



Pennsylvania U.S. Senate Candidate Spending Analysis – Joe Sestak

Total Net Spending Agenda: \$100.062 billion

Economy, Transportation, and Infrastructure: \$80.441 billion

A. Small Business Tax Credits:

“Provide a 15% refundable tax credit in 2010 and a 10% refundable tax credit in 2011 to small businesses with less than \$5 million in gross receipts for net increases in adding jobs, adding hours, and raising wages.”

<http://joesestak.com/planforpafamilies/theplan.pdf>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 4056 (111th Congress), the Jobs Opportunity and Business Stability Act of 2009. H.R. 4056 would provide a refundable credit to business owners with fewer than 20 employees and less than \$5,000,000 in gross receipts. Timothy J. Bartik and John H. Bishop at the Economic Policy Institute estimate that a similar but less restrictive plan – one without the cap on employees or gross receipts – would induce credits for new jobs totaling \$18 billion in 2010 and \$10 billion in 2011, http://epi.3cdn.net/d4d645e728ddc511d3_lkm6iigcv.pdf. The level of “refundability” (and hence the impact on outlays as opposed to revenues) is unknown.

B. Economic Plan:

“Looking forward, Joe has called for a comprehensive economic plan with four key components addressing all facets of our economy[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: \$18.816 billion (first-year cost).

Source: Programs detailed below.

1. “Quickly [r]espond to the [c]urrent [e]conomic [c]risis:
 - Stabilize the economy through aggressive stimulus plan;
 - Stabilize the housing market through a comprehensive package;
 - Stabilize financial institutions through effective implementation of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) and President Obama’s Financial Stability Plan; and
 - Provide liquidity to markets through effective Federal Reserve action.”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: \$18.7 billion (\$93.5 billion over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 1356 (111th Congress), the Homeownership Vesting Plan Act of 2009. The text authorizes the funding.

2. “Create and Retain Skilled American Jobs:”

- “Invest in small business: Increase access to small business capital by securing Small Business Administration microloans; establish a mechanism for federally directed emergency small business lending to better weather economic downturns; expand federal procurement set asides for small businesses; and support a major investment (at minimum \$250 million) in public-private business incubators to support entrepreneurial skills and development.”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: \$50 million (\$250 million over five years).

Note: NTUF assumes that the minimum \$250 million investment in public-private incubators would be spread over five years. Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 3546 (111th Congress), the Small Business Lending Promotion Act of 2009.

- “... [S]upport expanded funding for workforce development, including Job Corps and Youth Build....”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: \$6 million (\$28.3 million over five years).

Source: <http://wduqnews.blogspot.com/2010/02/sestak-looks-to-enhance-job-corps-for.html>.

3. “Restore American Innovation to Spur New Industries:”

- “Support Major Federal Investment in New Industries: Incentivize private investment in innovative technologies and companies; expand the Small Business Innovation Program to include small business participation in federal and private projects; establish an office of angel investing to encourage micro-lending for new ideas; and expand graduate education and research programs in groundbreaking science and technology fields.”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: \$13 million (\$66 million over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 3684 (111th Congress), the American Small Business Innovation Act. The text of the bill would result in a net spending increase of \$66 million over five years.

- “Harness Regional Strengths and Drive Public-Private Partnerships: Support public-private partnerships that capitalize on the presence of colleges and universities in our community. Investing in these public-private-academic partnerships will turn scientific research – and, particularly, research in the life sciences and other high-tech clusters – into innovation, which will draw new high-technology jobs to the state.”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: \$47 million (\$141 million over three years).

Source: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 4422 (111th Congress), the Minority Entrepreneurship and Business Development Act. The text authorizes the funding.

4. “Enforce Fiscal Discipline:

- Close the budget gap by reigning [*sic*] in long-term healthcare costs;
- Make ‘pay-as-you-go’ rules enforceable – requires Congress to offset the cost of all new spending;
- Require discretionary spending caps....”

<http://joesestak.com/Economy.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Without specific information is it not possible for NTUF to forecast potential savings.

C. Create Green Technology Jobs:

“Create New Jobs in Emerging Industries and Green Technology”

<http://joesestak.com/planforpafamilies/theplan.pdf>

Cost: \$51.54 billion (\$257.7 billion over five years).

