

# FY 2003 OMNIBUS: HOMELAND SECURITY

## BORDER/PORT SECURITY

- **CUSTOMS: Borders Remain Significantly Understaffed:** There are currently more than 8,000 Customs inspectors at ports of entry - far below the previously reported need of 14,000 inspectors. Bush's 2003 budget requested only about 600 more inspectors. Even if the previously stated need of 14,000 inspectors shrinks to 12,000 under the homeland security reorganization, Customs would need an additional \$252 million to hire an additional 3,400 inspectors beyond what the 2003 conference agreement provides.
- **CUSTOMS: Totally Underfunding Container Security Initiative:** The Commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service described the Container Security Initiative as being at "the forefront of our government's effort to secure the Nation from the potential terrorist threat using cargo containers" adding that it is "a major piece of the President's National Strategy for Homeland Security." Nonetheless, while President Bush touted this program at various photo-ops, he failed to request any money for it either in the 2002 Supplemental Bill or his 2003 budget. When Congress provided \$39 million for it in the Supplemental, Bush vetoed it in August. The Omnibus includes just \$12 million of the \$57 million the Customs Commissioner says he needs to fully fund the initiative.
- **CUSTOMS: Across the Board Cuts Wreak Havoc:** The Senate version of the omnibus contained nearly 3% in across-the-board cuts for all agencies and Departments. Because the conference agreement is likely to retain some or all of these across-the-board cuts, we are very concerned about the impact on Homeland Security functions. For example, a 3% across-the-board cut would be about an \$80 million cut for Customs; if all of this \$80 million was used for personnel, about 1,000 additional inspector positions could be filled. This cut would offset the 650 new inspectors that are provided in the FY03 conference agreement and begin to eat into the Customs staffing increases that were achieved in the FY02 supplemental. At ATF, the concerns are similar; an across-the-board cut of 3% would reduce their budget by about \$30 million the equivalent of almost 350 positions.
- **PORT SECURITY: 60% Less Than What Coast Guard Said Is Needed:** In December, the U.S. Coast Guard reported that ports need at least \$963 million this year and \$4.4 billion over the next decade for security grants. Unfortunately, President Bush requested no money for port security grants in either the 2002 Supplementals or his 2003 budget. The Omnibus does include \$150 million and the Congress added \$250 million to the two 2002 supplementals for a total of \$400 million for port security to date. However, this is still 60% less than the \$963 million the Coast Guard said is necessary to protect the nation's ports.

## NUCLEAR/OTHER SECURITY

- **PROTECTING NUCLEAR MATERIAL: Bush/GOP Ignore Secretary of Energy's Desperate Call:** In his letter to OMB on March 14<sup>th</sup>, Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham requested \$379 million for "urgent and compelling requirements for safeguards and security" of vulnerable nuclear materials. In his letter he specifically said, "failure to support these urgent security requirements is a risk that would be unwise." Unfortunately, the President's 2002 supplemental request was 93% less than what Abraham specified was needed for nuclear security. When Congress added back some of that money, Bush effectively vetoed it in August. The Omnibus continues to leave \$254 million of what Abraham identified in his letter totally unfunded, despite the fact that the CIA and FBI directors both said they fear a major radiological attack in the U.S.
- **DAMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Continuing to Shortchange Security:** According to a report this spring by the Associated Press, the Bush Administration's 2002 Supplemental included "none of the \$150 million the Army Corps of Engineers wanted to bolster security at up to 200 reservoirs, dams and locks across the country." When Congress tried to add more than \$100 million, Bush rejected it in August. The FY 2003 Omnibus leaves all of that original request for infrastructure security totally unfunded.

