

Emergency Campaign for America's Priorities

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Bush's Sick & Twisted Priorities: We Can Afford \$50 Billion More for Twisted Iraq War, But Not \$50 Billion for Sick Children?

Washington, DC - President Bush announced today he plans to ask Congress for another \$50 billion in additional funding to continue his endless war in Iraq when they return in September. His other plans for September include vetoing a funding bill for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) because of the cost -- \$50 billion in the House passed version. The White House has threatened to veto any funding over the President's suggested levels, calling needed funding for children's health care "excessive." The President's proposal however was woefully inadequate and wouldn't even cover the number of children on SCHIP now, let alone expand the program. This example of hypocrisy comes just a day after the new census data on income and poverty shows that over two million more people were uninsured in 2006 than in 2005, including 700,000 children. Members of Congress and the Republican Leadership will have a simple choice when they return to Congress next week, will they stand up to threats of a presidential veto and stand with the millions of children across the country that depend on the SCHIP or cave to political pressure from the White House and GOP leadership.

"What would you spend \$50 billion dollars on? This Congress would invest in Children's Health Care and has proposed to fully fund SCHIP with a \$50 billion dollar expansion in the House. Bush would invest in continuing this reckless war in Iraq while vetoing SCHIP. Bush's most recent Iraq funding request brings to light just how sick and twisted this Administration's priorities are. Why is it we can afford \$50 billion more for this twisted and endless war in Iraq, but not \$50 billion for sick children?" said Cara Morris Stern, spokesperson for the Emergency Campaign for America's Priorities.

"For six years, the Bush administration and Republican Congresses have led us down the wrong course. Tax cuts were given to the wealthy and corporate special interests at the expense of the rest of us. An unjust war was funded with billions of dollars thrusting us into the biggest deficit this country has ever seen. The new leadership has begun to change course, investing in critical priorities like SCHIP, but the fight is far from over. When Congress returns next week, each Member will have a choice. Will they override the Presidential veto on SCHIP or will they stubbornly 'stay the course' on Bush's dangerous veto threat that will affect the lives and health of millions of children? We can do better for the 9 million uninsured children in America," said Morris Stern.

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