



**Policy Paper No. 154**

**BillTally Report 108–2**

**October 7, 2004**

### **The First Eighteen Months of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress: Ghosts of the Revolution**

This fall marks the 10-year anniversary of the historic election that made the Republicans the majority party in Congress. With the platform set out in the “Contract with America,” legislators embarked on a mission to change the way things were done in Congress and vowed to scale back the size and impact of the federal government. Yet today, both parties are on track to propose more spending than ever, and the surge in the size of lawmakers’ spending agendas is not being driven by the issues of war and homeland security. These items were actually outpaced by demand for new spending on child care programs, entitlements, and welfare. On the other side of the ledger, the zeal that once existed to root out wasteful or duplicative federal spending has waned over the past decade. Although there are a few signs that more Members are seeking ways to rein in federal spending, there is not yet sufficient evidence to indicate whether this is a trend that will gain steam.

This report summarizes data from NTUF’s BillTally accounting software, which for over 12 years has studied the cost or savings of all legislation introduced in Congress that affects annual federal spending by at least \$1 million. Agenda totals for individual lawmakers were developed by cross-indexing their sponsorship and cosponsorship records with cost estimates for 1,147 House bills and 871 Senate bills under BillTally accounting rules that prevent the double counting of overlapping proposals.<sup>1</sup> Prior to publication of this report, all sponsorship and cost data were presented for confidential review to each Congressional office. Appendix A lists all Members alphabetically with the number of spending and saving bills they introduced, Appendix B lists Members by state delegation, and Appendix C gives a thorough explanation of the BillTally methodology.

#### **I. Data Highlights**

- Proposals to grow government far outnumbered those to pare back government, as reflected in the ratio of spending increase bills to decrease bills in both chambers of Congress, but for the first time in eight years, the ratio shrunk compared to its level in the preceding Congress. For each bill to lower spending introduced in the House, there were nearly 22 bills to raise spending. For each bill to reduce spending introduced in the Senate, there were 29 bills to increase spending.
- If every bill (including overlapping legislation) before the Senate were passed into law, federal spending would rise by a net of \$1.47 trillion each year, or \$13,456 per household. Bills before the House would cumulatively cause spending to soar by \$5.77 trillion, or \$52,761 per household.

- In the Senate, each \$1 saved from legislation that would reduce spending was overwhelmed by \$18.16 in new spending. In the House, each \$1 of savings proposed in legislation was swamped by \$47.66 in spending increases.
- Fifty-seven Representatives did not sponsor any bills to lower spending and 131 could only find a single cut bill to support among the 50 that were introduced. Twenty-two Members sponsored more than five cut bills each; Representative Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL) sponsored the most (11). The average Representative sponsored 68 bills to increase spending. Representative Martin Frost (D-TX) sponsored the most spending increases (273).
- Thirty-one Senators did not sponsor any bills to cut spending while 36 Senators could each only find one cut bill to support among the 29 that were proposed. Only one Senator, Russ Feingold (D-WI), sponsored more than five cut bills. In contrast, the average Senator sponsored 63 bills to increase spending. Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) led the chamber by sponsoring 174 bills to increase spending.
- In the House of Representatives, the average Member compiled record high spending agendas with record low savings agendas to offset the new expenditures. The average House Democrat sponsored or cosponsored legislation that would increase spending by \$509.5 billion annually and sponsored \$201 million in bills to cut spending. These savings offset 0.03 percent of the total amount of increases. The average House Republican sponsored legislation to increase spending by \$39.8 billion and sponsored \$4.2 billion in savings, which would offset 10.6 percent of the new outlays.
- Although the average Senator sponsored more proposals to reduce spending over the first eighteen months of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress than at the same point in the 107<sup>th</sup>, this upswing of measures to save taxpayer dollars was not large enough to keep pace with the increase in legislation calling for new spending. The typical Senate Democrat sponsored \$335 million in savings, which offset 0.17 percent of \$196.2 billion in proposed increases. The net agenda of the average Senate Democrat (\$195.8 billion) nearly beat the record set in the 103<sup>rd</sup> Congress. The average Republican sponsored or cosponsored legislation that would increase spending by \$35.2 billion, 7.1 percent of which was offset by \$2.5 billion in sponsored spending reductions.
- For the first time since the 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress (when the BillTally program began), the net agenda of the typical House Republican was larger than that of the typical Senate Republican.
- While the average net spending agenda proposed by House and Senate Republicans has reached record highs, the difference between the parties' approaches towards spending remains clear. The typical House Democrat sponsored or cosponsored legislation that would increase federal outlays fourteen times higher than legislation backed by the typical House Republican, while the typical Senate Democrat net agenda was six times larger than the net spending agenda of the average Senate Republican.
- Just 11 House Members had net agendas to reduce spending, while 167 Representatives – nearly 40 percent of the House – compiled net agendas to increase spending by greater than \$100 billion. Of these, 37 (36 Democrats and one Independent) had net agendas to increase spending by over \$1 trillion.