Source: Related legislation in the form of H.R. 2454 (111th Congress), the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 has been adopted in the House. Representative Sestak voted in favor of passage, <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2009/roll477.xml>. H.R. 2454 would establish a cap-and-trade system to regulate carbon emissions. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), “The bill would limit or cap the quantity of certain greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted from facilities that generate electricity and from other industrial activities over the 2012-2050 period. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would establish two separate regulatory initiatives known as cap-and-trade programs—one covering emissions of most types of GHGs and one covering hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). EPA would issue allowances to emit those gases under the cap-and-trade programs. Some of those allowances would be auctioned by the federal government, and the remainder would be distributed at no charge.” Funds would support the development of clean energy projects and establish a renewable electricity standard, among other programs.

<https://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/102xx/doc10262/hr2454.pdf>.

1. R&D

“Fund job-creating research and development of renewable energy sources: \$150 billion investment over 10 years in renewable energy and energy efficiency and support increased funding to train researchers, securing our future competitiveness.”

A Plan for Pennsylvania Families, p. 5

2. Cap-and-trade

“Establish a cap-and-trade program for carbon emissions; create an incentive for companies to burn less oil and other fossil fuels and to encourage more carbon-free alternatives such as solar power.”

A Plan for Pennsylvania Families, p. 5

3. Renewable Energy Standard

“Increase the national renewable energy standard to 20% by 2020 in conjunction with a strong Renewable Electricity Standard, requiring at least 20% from renewable sources by 2020 together with a strong Efficiency Resource Standard.”

A Plan for Pennsylvania Families, p. 5

D. Target Infrastructure Spending:

“Support an immediate \$10 billion injection for the nation’s schools to quickly and effectively support job creation through repairs and maintenance, putting to work some of the million and a half construction workers who remain jobless.”

<http://joesestak.com/planforpafamilies/theplan.pdf>

Cost: \$10 billion (first-year cost).

E. Broadband Access:

“Maintain and expand access, especially in rural and other underserved areas, to high speed internet service that does not discriminate based on content[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/InternetBroadband.html>

Cost: \$20 million (\$100 million over five years).

Source: Related legislation has been introduced in the form of H.R. 4545 (111th Congress), the Rural Broadband Initiative Act of 2010. The text authorizes the funding.

F. Regional Growth Organizations:

“Facilitate further public/private partnerships and support regional growth organizations, which can address impediments holding back effective economic developments that occur across state lines[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/InternetBroadband.html>

Cost: \$65 million (\$325 million over three years).

Source: Related legislation has been introduced in the form of H.R. 2665 (111th Congress), the National Centers of Excellence for Regional Smart Growth Planning Act. The text authorizes the funding.

G. Intermodal Transportation System:

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 5799 (111th Congress), the Transportation Efficiency Act. H.R. 5799 would establish a Presidential task force to study and develop a national intermodal transportation plan.

Education, Science, and Research: \$7.158 billion

A. Make Higher Education More Accessible and Affordable for Students:

“Support more qualified teachers[.] Reauthorize the Teach [f]or America program, which recruits and trains recent college graduates seeking to enter into the teaching profession.”
<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: According to the Department of Education, the program received \$18 million in Fiscal Year 2010 and was slated for consolidation in the President’s Fiscal Year 2011 budget, <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget11/summary/edlite-section4.html>. According to the budget, the Teach for America program would be consolidated with four other programs (School Leadership, Teacher Quality Partnership, Teachers for a Competitive Tomorrow, and Transition to Teaching) to create the Teacher and Leaders Pathways program. The five programs received a total of \$136.1 million in Fiscal Year 2010. The Administration requested \$405 million for the new program saying, “The request would almost triple funding for the antecedent programs in order to increase the number of effective teachers serving in high-need and low-performing schools and high-need fields and subjects,”

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget11/summary/11summary.pdf>. It is unknown how much additional funding Representative Sestak might support.

B. Math and Science Teachers:

“Increase exemplary subject knowledge and pedagogical skills among mathematics and science teachers[.] Establish tuition repayment program for individuals with degrees in Mathematics and Science who commit to serve as a teacher.”
<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: \$159 million (\$794 million over five years).

Source: Related legislation was introduced in the form of H.R. 362 (110th Congress), to authorize science scholarships for educating mathematics and science teachers, and for other purposes. The text authorizes the funding.

