His budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminates funding for every campus-based student aid program outside of Pell Grants and College Work-Study (\$901.4 million)- impacting 1 million students;</li> <li>• Recalls \$419 million from Perkins Loan revolving funds used by 1,315 colleges and universities to provide affordable student loans;</li> <li>• Cuts IDEA Special Education by \$291 million;</li> <li>• Cuts or eliminates important programs to produce quality teachers (\$100 million) and improve classroom technology (\$272 million); and</li> <li>• Cuts Head Start by \$100 million.</li> </ul>	<p><b>... rejects those cuts, investing \$4.5 billion above the President's request for the Department of Education, roughly the cost of 2 weeks in Iraq, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2 billion above the President's request into programs that help families pay for college - benefiting 8.5 million students - to prepare our nation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. This includes increasing the maximum Pell Grant from \$4,310 to \$4,925.</li> <li>• \$600 million above the President's request for No Child Left Behind Programs including funding for Title I grants to help low-income kids (+ \$401 million), improving teacher quality (+\$250 million), after school programs (+\$100 million), and classroom technology (+\$272 million) while making responsible cuts to problem programs.</li> <li>• \$800 million above the President's request for Special Education to help educate the 6.9 million American kids with disabilities.</li> <li>• \$254 million above the President's request for Head Start to help low-income children be successful in school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Job Training and Vocational Education</b></p> <p>The housing market slump, the credit crunch that goes with it, and climbing oil prices have economic forecasters predicting the worst. The current administration has the worst record on job growth since Herbert Hoover. Our economy is in trouble. The situation cries out for investments in first class jobs programs.</p>	<p><b>... cuts the largest job training and vocational ed programs by \$1.2 billion.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuts training for adults, youth, and dislocated workers by \$609 million, eliminating services for 173,000 people.</li> <li>• Cuts state grants for vocational education in half (\$581 million).</li> <li>• Cuts Job Corps by \$56 million, eliminating occupational skills training for 4,300 disadvantaged, youth who lack education and job skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>... rejects those cuts, investing \$1.3 billion above the President's request, roughly the cost of 4 days in Iraq.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just rejecting the President's cuts to Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Training programs, keeping them at 2007 levels, puts them \$609 million above the President's request.</li> <li>• A 2% increase to Vocational Education state grants puts them \$606 million above the President's request.</li> <li>• A 2.7% increase for Job Corps puts that program at \$98 million above the President's request for the nationwide network of facilities that provide training, job placement and support services to at-risk young adults.</li> </ul>

AT ISSUE	THE PRESIDENT	THE CONFERENCE REPORT
<p><b>Medical Research</b></p> <p>The National Institutes of Health are responsible for cutting edge research into deadly diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, stroke and heart disease.</p>	<p>... cuts funding for <b>medical research at the National Institutes of Health by \$480 million</b>, a cut that would lead to about 800 fewer research grants than last year.</p>	<p>... rejects those cuts, investing about <b>\$1.4 billion above the President's request</b>, roughly the cost of 3 days in Iraq, in order to produce over 1,400 more research grants into life threatening diseases.</p>
<p><b>Block Grants: Economic Development and Helping Alleviate Poverty</b></p> <p><b>Community Service Block Grants</b> help states meet the needs of low-income individuals with services such as adult education, housing assistance, nutrition programs, emergency services, employment aid and health services. CSBG services and activities are provided to over 95% of all U.S. counties.</p> <p><b>Social Services Block Grants</b> help each state meet the needs of their residents, including: child care, protective services, help for the disabled, adoption, counseling, transportation, foster care, substance abuse, congregate meals, and other critical services for low-income families.</p>	<p>... slashed these programs by <b>\$1.13 billion</b>, it:</p> <p>Eliminates funding for Community Service Block Grants (\$630 million) and</p> <p>Cuts Social Services Block Grants by \$500 million.</p>	<p>... rejected those cuts, investing <b>\$1.17 billion above the President</b>, roughly the cost of 4 days in Iraq, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$665 million more than the President's request for Community Services Block Grants;</li> <li>• \$500 million more than the President's request for Social Services Block Grants, simply maintaining last year's level.</li> </ul>
<p>The <b>Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program</b> helps low-income and elderly families pay their home heating bills.</p>	<p>...cuts <b>LIHEAP by \$379 million</b>.</p>	<p>... rejected those cuts, investing <b>\$630 million more than the President's request</b>, roughly the cost of 2 days in Iraq, to provide help to 1.5 million additional families who face a colder winter and rising home energy prices this winter.</p>

The differences couldn't be clearer.

###