

WASHINGTON - Congressman Steny Hoyer (MD) released the following statement today following passage of the Republicans' Fiscal Year 2005 Budget Conference Report in the House of Representatives last night. The Budget Act requires a budget resolution to provide spending and revenue levels for five years, but the Republican Budget passed by the House provides budget policies for only one year masking the truly negative impact of Republican policies.

"Over the past three and a half years of Republican governing, we have witnessed a fiscal disaster that destroyed a record surplus and left record deficits and exploding debt in its wake, threatening Social Security and Medicare, and our ability to invest in the future.

"The Republican budget passed by the Congress last night will only add to the record deficits that Republican policies have created, and fails to include a plan to rein those deficits in. In fact, for just one year, it projects a deficit of \$367 billion, and over six years, the estimated deficit would grow to \$1.4 trillion.

"The Republican's reckless tax cut agenda, skewed toward the highest-income taxpayers, has already racked up a cost of about \$2.25 trillion with absolutely no plan for payment. Instead, the Republican budget spends all \$1 trillion of the Social Security surplus over the next 10 years and slashes funding for domestic priorities.

"The Republican budget cuts funding for health care programs, environmental protections, community and regional development, veterans benefits and law enforcement. The budget reduces funding for first responder and port security grants that send federal funds directly to our local officials. It also provides \$8.8 billion less than the amount authorized under the landmark education reform program No Child Left Behind.

"Furthermore, this budget has provided no plan for bringing down the debt, rather it irresponsibly and immorally allows our nation to accrue up to \$8 trillion in debt, levying a 'debt tax' on our children and grandchildren for generations to come.

"I believe it is our responsibility to fight for a real, honest budget and I supported a Democratic budget plan that would have balanced the budget in 8 years, provided tax relief for middle and lower-class hard-working families, invested in America's priorities and provided for a strong

defense without adding to the deficit.

"I will continue to fight to ensure that our nation's fiscal agenda reflects Maryland's mainstream values while ensuring that our children and grandchildren are not left footing the bill."

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