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PRESIDENT'S FY2007 BUDGET

On February 6, 2006, President Bush submitted his \$2.77 trillion budget to Congress. While defense spending is slated to receive an increase of 6.9 percent to \$439.3 billion, and homeland security spending would increase by 3.3 percent to \$33.1 billion, the President is proposing to reduce all other annually appropriated domestic programs by \$2.2 billion (or one-half of one percent), to \$398.3 billion.

The President is advocating cutting domestic programs like education (reduced by 3.8 percent), farm subsidies, and public health programs (agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services would be cut by 2.3 percent), and curbing the growth of Medicare spending (\$36 billion over five years).

FASEB's Office of Public Affairs published a [special edition](#) Washington Update detailing how the President's budget would affect each of the six agencies our organization tracks, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Energy's Office of Science, the Veteran's Administration's Research and Development Program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Research Initiative program, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Human System Research and Technology.

FASEB also [expressed strong disappointment](#) over the funding level proposed for NIH and [praised](#) the President for his proposal to increase funding for NSF and DOE.

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**INSIDE (The Beltway) SCOOP – Jon Retzlaff,
Legislative Director**

There's no question that fiscal responsibility is the House Republicans' mantra for FY2007. House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) commented that the President's budget has helped lay the groundwork for reining in federal spending and reducing the deficit (which is forecasted to reach \$423 billion in 2006). In addition, the conservative Republican Study Group and moderate members belonging to the Republican Main Street Partnership have indicated that they will object to any bill that would overrun budget caps.

On the Senate side, Budget Committee Chairman Judd Gregg (R-NH) has stated that he wants to reduce the deficit, control non-defense discretionary spending, and slow the growth of entitlement spending. Fortunately, Senate L/HHS Appropriations Chairman Arlen Specter is on record saying that he will not vote for a budget resolution that includes the dollar amounts proposed by the President. And, in fact, Specter has pointed out that the President's allocation to his committee is \$4 billion below last year's level, which rises to \$7 billion below last year's level if inflationary increases are accounted for in the agencies FY2007 budgets.

However, if there is a silver lining, it is that Republicans are caught between making a real headway in limiting the size and role of the federal government, and the political reality that votes to cut programs that challenge the lives of millions of people could make them especially vulnerable to Democratic attacks in the fall.

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UPCOMING HEARINGS

House Appropriations Subcommittee to Hold Hearing on Pandemic Influenza

On March 2, 2006, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs will hold a hearing on pandemic influenza issues. Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, NIAID, has been asked to testify.

Senate Appropriations Overview Hearing

On March 15, 2006, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education (Senator Arlen Specter [R-PA], Chairman) will hold its overview of the FY2007 President's Budget for NIH.

House Appropriations Overview Hearing

On March 16, 2006, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education (Representative Ralph Regula [R-OH], Chairman) will hold its overview of the FY2007 President's Budget for NIH.

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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE

The House and Senate will be on recess from February 20-24.

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