- Only two Senators produced net agendas to reduce spending, while 27 Democrats and one Republican had net agendas to increase spending by greater than \$100 billion.

## II. Analysis of Findings

### A. Why Look at Sponsorship?

This study examines trends of federal spending through the prism of Members' sponsorship records. Analysis of voting records over time can provide valuable insights into a Member's budgetary principles, but on occasion it can be difficult to determine the reason guiding a decision on a specific vote. Bills can be complex with several components, and a Member's vote can be subject to interpretation. For example, a generally pro-military Senator may vote against an increase in defense spending he would otherwise support, because of an added clause directing that a portion of the funds in the bill go towards family planning (and therefore decides to oppose it out of pro-life principles). This vote could later be used against him, rightly or wrongly, to say that he is opposed to strengthening nation defense. Or a Representative on record for supporting expansion of preventative health care spending under Medicare may vote against a bill that would do just that because he believes the funds provided in the bill are inadequate to meet its stated policy objectives. This vote could be used to attack that Representative for failing to support the Medicare safety net when in fact he opposed the measure because he believed the bill would shortchange the program.

This problem of construing intent can be avoided by examining Congressional sponsorship – those bills that a Member either authors, co-authors, or otherwise officially endorses as a cosponsor. The record resulting from this component of Congressional behavior can help provide an understanding of a Member's legislative interests and budgetary philosophy.<sup>2</sup> This study looks at a Member's sponsorship record as his or her "wish list" and then tabulates the cost of that list as though all of the items were to instantaneously become law. This data for each Member can be tracked with other variables and events to examine influences on spending behavior, such as time in office, party identification, the overall budgetary climate, and other factors.

