

# **PRESIDENT BUSH REQUESTS \$245 BILLION IN NEW SPENDING FOR IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN WARS IN 2007 & 2008**

*Based on These Requests, by 2008, Iraq & Afghanistan Wars Will Cost More Than the Vietnam War, in Inflation-Adjusted Dollars*

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- At a time when he says he wants to “rein in spending,” the President has submitted a budget that includes an eye-popping request of \$726 billion in new spending for the Department of Defense and for war-related costs for 2007 and 2008.
- This includes \$245 billion (\$235 billion for the Department of Defense) in new spending for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – including a \$100 billion supplemental request for FY 2007 and a \$145 billion request for FY 2008.
- If the President’s request of \$245 billion for war-related costs is approved, the U.S. will have spent more than \$660 billion on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars by 2008 – more than the amount we spent on the Vietnam war in inflation-adjusted dollars.
- Unlike previous GOP-controlled Congresses, the new Democratic-controlled Congress will exercise vigorous oversight of Iraq war funding. The huge sums involved demand rigorous congressional scrutiny.
- Democrats strongly support our troops. In reviewing the FY 2007 Iraq supplemental, Democrats will particularly examine the impact of the President’s Iraq policies on the welfare of our troops, including whether the troops already deployed have all of the equipment that they need. Consideration of the supplemental will also be a time when Democrats will continue to demand a new direction in Iraq and question the President’s escalation policy.

On February 5, the President submitted a \$481 billion request for the DOD base budget for FY 2008, a \$100 billion (\$93 billion for the Department of Defense) emergency supplemental request for war-related costs for FY 2007, and a \$145 billion (\$142 billion for the Department of Defense) supplemental request for war-related costs for FY 2008. Following are talking points.

## **Funding for Iraq & Afghanistan Wars**

**The President’s budget gives no hope that he plans to reduce our military involvement in Iraq in the foreseeable future.** This budget shows that the President is still not listening. Instead of responding to what the American people said in the 2006 election and beginning a phased redeployment of our troops, the President is calling for an escalating commitment to the Iraq war and for increasing the war funding.

**Under the President’s budget, war-related costs continue to escalate – with war-related funding to be \$50 billion higher in FY 2007 than it was in FY 2006.** The President’s supplemental request for FY 2007 of \$100 billion for Iraq/Afghanistan is on top of the \$70 billion already appropriated – bringing the FY 2007 total to \$170 billion. This is \$50 billion more than the \$120 billion that was provided for war-related costs for FY 2006.

**If President's requests are approved, the U.S. will have spent \$662 billion on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars by 2008 – more than we spent on the Vietnam war.** According to OMB, the Congress has so far provided \$427 billion to the Department of Defense for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. If the President's requests of \$235 billion in new Department of Defense spending for war-related costs in 2007 and 2008 are approved, this will bring total war-related costs to \$662 billion by 2008. When adjusted for inflation, this will be more than was spent on the Vietnam War.

**Despite the President's large request, the nonpartisan CBO states that the President is understating the cost of his Iraq escalation policy.** The nonpartisan CBO has issued an analysis which concludes that the President's plan to increase the number of combat troops in Iraq by about 20,000 could require a complement of up to 28,000 support troops – for a total troop level of up to 48,000. The President requests only \$5.6 billion for the new troops in his FY 2007 war supplemental – but CBO estimates that the deployment of the full number of troops needed will cost \$9 to \$13 billion through the end of this fiscal year and much more depending on the length of the deployment.

**Furthermore, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff testified that there is not enough equipment for the additional 21,500 troops the President is sending into Iraq.** As the UPI (2/6/07) reported, *“[Chairman] Peter Pace admitted Tuesday to the Senate Armed Services Committee that equipment will be a problem when U.S. forces in Iraq are increased. Pace said the military has about 41,000 armored vehicles in Iraq – fewer than will be needed ‘to cover all of the troops that are deploying.’”*

**Over the last four years, under GOP-controlled Congresses, there has been no congressional oversight of Iraq war spending – with the President rushing through emergency war supplementals.** Since 2003, the Administration has been financing the Iraq war, not through the regular budget process, but through a series of rushed-through emergency supplemental bills. Handling Iraq war funding in this way has avoided accountability and oversight. And the GOP Congress failed to live up to its constitutional responsibilities to ask tough questions and examine carefully the Administration's spending requests.

**Over the last few years, the Administration has also consistently abused the emergency supplemental process – including items in the supplemental not related to the Iraq/Afghanistan wars.** For example, this year the Administration has included in its proposed FY 2007 war supplemental a request for funding for the next-generation Joint Strike Fighter – an item completely unrelated to the Iraq war. The Joint Strike Fighter has only just begun initial testing and will not be in the field until well into the next decade.

**Unlike previous GOP-led Congresses, the Democratic-led Congress will exercise vigorous oversight of Iraq war funding and will stand up for the troops in asking tough questions.** Democrats strongly support our troops. In reviewing the Iraq supplemental, Democrats will particularly examine the impact of the President's Iraq policies on the welfare of our troops, including whether the troops already deployed have all of the equipment that they need. Consideration of the supplemental will also be a time when Democrats will continue to demand a new direction in Iraq and question the President's escalation policy.

**Democrats are calling for a new direction in Iraq,** that includes shifting the principal mission of our forces from combat to training, force protection, counterterrorism, and border security; beginning the phased redeployment of our forces in the next 4 to 6 months; and implementing an aggressive diplomatic offensive, both within the region and beyond, to help the Iraqis achieve a sustainable political settlement..