C. Technical Education:

“Provide better funding for career and technical education programs[.] Increase funding for Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which expands accountability and rigorousness of technical programs.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: \$95 million (\$475 million over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 2074 (111th Congress), the Pathways Advancing Career Training Act. The text authorizes the funding.

D. Promote Early Education:

“Support the School Meal Enhancement Act, allows Local Education Agencies ... to institute programs that provide free school lunches to all students if a large portion of the students are eligible for that program.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 2690 (111th Congress), the School Meal Enhancement Act of 2009. A potentially less restrictive program, in that more children would be eligible, was included in H.R. 5504 (111th Congress), the Improving Nutrition for America’s Children Act. CBO estimated that the program in H.R. 5504 would cost \$164 million over five years.

E. Head Start Funding:

“Increase Head Start Funding[.] The Head Start program offers children of low-income families a preschool experience designed to prepare them for entrance into elementary school.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Head Start received \$2.1 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds of which \$1.1 billion went to the Early Head Start program, <http://dhhs.gov/asfr/ob/docbudget/2010budgetinbriefr.html>. It is unknown how much additional funding Representative Sestak might support.

F. Early Literacy Programs:

“Increase funding for early literacy programs[.] Continue increases requested by President Obama in Title I early Childhood grants and Early Reading First.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: The President’s Fiscal Year 2010 budget requested \$500 for new Title I Early Childhood Grants and an additional \$50 million for the Early Reading First program,

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget10/summary/edlite-section1.html>. The administration's Fiscal Year 2011 request consolidated several literacy programs, including Early Reading First, into the Effective Teaching and Learning: Literacy program. Funding would rise from \$413 million to \$450 million, <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget11/summary/11summary.pdf>. It is unknown how much additional funding Representative Sestak might support.

G. Improve Care for Children with Disabilities:

“Increase [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act] IDEA funding to match 40% federal share[.] IDEA and its reauthorizations stipulate that funding will meet 40 percent of the excess costs of providing special education to these children. We must raise appropriations to meet that standard.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: \$6.833 billion (\$34.163 billion over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 3578 (111th Congress), to amend part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to provide full federal funding of such part. The bill increases the federal share over six years.

H. No Child Left Behind (NCLB):

“Establish fair assessments for special education students in NCLB[.] Expand applicability of modified assessment programs for Special Education students.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: Unknown.

I. Keep Students Safe:

“Reduce the use of [s]eclusion and [r]estraint among special needs children[.] Set minimum federal standards for state regulation of the use of seclusion and restraint in schools.”

<http://joesestak.com/Education.html>

Cost: \$51 million (\$253 million over five years).

Note: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 4247 (111th Congress), the Keeping All Students Safe Act. According to CBO, the bill would increase spending by \$253 million over five years.

J. Technical Education for Women:

“Support major federal investment in pre-vocational and vocational programs that are geared at improving women's participation and employment in non-traditional fields.”

<http://joesestak.com/GenderEquality.html>

Cost: \$20 million (\$100 million over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 4830 (111th Congress), the Women and Workforce Investment for Nontraditional Jobs Act. The text authorizes the funding.

Energy, Agriculture, and the Environment: \$1.038 billion

A. Dairy Farmers:

“Improve programs protecting dairy farmers from price variation by increasing percentage of losses covered.”

“Expand the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) which helps U.S. dairy exporters meet prevailing world dairy prices.”

<http://joesestak.com/Agriculture.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 3166 (111th Congress), to amend the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 to index for inflation the payment rate for payments under the Milk Income Loss Contract Program.

B. Seasonal Farm Workers:

“Expand H-2A visas programs to ensure available seasonal workers for farms.... Establish pathway to citizenship for current experienced farm workers.”

<http://joesestak.com/Agriculture.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Source: Title II of H.R. 2414 (111th Congress) would revise the H-2A visa program. A cost estimate is unavailable.

C. Expand Access to Capital:

“Expand the Rural Development Guaranteed Loan Program in the Department of Agriculture to improve access to capital for farmers and rural businesses.”

Cost: Unknown.

D. Clean Coal

“... Joe believes we need to ... continue investment in clean coal; continue investment and require carbon capture and sequestration.”

