

# Emergency Campaign for America's Priorities

For Immediate Release  
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October 30, 2007

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## **New Report Shows What's at Stake for New York as Congress and White House Square off in Budget Showdown**

### ***New Yorkers Call on Representatives Fossella, King, Kuhl and Reynolds: Don't Shortchange Priorities at Home for War in Iraq***

New York – Two weeks ago President Bush instigated a battle between Congress and the White House when he vetoed the popular Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Unfortunately, Representatives Kuhl and Reynolds put politics ahead of children and supported the President's reckless veto. But the fight is just beginning, and much is at stake for New York families, according to a new report released by the Emergency Campaign for America's Priorities (ECAP) today.

President Bush has threatened to veto nearly all appropriations bills that provide more than his Fiscal Year 2008 budget request, including the Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS), the Transportation-Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD), the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) and even Homeland Security. The Labor-HHS bill, which is the focus of the ECAP report, funds a broad range of constituencies and needs from veterans programs to disease research to education. The programs in this bill all share a common, fundamental goal of strengthening this nation by investing in and improving the quality of life of its people, especially the most vulnerable.

The President has desperately tried to claim these vetoes are motivated by a desire to restore fiscal discipline by vetoing bills with more than his budget's funding levels. However, while saying the \$22 billion dollar more in Congress' budget is "excessive," he has asked Congress for nearly \$200 billion in borrowed money to cover the \$10 billion a month we are spending in Iraq.

"President Bush's veto threats show just how out of touch this administration is when it comes to investing in America's priorities, and the burden is on Representatives Fossella, King, Kuhl and Reynolds and other New York members of Congress to stand up to the President and reject his reckless cuts. How can the President say we can afford to spend hundreds of billions of dollars in Iraq, but can't afford the health care, education, cancer and disease prevention, veterans care and other critical programs millions of Americans rely on?" said Lisa Tyson, the Director of the Long Island Progressive Coalition/Citizen Action on Long Island.. "In the next few weeks, the House and Senate will take about strong bipartisan budget legislation that protects basic human needs and send it to the President. We call on Representatives Fossella, King, Kuhl and Reynolds to consider the vital programs this bill funds and

support this critical legislation. They should also reject the upside down priorities of this Bush administration and pledge to override the President's reckless veto."

"Energy costs are particularly critical for cash-strapped Long Islanders, who pay among the highest energy bills in the nation," said Tyson. "We can't begin to talk about an affordable Long Island without keeping energy costs under control. We hope that Congressman Peter King considers the needs of those facing sky-high utility bills over the political needs of our out-of-touch President when he votes on the budget bills before the Congress this month."

According to today's report, entitled "*Don't Shortchange America's Priorities for the War in Iraq*":

- The House-passed appropriations bill would allow 1,162 more of New York's children to receive Head Start than under the President's plan.
- House appropriations would fund 517 more teachers than the President's plan, and would allow \$116 more special education funding for each child with disabilities in New York. [House Budget Committee [http://budget.house.gov/analyses/0802state\\_report%20\(2\).pdf](http://budget.house.gov/analyses/0802state_report%20(2).pdf).]
- Although 774,592 have trouble putting enough food on the table, a Presidential veto could stop 28,300 elderly in New York from receiving monthly food packages. [First Things First Report, <http://chn.org/statereports.html>]
- Despite soaring energy prices, a veto could mean 202,400 fewer of New York's households will get the help they need to pay their utilities in 2008 than in 2001. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, <http://www.cbpp.org/2-21-07bud-tables.pdf>]

"If the New York delegation does not have the courage to stand up to the President—if they cave to political pressure—they will be voting against health care for veterans, against job training, against funding for clean water and cancer research, against Head Start slots for children and against heating assistance for the poor just as the temperature drops. This is a fight over what our priorities are as a country and whether we stand up for the most vulnerable Americans," added Trudi Renwick, Senior Economist with the Fiscal Policy Institute.

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