### B. A Sign of Change?

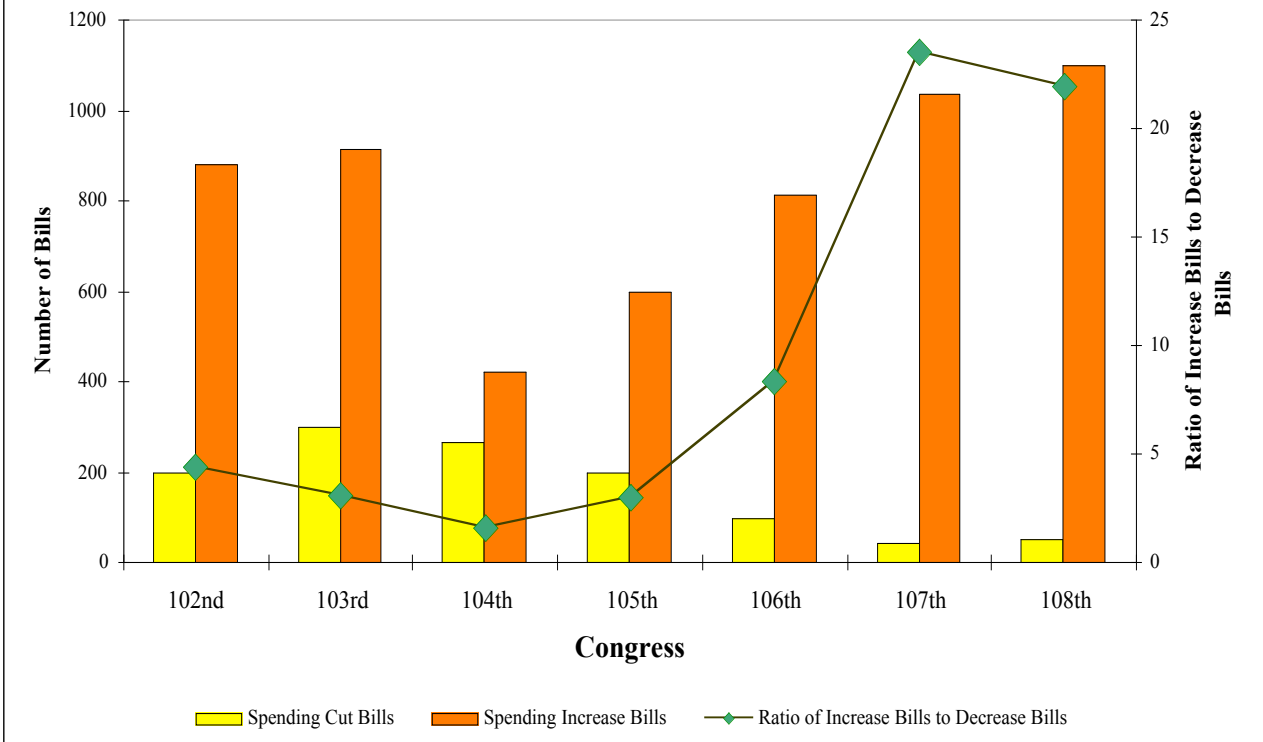
For the first time since the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, the ratio of increase bills to decrease bills has declined in both the House and the Senate (see Table 1 below). Over the past 10-plus years, the number of cut bills introduced during the first 18 months of each Congress has declined while the number of bills to increase spending has soared. During the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, the number of costed spending increase bills reached record highs in both the House and the Senate, but for the first time since the 103<sup>rd</sup> Congress, spending cut bills in the House became more prevalent as well. This uptick also occurred in the Senate, for the first time since the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Although the ratio of spending increases to cuts is still over 20 times its level in the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress (see Figures 1 and 2 below), this drop of the ratio could be a harbinger of a new trend that will see a greater number of savings provisions introduced in Congress. Ten years ago, record deficits spurred the movement toward proposals to cut spending. The subsequent budget surpluses led to a slackening of fiscal discipline as Members of Congress sought ways to turn the Treasury's excess cash flow into new policy initiatives. Now

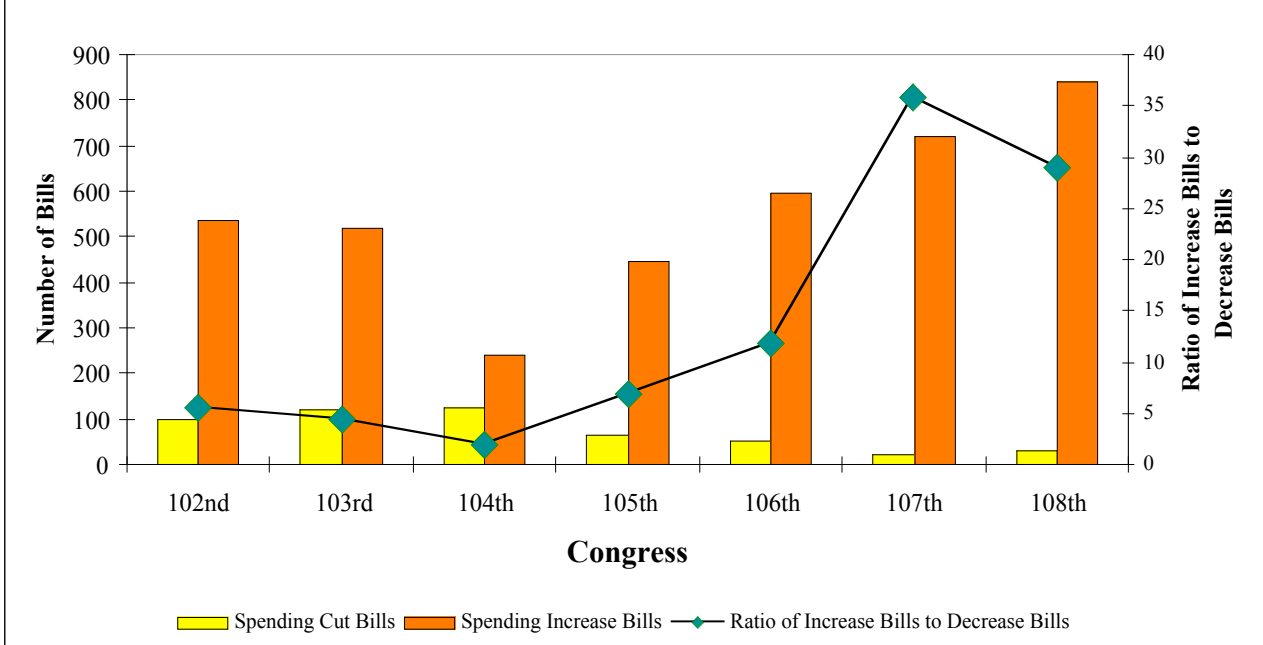
with the return of federal deficits, Members may be slowly turning their attention again to budget cutting legislation. It remains to be seen whether this is a trend with momentum that will carry through to the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, or whether this upswing in the number of savings bills is merely a minor detour on the way to a seemingly ever-expanding federal budget.