<http://joesestak.com/Energy.html>

Cost: \$953 million (\$3.81 billion over four years).

Source: Related legislation has been introduced in the form of S. 1134 (111th Congress), the Responsible Use of Coal Act of 2009. Estimate is based on the text of the bill.

E. Nuclear Power:

“... Joe believes we need ... [c]ontinued funding [for] research into developing future reactor technology and design; Promote the use of Thorium following the findings from the Defense and Energy Departments.”

<http://joesestak.com/Energy.html>

Cost: \$55 million (\$165 million over three years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 3177 (111th Congress), the Fusion Engineering Science and Fusion Energy Planning Act of 2009. Estimate is based on the text of the bill.

Note: Representative Sestak is also the sponsor of H.R. 2015 (111th Congress), to instruct the Secretary of Energy to carry out a study on the use of thorium-fueled nuclear reactors.

F. Safe Drinking Water:

“... Joe believes we need to ... [g]ive local communities the added protection of the Safe Drinking Water Act, in addition to current State protections.”

<http://joesestak.com/Energy.html>

Cost: Unknown.

G. Natural Gas:

“... Joe believes we need to ... [e]ncourage the development of natural gas infrastructure and use [it] as a vehicle fuel source.”

<http://joesestak.com/Energy.html>

Cost: \$30 million (first-year cost).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1835 (111th Congress), the New Alternative Transportation to Give Americans Solutions Act of 2009. The text authorizes the funding.

H. Water Infrastructure:

“... Joe believes we need to ... [i]ncrease investment in water infrastructure development.”

<http://joesestak.com/Energy.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Health Care: \$10.59 billion

A. Accountable Care Organizations:

“Include incentives for Account[able] Care Organization[s] (ACO) in the Health Insurance Exchange, Public Plan[.] Require Qualified Health Benefit Plans to contract with ACOs. Alternatively, require the public plan to contract with ACOs.

“Implement Wellness Program in Medicare[.] Give premium and co-pay reductions to seniors who participate in chronic disease management programs and follow preventative care recommendations.

“Establish Regional Accountable Care Organization reimbursement in Medicare[.] Provide pilot program to encourage a regional implementation of Accountable Care Organizations.”
<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act contains a provision that creates a pediatric accountable care organization demonstration project.

B. Primary Care Incentives:

“Incentivize [p]rimary [c]are[.] Increase Medicare bonus to [p]rimary [c]are [p]hysicians to 10% (from 5% in AAHCA)[.]”

Cost: Unknown.

Note: According to a CBO estimate for H.R. 3200, the America’s Affordable Health Choices Act (111th Congress), the bill would provide \$2.5 billion in incentive payments to select primary care services over a five-year period, <https://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/104xx/doc10464/hr3200.pdf>. CBO also reports that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), which has been signed into law, would provide \$2.5 billion in incentive payments over a five-year period to expand access to primary care and general surgery services, https://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/113xx/doc11307/Reid_Letter_HR3590.pdf. According to the Congressional Research Service, “The provision [sec. 5501 in PPACA] would establish a new 10% bonus on select evaluation & management and general surgery codes under the Medicare fee schedule for five years, beginning January 1, 2011” (<http://www.ncsl.org/documents/health/MCprogChgs.pdf>). NTUF is unable to determine if this 10 percent bonus would fulfill Representative Sestak’s proposal or not.

C. National Health Services Corps Funding:

- “Maintain 50% of Stimulus bill increase in funding for National Health Services Corps, which provides tuition repayment for [p]rimary [c]are.”
<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: \$150 million (first-year cost).

Source: The National Health Service Corps received \$300 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

<http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/about/facts.htm>

- “Increase [h]ealth [c]are [w]orkforce[.] Expand the National Health Service Corps to include additional providers and increase institutional funding of [n]ursing [e]ducation.”

<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: \$436 million (\$2.18 billion over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1296 (111th Congress): the Access for All America Act. Estimate is based on the text of the bill and budget baselines.

D. Preventive Care:

“Invest in Preventative Care[.] Maintain 50% of new federal investment in prevention and wellness fund at CDC in the Stimulus[.]”

Cost: \$325 million (first-year cost).

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention received \$650 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for community-based prevention and wellness programs.

<http://www.cdc.gov/partners/Archive/EconomicStimulus/>

E. Community Health Centers:

“Increase funding for Community Health Centers.”

