

FEDERAL BUDGET TIMETABLE, 2006

MONTH	KEY STEPS IN BUDGET PROCESS	POSSIBLE ADVOCACY STEPS (depending on circumstances & resources)
FEB.	<p>Monday, February 6: President's budget released</p> <p>Congress holds hearings on budget</p> <p>Committees prepare "views and estimates letters" that tell the Budget Committees what they think of the President's budget proposals</p> <p><i>District work period: Feb. 20-24</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANALYSIS: Prepare an analysis of the impact of the President's budget on your state and its budget. • MEDIA: Brief press (reporters, editorial writers, columnists) on the President's budget and key issues for the state. • COALITION: Brief a broad array of organizations about the President's budget and its implications for your state. Discuss possible coordinated activities. • LETTERS: Send (sign-on) letters to the congressional delegation highlighting concerns about the President's budget (e.g. deep discretionary cuts, unaffordable tax cuts). • GOVERNORS: Meet with governor's staff & state legislators to discuss the impact of the President's budget on the state and its budget. Ask them to send letters to the delegation making recommendations for the congressional budget. • CONGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Request a meeting with your Senator(s) and/or House Members during the district work period to educate them about the impact of the President's budget on your state. [Note: meeting requests must be submitted well in advance.] ○ Set up conference calls with Legislative Directors (LD's) and/or budget Legislative Assistant (LA's). ○ Arrange for budget questions to be asked at congressional town hall meetings.
MAR. APRIL	<p>Congress prepares its budget resolution.</p> <p>The resolution will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ total for discretionary spending ➤ targets for revenues and entitlement spending <p>The resolution could also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "reconciliation instructions" to cut entitlements and/or taxes ➤ budget process changes affecting both discretionary and entitlement spending <p><i>District work periods: Mar. 20-24 and Apr. 10-21</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANALYSIS: Prepare analyses of the House & Senate budget resolutions drafted by the Budget Committees. • MEDIA: Brief press (reporters, editorial writers, columnists) on the House & Senate budget resolutions and key issues for the state. • COALITION: Brief your coalition on the House & Senate budget resolutions and implications for your state. Discuss possible coordinated activities. • LETTERS: Send (sign-on) letters to your congressional delegation highlighting concerns about the House & Senate budget resolutions. • CONGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you did not get a meeting in February, request a meeting with your Senator(s) and/or House Members during one of the district work periods to educate them about the impact of the budget on your state. ○ Set up conference calls with LDs and/or budget LAs. ○ Arrange for budget questions to be asked at congressional "town hall meetings. ○ Be prepared to respond swiftly if key amendments emerge when full House/Senate consider the budget.

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<p>MAY</p> <p>JUNE</p> <p>JULY</p>	<p>Appropriations process starts, at least at the committee level.</p> <p><u>Possible:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • budget reconciliation legislation, which could include tax cuts and/or entitlement cuts • stand-alone bills to make all or some of the Bush tax cuts permanent (such as the estate tax repeal) <p><i>District work periods: May 29-June 2 and July 3-7</i></p>	<p>Specific action items will depend on which bills are actually moving and what committee or amendment opportunities there might be, but this is the stage where these budget & tax decisions could start to get very specific.</p> <p>It will be important to educate the media, your coalition, and your congressional delegation about the impact on your state of proposed cuts in particular discretionary programs, cuts in entitlement programs (if any), and any proposed tax cuts.</p>
<p>AUG.</p>	<p><i>Congressional recess: July 31-Sept. 4 in the House; Aug. 7-Sept. 4 in the Senate</i></p>	<p>If key bills are still pending, this is a great time to get your Members to focus on your concerns – whether through direct contact or the media or both. Call their district offices to find out when they will be back in the state (rather than on vacation or an overseas trip).</p>
<p>SEPT.</p> <p>OCT.</p>	<p>Any item listed as “possible” in May/June/July could happen now instead.</p> <p>Appropriations process continues (official deadline is October 1, but this is rarely met).</p>	<p>To be determined.</p>
<p>NOV.</p>	<p>Break for elections</p>	
<p>DEC.</p>	<p>“Lame duck” session likely, to finish appropriations bills and any other critical business.</p>	<p>To be determined.</p>