<b>Table 1. Bill Introduction Rates in the First 18 Months of Past 7 Congresses</b>			
<b>Congress</b>	<b>Spending Cut Bills</b>	<b>Spending Increase Bills</b>	<b>Ratio of Increase Bills to Decrease Bills</b>
<b>House</b>			
102 <sup>nd</sup>	199	879	4.42
103 <sup>rd</sup>	301	914	3.04
104 <sup>th</sup>	267	420	1.57
105 <sup>th</sup>	199	598	3.01
106 <sup>th</sup>	98	814	8.31
107 <sup>th</sup>	44	1,034	23.5
108 <sup>th</sup>	50	1,097	21.94
<b>Senate</b>			
102 <sup>nd</sup>	97	535	5.52
103 <sup>rd</sup>	120	520	4.33
104 <sup>th</sup>	123	242	1.97
105 <sup>th</sup>	65	445	6.85
106 <sup>th</sup>	50	594	11.88
107 <sup>th</sup>	20	718	35.9
108 <sup>th</sup>	29	842	29.03

**Figure 1. House Bills Introduced and Scored in the First 18 Months of Each Congress**



**Figure 2. Senate Bills Introduced and Scored in the First 18 Months of Each Congress**



*C. On The Other Hand...*

The slight rise in the number of proposals to reduce spending has had little impact on Members' aggregate net spending totals. This observation holds true across parties in both chambers of Congress (see Tables 2 and 3). Fewer Members are sponsoring multiple bills to cut spending, so, the net agendas of the typical House Republican and Democrat rose to record levels. For the Democrats this resulted from a surge in calls for new spending (up over \$100 billion from this time during the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress) and a record decline in the average agenda to cut spending (down to \$201 million from \$864 million two years ago and \$23 billion 10 years ago). In short, the average Democrat would have to increase his or her dollar amount of sponsored savings to 2,500 times its current level in order to “balance” his or her agenda so that it had no net impact on the budget.

<b>Table 2. Average House Sponsorship of Legislation in the First 18 Months of the Past 7 Congresses by Party (in Millions of Dollars)</b>			
<b>Congress</b>	<b>Proposed Increases</b>	<b>Proposed Cuts</b>	<b>Net Agendas</b>
<b>Democrats</b>			
102 <sup>nd</sup>	\$148,955	(\$2,780)	\$146,175
103 <sup>rd</sup>	\$293,367	(\$23,393)	\$269,973
104 <sup>th</sup>	\$173,912	(\$10,121)	\$163,791
105 <sup>th</sup>	\$109,374	(\$3,262)	\$106,112
106 <sup>th</sup>	\$52,557	(\$1,068)	\$51,490
107 <sup>th</sup>	\$409,924	(\$864)	\$409,060
108 <sup>th</sup>	\$509,555	(\$201)	\$509,354
<b>Republicans</b>			
102 <sup>nd</sup>	\$23,804	(\$9,600)	\$14,204
103 <sup>rd</sup>	\$39,523	(\$62,394)	(\$22,871)
104 <sup>th</sup>	\$7,603	(\$26,627)	(\$19,024)
105 <sup>th</sup>	\$11,307	(\$22,041)	(\$10,734)
106 <sup>th</sup>	\$21,506	(\$16,771)	\$4,736
107 <sup>th</sup>	\$42,409	(\$13,853)	\$28,556
108 <sup>th</sup>	\$39,823	(\$4,234)	\$35,589
Notes: Totals may not add due to rounding. Representative Sanders (I-VT) is not included in this table.			