<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: \$2.979 billion (\$14.893 billion over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1296 (111th Congress), the Access for All America Act. Estimate is based on the text of the bill and budget baselines.

F. Health Information Technology (IT):

“Expand incentives for adoption, [e]nact bonuses [for] Medicaid providers who implement Health IT. This would include a broader definition of provider and apply to specialties, such as pediatrics, that do not service Medicare patients.”

“Require interoperability as a component of ‘Meaningful use[.]’ Direct the Office of the National Coordinator to establish a national standard for interoperability of Health Records by September 1st, 2010. Require the inclusion of interoperability in the definition of meaningful use of health information technology for federal technology incentives.”

“Provide Assistance to Small and Ancillary Providers for Health IT adoption[.] Establish loan guarantee program to aid smaller practices and health care providers excluded from Medicare bonuses in implementing Health IT.”

<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: Unknown.

G. Pediatric Cancer Research:

“Encourage [f]uture [r]esearch in [p]ediatric [c]ancer[.] Bring leaders of [p]ediatric [c]ancer research together with congressional staff and leaders to plot course for future research efforts.”
<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: Unknown.

H. National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation Funding:

“Funding for NIH and NSF[;] [m]aintain funding levels at 50% of Stimulus funding in FY2011 budgets.”
<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: \$6.7 billion (first-year cost).

Source: The National Institutes of Health received \$10.4 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

http://www.nih.gov/about/director/02252009statement_arra.htm.

The National Science Foundation received \$3 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=114483&org=NSF&from=news.

I. Patent Reform:

“Reform [p]atent [l]aw to [e]stablish [c]onsistency for [b]usinesses[.] Establish a singular process for protesting copyright violations, which will reduce uncertainty for innovator companies but preserve the rights of generic manufacturers[.]”
<http://joesestak.com/Health.html>

Cost: Unknown.

J. Prevent Insurance Plan Discrimination:

“Prevent health insurance plans from discriminating against LGBT [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered] individuals. LGBT individuals lack healthcare coverage and suffer from inadequate coverage – particularly transgender individuals.”
<http://joesestak.com/LGBT.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Source: Related legislation was introduced in the form of H.R. 3001 (111th Congress), the Ending LGBT Health Disparities Act. A cost estimate is not available.

K. Fight Medicare Fraud:

“Improving [p]ayment [a]ccuracy and [e]xpand [f]unding and [a]uthority to [f]ight [w]aste, [f]raud and [a]buse.”

<http://joesestak.com/Seniors.html>

Savings: Unknown.

Note: It is possible that efforts to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare system would result in significant savings. Based on the information available, NTUF cannot estimate the level of resources that Representative Sestak would dedicate to fighting waste, fraud, and abuse, nor are we able to determine what level of savings those investments might generate.

National Security and International Relations: -\$25 million (savings)

A. Close Guantanamo Bay:

“Closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay (and removal of detainees to supermax prisons or other high security facilities) is necessary in order prevent further use of its operation as a propaganda tool by Al Qaeda and its ilk.”

<http://joesestak.com/Defense.html>

Cost: Unknown.

B. Defense Procurement:

“Joe will continue to support legislation aimed at curbing the ‘tyranny of optimism’ which prevails among the culture in defense procurement and attempt to keep cost estimates realistic and under control, leaving the Defense Department with sufficient funding for personnel costs so that we never again have another scandal such [as] the inadequate conditions found at Walter Reed in 2007.”

<http://joesestak.com/Defense.html>

Cost: \$11 million (\$55 million over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 2102 (111th Congress), the Weapons Acquisition System Reform Through Enhancing Technical Knowledge and Oversight Act of 2009. The text authorizes the funding.

Note: It is possible that over the long term, defense procurement reform will generate significant savings. However, NTUF is unable to calculate such an estimate with any degree of precision due to the many variables involved.

C. End Don’t Ask; Don’t Tell:

“Americans are guaranteed the opportunity to achieve a better future for themselves and their families – so that they may continue to contribute to America’s collective future. This involves: A military policy that allows America’s best men and women to serve their country without hesitation[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/LGBT.html>

Cost: -\$36 million (-\$180 million over five years).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1283 (111th Congress), the Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2009. A University of California report estimates the cost of discharging service members and then recruiting and training their replacements to have been \$364 million over the first decade of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/13/AR2006021302373.html>.

