

# **THE HOUSE BUDGET RESOLUTION: Fiscally Responsible With the Right Priorities for Maryland Families**

The 110<sup>th</sup> Congress is working to make progress for the American people on the toughest challenges we face – challenges that have gone unaddressed for years in Washington. Now, there's a new direction for Maryland and for America. This week, the House will pass H. Con. Res. 99, the Budget Resolution for FY 2008. This budget is fiscally responsible with the right priorities for America. It will restore fiscal responsibility and accountability to Washington; strengthen our national defense; and invest in the next generation and America's prosperity.

The Democratic House Budget:

## **Strengthens Our National Defense And Honors Promises To Maryland's Brave Troops And Veterans.**

- The House budget provides for the largest veterans' budget increase in American history – \$3.5 billion more this year (\$32 billion over the next five years) for veterans' health care than the President's budget. These additional resources are needed to provide excellent health care for new veterans, repair VA health care facilities, make needed investments in veterans' mental health care and traumatic brain injury, and speed up and improve the accuracy of disability claims processing.
- These improvements are needed to ensure that the 486,299 veterans in Maryland receive care worthy of their sacrifice. It is also critical for the 19,669 brave Marylanders, who have served their country in Afghanistan and Iraq since September 2001, many of whom will need VA health care services. [Veterans Administration, 9/04; Department of Defense, 2/07]
- The House budget provides six percent more in areas that deal with homeland security, rejecting the cuts to vital first responder and terrorism prevention programs included in the President's FY 2008 budget.
- Under the President's budget, the State Homeland Security Grant Program – which awarded \$97,918,423 to Maryland from 2003 to 2006 – would be slashed by 52 percent. The Law Enforcement Terrorist Prevention Program (LETPP) – which awarded \$22,425,154 to Maryland from 2004 to 2006 – would be eliminated. [Department of Homeland Security, 1/07]
- The Democrats' budget also includes funds to begin implementing the 9/11 Commission recommendations to make Maryland and our nation more secure.

## **Invests in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce And A Growing Economy And Protects Middle-Class Tax Relief.**

- The Democratic House budget makes a sustained commitment to research and development and education – investments that are part of our Innovation Agenda: A Commitment to Competitiveness to Keep America #1.
- The Democratic House budget supports middle-class tax cuts and protects middle-income families from a tax increase by setting up a reserve fund for a long-term fix for the alternative minimum tax (AMT). In 2004, 102,000 Maryland families were subject to the AMT – and if nothing is done to fix the system, an estimated 751,000 families here in Maryland will be subject to the AMT in 2007. [CRS, 6/06]
- Small businesses employ nearly half of all workers and create three out four new jobs in America. In Maryland, there are 516,700 small businesses that serve as the engine of the economy. [SBA, 2006]
- To spur economic growth and support small businesses here in Maryland, the House budget rejects the President's proposal to cut the Small Business Administration by 26 percent from last year's request and 56 percent from 2001.

- The House budget also recognizes the importance of job training for hardworking Marylanders to keep America competitive with a highly-skilled workforce. It rejects the President's cuts that eliminate \$44,127,000 in funding for job training and employment services in Maryland. [FFIS, 2/07]
- These investments to a growing economy for America's families are needed as family income in Maryland has dropped by \$1,724 since 2000, while health care and energy prices are climbing. [Census, 8/06]

### **Restores Funding For Maryland's Children And Working Families, Giving Them Greater Opportunities To Succeed.**

- In Maryland, 137,340 of children do not have health insurance. The House budget helps these children by increasing funding for State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) – reducing the number of uninsured kids across America by millions. [Kaiser State Health Facts, 2005]
- The House budget provides substantially more funding for Maryland's 862,600 children enrolled in public elementary, middle and high schools – providing nearly \$8 billion more in 2008 and 11 percent more over the next five years for education and training programs than requested by the President. [Department of Education, 8/05]
- This will increase resources for No Child Left Behind, special education and Head Start – rejecting harsh cuts and underfunding for these critical education programs included in the President's budget.
- Under the President's budget, 49,347 Maryland children will go without promised help in reading and math and Head Start – a vital program for 10,347 Maryland children – is cut by 1.5 percent below the 2007 level. [Senate Appropriations Committee Staff, 2/07; Administration for Children & Families, 6/06]

### **Provides Funding For Initiatives To Protect Our Environment And Preserve Our Planet.**

- The Democratic House budget invests in renewable energy and energy efficiency to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, reduce global warming, and promote new technologies that can create American jobs.
- Creates a reserve fund that could target up to \$14 billion over 10 years to invest in clean, renewable alternative energy and energy efficiency paid for by redirecting oil subsidies.
- Ending our addiction to foreign oil is a key step in ensuring that energy will be more affordable for America's families in the future and that America's families are not at the whim of overseas oil cartels.
- Gas prices have increased by \$1.13 in Maryland since January 2001, an increase of approximately 78 percent. [EIA, 3/07 & 1/01; AAA Fuel Gauge Report, 3/07]
- Democrats restore funding for Maryland environmental programs cut by the President's budget – including \$9,560,000 in Clean Water revolving loan funds that help Maryland improve wastewater treatment. [FFIS, 2/07]

### **Restores Fiscal Responsibility To Washington.**

- The House budget puts in place the tough “pay as you go” budget rules to begin to reverse the record budget deficits accumulated under Republican leadership.
- Republicans' irresponsible economic policies of the past six years have left a debt burden of \$30,203 for a typical middle-income family of four in Maryland. [CTJ, 10/06]