Across the aisle, the average House Republican proposed fewer spending increases than at this point in the previous Congress, but also proposed a record low total of savings (three times smaller than during the 107<sup>th</sup>). Because of this record low – a drop of more than \$9 billion since two years ago and \$58 billion since 10 years ago – the average net agenda for a GOP Member surpassed the net agenda of the average Senate Republican for the first time since 1992.

**Table 3. Average Senate Sponsorship of Legislation in the First 18 Months of the Past 7 Congresses by Party (in Millions of Dollars)**

Congress	Proposed Increases	Proposed Cuts	Net Agendas
<b>Democrats</b>			
102 <sup>nd</sup>	\$67,336	(\$5,101)	\$62,235
103 <sup>rd</sup>	\$212,869	(\$16,375)	\$196,494
104 <sup>th</sup>	\$5,584	(\$4,950)	\$633
105 <sup>th</sup>	\$27,310	(\$1,318)	\$25,992
106 <sup>th</sup>	\$39,039	(\$863)	\$38,176
107 <sup>th</sup>	\$131,450	(\$270)	\$131,180
108 <sup>th</sup>	\$196,199	(\$335)	\$195,864
<b>Republicans</b>			
102 <sup>nd</sup>	\$20,541	(\$9,262)	\$11,280
103 <sup>rd</sup>	\$45,343	(\$68,452)	(\$23,110)
104 <sup>th</sup>	\$7,136	(\$23,618)	(\$16,482)
105 <sup>th</sup>	\$17,021	(\$20,197)	(\$3,175)
106 <sup>th</sup>	\$20,064	(\$9,701)	\$10,363
107 <sup>th</sup>	\$30,094	(\$116)	\$29,978
108 <sup>th</sup>	\$35,202	(\$2,519)	\$32,683

Notes: Totals may not add due to rounding. Senator Jeffords (I-VT) is not included in this table.

In the Senate (see Table 3 above), net agendas of the typical Republican and Democrat continued the trend of upward growth that has taken place over the past several Congresses. This occurred despite the fact that the average total sponsorship of savings bills rose from its level at this point of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress. Not since the 103<sup>rd</sup> Congress had the average Senator of either party called for greater reductions in spending compared to the totals produced in the preceding Congress.

*D. The Outliers – Boom and Bust*

As Table 4 (below) shows, there are fewer and fewer Members of Congress whose overall spending agenda would reduce the size of the federal government. In contrast, 167 Representatives, including four Republicans, one Independent, and 162 Democrats (totaling 38 percent of the House), sponsored legislation that would increase spending by at least \$100 billion per year. At this point in the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress – just four years ago – there was only one Member with an agenda calling for this level of annual spending increases.

<b>Table 4. Total Number of Members with Net Agendas to Reduce Spending and Number of Members with Spending Agendas Greater Than \$100 Billion (First 18 Months of Each Congress)</b>		
<b>Congress</b>	<b>Members with Net Agendas to Reduce Spending</b>	<b>Members with Net Spending Agendas Greater Than \$100 Billion</b>
<b>House</b>		
106 <sup>th</sup>	92	1
107 <sup>th</sup>	30	92
108 <sup>th</sup>	11	167
<b>Senate</b>		
106 <sup>th</sup>	15	0
107 <sup>th</sup>	0	14
108 <sup>th</sup>	2	28