Veterans: Unknown

A. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

“Address the epidemics of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), each of which afflict up to one in five of our brave service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/Veterans>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1308 (111th Congress), the Veterans Mental Health Screening and Assessment Act. A cost estimate is unavailable.

B. Priority 8 Veterans:

“Ensure that the arbitrary exclusion of Priority 8 veterans from VA health care coverage is completely overturned[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/Veterans>

Cost: Unknown.

C. Disability Compensation Reform:

“Overhaul veteran disability compensation, which at present is hampered by a gridlocked, dual-tracked process[.]”

<http://joesestak.com/Veterans>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: According to Representative Sestak’s campaign website, he is planning to introduce legislation to address this issue.

D. Quality of Life Services:

“Provide adequate drug and alcohol treatment, counseling and housing for homeless or elderly veterans, continuing to work with organizations such as Give an Hour and support legislative programs such as HUD-VASH; and [w]ork towards solutions for the record-high divorce and

suicide rates which the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have caused amongst service members.”
<http://joesestak.com/Veterans>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 4569 (111th Congress), the Expanded Housing for America’s Veterans Act. A cost estimate is not available.

Miscellaneous: \$860 million

A. Animal Protection:

“Joe will fight to ensure funding for animal protection, proper enforcement of animal preservation and welfare laws, and preservation of critical habitats.”
<http://joesestak.com/Animals.html>

Cost: Unknown.

1. “Provide adequate funding for enforcement activities of animal protection laws and habitat protection, especially for Endangered Species.”
2. “Establish an executive office to better coordinate policy and regulations affecting animals across several different agencies.”
3. “[D]evelop a national standard by pet microchip scanners to ensure they are affordable and effective in reuniting lost pets with their families.”
4. “[R]equire that large commercial breeders of puppies be licensed, regulated, and inspected and establish national standards for these breeders.”

Note: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 5434 (111th Congress), the Puppy Uniform Protection and Safety Act.

5. “[E]stablish mechanism for enforcement of U.S. standards in imported products for consumption by pets.”

Note: Representative Sestak was a cosponsor of H.R. 2108 (110th Congress), the Human and Pet Food Safety Act of 2007.

B. Election Reform:

“To eliminate the opportunity for undue influence, Joe supports public financing for election campaigns and has co-sponsored a bill to accomplish this.”
<http://joesestak.com/Ethics.html>

Cost: \$850 million (first-year cost).

Source: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1826 (111th Congress), the Fair Elections Now Act. Estimate is based on information from Fair Elections Now.
<http://fairelectionsnow.org>.

C. Congressional Ethics:

“Looking forward, Joe believes we need to take additional steps in this area. That is why he introduced HR 2822, which went further by allowing ethics complaints to not only be filed by those outside of the House, but also outside parties, and grant the office subpoena power.”
<http://joesestak.com/Ethics.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Source: Representative Sestak sponsored H.R. 2822 (110th Congress), the Independent Ethics Commission Act of 2007. A cost estimate is not available.

D. Earmark Reform:

“Joe favors eliminating all earmarks from the appropriations process and instituting in its place a grant system that takes into account local input in Washington.”
<http://joesestak.com/Ethics.html>

Cost: \$10 million (\$31 million over three years).

Source: Representative Sestak is the sponsor of H.R. 5775 (111th Congress), to require the establishment of a commission on earmark reform, to consolidate and streamline the grants management structure of the federal government, and for other purposes. The bill authorizes \$1 million for a National Commission on Earmark Reform and \$30 million over three years to establish an Office of Grant Making.

E. Social Security:

“Oppose [p]rivatization of Social Security, which would have decreased the income of retirees significantly during the recent economic recession.

“Support [e]fforts to [c]redit Social Security [r]evenue to the Trust Fund [r]ather than the General Fund.

“Establish a Social Security ‘Lock Box’ Policy[;] such a policy would prevent diversion of funds from Social Security for other programs.”

<http://joesestak.com/Seniors.html>

Cost: Unknown.

Note: Representative Sestak is a cosponsor of H.R. 1276 (111th Congress), the Social Security Protection and Truth in Budgeting Act of 2009. A cost estimate is not available.