## **FIRST RESPONDERS**

- **BUSH FALSEHOOD: Promises of \$3.5B in “New Money” Never Requested By President:** Bush and Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge repeatedly promised the nation’s police and fire departments \$3.5 billion in “new” first responder grants. Bush first pledged this “new money” in a February 25, 2002 speech to the nation’s governors. Earlier that month in a speech to the National Press Club, Ridge pledged that “this \$3.5 billion is nearly a thousand-percent increase.” However, according to Bush’s budget request, he actually proposed reducing existing grants to state and local fire departments by at least \$1.2 billion to pay for his “new” initiative.
- **STILL SHORT: 66% Less “New Money” In Final Bill Than Promised:** While Congressional Republicans claim that the 2003 Omnibus bill funds the President’s supposed request for \$3.5 billion in “new” money for first responders, the fact is they are counting previously existing law enforcement and firefighting grants, as well as the new first responder initiative. For comparison, in 2002 the programs the GOP is counting to reach \$3.5 billion for “first responders” actually received roughly \$2.3 billion last year. That’s only \$1.2 billion in “new” money - 66% less than the \$3.5 billion in “new” money that Bush and the GOP promised.

# FY 2003 OMNIBUS: DOMESTIC PRIORITIES

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## ENVIRONMENT

- **RIDER: Allowing for Total Deforestation of National Forests:** The Bush Administration and the GOP Congressional leadership added a provision to the 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Bill which would effectively allow unlimited clear-cutting of forests throughout the United States by commercial logging companies. Specifically, the leadership inserted a provision expanding the small Department of Interior Stewardship Pilot Demonstration Program. Previously, the program was limited by law to only 84 small, non-commercial pilot programs to thin fire-prone forests under expedited procedures. The Bush/GOP provision, would change this, allowing private companies to participate in an unlimited number of logging operations for commercial purposes. The result would effectively open up massive amounts of previously protected national forests to deforestation.
- **RIDER: Bush Power Grab on Tongass National Forest:** On the Tongass National Forest issue, Republicans added a provision exempting the Forest Service's management plan from all judicial or administrative appeals processes. In other words, no matter what the Forest Service decides to do with Tongass, it would not be able to be challenged in court or through the Forest Service's administrative appeals process.
- **RIDER: Opening Up Alaska to Oil Drilling:** On the issue of drilling in the arctic, Republicans stripped out the House-passed provision barring preliminary work on an ANWR drilling program, potentially opening up the area to environmentally-hazardous oil exploration.
- **CONSERVATION/PARKS: Slashing Funding For Conservation:** In terms of conservation spending, Republicans included a provision slashing 15% (\$200 million) out of Conservation Spending Category programs from the FY 2002 level. Overall, the bill is \$110 million below Bush's 2003 budget request for national parks and \$30 million below the Bush request for fish and wildlife refuges.

## AGRICULTURE

- **DROUGHT AID: Robbing Peter to Pay Paul:** While the 2003 Omnibus Bill provides drought aid to farmers, it takes the funds out of USDA's mandatory spending program for conservation.

## EDUCATION

- **ACROSS-THE-BOARD-CUT: Impacts Current School Year:** An across-the-board cut of 0.65% would mean a reduction of about \$333 million in FY 2003 budget authority for education. If the across-the-board cut applies to all FY 2003, including FY 2003 advances, about \$98 million of the \$333 million cut would come out of \$15 billion in education advances that became available October 1, 2002 for the 2002 school year. This \$98 million in current school year reductions would have to be taken largely from the President's Reading First initiative because not all of those funds have been obligated (there is also a small amount of special education and vocational education money that had not all been obligated as of January 30th.)
- **CUTTING NEW INVESTMENT: Omnibus Slashes Historic Rate:** The 2003 Omnibus provides \$53.4 billion for education, an increase of \$3.5 billion or 7% more than FY 2002. The percentage increase is half of the 14% average annual increase in discretionary education funding from FY 2002-1997.
- **BELOW GOP: Bill Drops More Than Half Of Increases from GOP Senate Bill:** The Senate bill provided a \$7.9 billion increase over the Bush request for education. The conference agreement, however, provides a \$3.1 billion increase over the Bush request - \$4.7 billion less than the bill passed the GOP-controlled Senate.
- **HIGHER EDUCATION: Pell Grants Don't Keep Pace With Inflation:** The conference agreement provides only a \$50 or 1.2% increase in the maximum Pell Grant, not enough to keep pace with inflation, let alone double digit tuition increases as high as 34% that students experienced this year on some college campuses.

# **HOUSING**

- **CUT: \$100 Million Cut to Public Housing:** The 2003 Omnibus cuts 3% (\$100 million) out of HUD's Public Housing Capital Fund – the major resource for construction/renovation of public housing facilities throughout the nation.