<b>Table 5. Members With Net Agendas to Reduce Spending in the First 18 Months of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress (in Millions of Dollars)</b>	
<b>House</b>	
Myrick, Sue (R-NC)	(\$42,606)
Hensarling, Jeb (R-TX)	(\$23,226)
Hefley, Joel (R-CO)	(\$22,278)
Crane, Philip (R-IL)	(\$19,840)
Smith, Nick (R-MI)	(\$6,843)
Linder, John (R-GA)	(\$6,297)
Brady, Kevin (R-TX)	(\$1,158)
Lewis, Jerry (R-CA)	(\$576)
Chabot, Steve (R-OH)	(\$458)
Miller, Jeff (R-FL)	(\$379)
Taylor, Charles (R-NC)	(\$61)
<b>Senate</b>	
Craig, Larry (R-ID)	(\$27,301)
Shelby, Richard (R-AL)	(\$24,247)

*E. The Agenda – How Would Members Spend Your Tax Dollars?*

Category	House					Senate				
	Cost	% of Total Cost	# of Bills	% of All Bills to Increase Spending	Average Cost Per Bill	Cost	% of Total Cost	# of Bills	% of All Bills to Increase Spending	Average Cost Per Bill
<b>Agriculture</b>	\$29,705	0.5%	20	1.8%	\$1,485	\$3,698	0.2%	11	1.3%	\$336
<b>Child Health Care/Child Related Programs</b>	\$519,424	8.8%	37	3.3%	\$14,038	\$491,655	31.6%	25	2.9%	\$19,666
<b>Economic Stimulus</b>	\$168,479	2.9%	17	1.5%	\$9,911	\$195,908	12.6%	13	1.5%	\$15,070
<b>Education</b>	\$116,273	2.0%	78	7.0%	\$1,491	\$73,424	4.7%	60	7.0%	\$1,224
<b>Energy</b>	\$28,720	0.5%	27	2.4%	\$1,064	\$56,577	3.6%	19	2.2%	\$2,978
<b>Environment/Conservation</b>	\$15,100	0.3%	96	8.6%	\$157	\$19,644	1.3%	85	9.9%	\$231
<b>Foreign Affairs/Foreign Aid</b>	\$26,617	0.5%	47	4.2%	\$566	\$52,234	3.4%	33	3.9%	\$1,583
<b>Homeland Security</b>	\$42,599	0.7%	42	3.8%	\$1,014	\$53,617	3.4%	45	5.3%	\$1,191
<b>Housing</b>	\$1,437	0.0%	16	1.4%	\$90	\$431	0.0%	8	0.9%	\$54
<b>Infrastructure/Transportation</b>	\$135,975	2.3%	51	4.6%	\$2,666	\$63,946	4.1%	27	3.2%	\$2,368
<b>Interior/Land Management</b>	\$2,085	0.0%	75	6.8%	\$28	\$1,044	0.1%	61	7.1%	\$17
<b>Law Enforcement/Courts</b>	\$10,671	0.2%	76	6.8%	\$140	\$3,744	0.2%	66	7.7%	\$57
<b>Medicare/Medic-aid/Social Security</b>	\$309,282	5.3%	72	6.5%	\$4,296	\$166,573	10.7%	56	6.5%	\$2,975
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	\$218,622	3.7%	233	21.0%	\$938	\$47,415	3.0%	176	20.5%	\$269
<b>National Defense</b>	\$128,925	2.2%	31	2.8%	\$4,159	\$76,500	4.9%	19	2.2%	\$4,026
<b>Public Health Services/Research</b>	\$3,922,969	66.6%	98	8.8%	\$40,030	\$40,340	2.6%	81	9.5%	\$498
<b>Veterans</b>	\$43,856	0.7%	60	5.4%	\$731	\$43,876	2.8%	38	4.4%	\$1,155
<b>Welfare</b>	\$169,529	2.9%	35	3.2%	\$4,844	\$165,831	10.7%	34	4.0%	\$4,877
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$5,890,268</b>		<b>1,111</b>		<b>\$5,302</b>	<b>\$1,556,457</b>		<b>857</b>		<b>\$1,816</b>

Note: 1) Overlapping measures are not offset against each other. 2) A few large bills containing spending in multiple categories were split into their respective components for this chart. 3) Totals may not add due to rounding.

Table 6 (above) details the level of spending proposed (savings provisions are excluded from this Table) in various categories, as well as the number of bills proposed affecting each issue area and their average cost. Interestingly, in terms of the percentage of bills corresponding to each issue area, Representatives and Senators divided their workload similarly. Only two issue areas varied between chambers by more than one percentage point: the House focused a greater portion of its workload on transportation and infrastructure legislation (4.6 percent of all costed bills) than the Senate (3.2 percent), while the Senate’s homeland security workload (5.3 percent of all costed bills) was larger than the House’s (3.8 percent).

One might reasonably assume that the increase in the size of Representatives’ and Senators’ spending agendas detailed in this report is occurring in response to our military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts of the global war against terrorism. Another important item on the national agenda is the fortification of our homeland security network. Yet, as Table 6 shows, in both chambers the total cost of proposals for foreign affairs, homeland security, and national defense were outpaced by legislation that would increase spending on child care programs (including expansion of the federally funded State Children’s Health Insurance Program), economic stimulus (including state bailout plans and other bills designed to expand the economy), entitlements (Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security), and welfare (including unemployment compensation).

*F. Freshmen and Member Caucuses*

<b>Table 7. Average Net Spending Agendas of Freshmen and Non-Freshmen by Party (in Millions of Dollars)</b>			
	<b>All</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
<b>House</b>			
Freshmen	\$148,801	\$330,466	\$33,196
Non-Freshmen	\$282,397	\$529,230	\$35,994
All	\$265,964	\$509,354	\$35,589
<b>Senate</b>			
Freshmen	\$28,604	\$67,810	\$22,069
Non-Freshmen	\$118,378	\$198,589	\$34,098
All	\$112,094	\$195,864	\$32,683
Note: Senate includes only first-term freshmen. Sen. Lautenberg (D-NJ), who has prior service in the Senate, was included with the non-freshmen. Sen. Pryor (AR) was the only freshman Democrat.			

Supporters of term limits will likely be heartened to learn that freshman Members of Congress in both parties proposed less spending than their respective longer-serving colleagues proposed. The difference was most notable among House Democrats: the typical returning House Democrat proposed to spend nearly \$200 billion more than the typical Democrat newcomer did.

<b>Table 8. Average Spending Agendas by Caucuses and Member Organizations (in Millions of Dollars)</b>			
<b>Caucus</b>	<b>Proposed Increases</b>	<b>Proposed Cuts</b>	<b>Net Agenda</b>
Republican Study Committee	\$36,776	(\$6,694)	\$30,082
All Other Republicans	\$41,738	(\$2,688)	\$39,050
Blue Dog Democrats	\$150,013	(\$578)	\$149,435
Non-Blue Dog Democrats	\$586,451	(\$120)	\$586,331
Congressional Black Caucus	\$1,093,741	(\$137)	\$1,093,604
Non CBC-Democrats	\$380,490	(\$215)	\$380,275
Congressional Hispanic Caucus	\$587,095	(\$70)	\$578,024
Non CHC-Democrats	\$502,340	(\$214)	\$502,126
Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues	\$560,144	(\$1,769)	\$558,375
All Other Representatives	\$229,894	(\$2,365)	\$227,538

Once elected to Congress, a Representative has the option to join any of several Member caucuses that organize around a particular issue area and/or political philosophy. In these caucuses, Members can share ideas and coordinate strategy to promote or oppose particular legislation. Two such caucuses, the Republican Study Committee (RSC) and the Democratic Blue Dog Coalition (BDC), both claim to promote fiscal discipline within their respective parties. RSC states that it “organized for the purpose of advancing a conservative social and economic agenda in the House of Representatives,”<sup>3</sup> and Representative Baron Hill (D-IN), Communications Co-Chair for the BDC, states that the Coalition is composed of “moderate-to-conservative Democrats who offer common-sense solutions and strongly advocate fiscal discipline.”<sup>4</sup> While the average Member of each of these caucuses compiled a net agenda that would increase spending, there was a measurable difference from Members of their respective parties who are not in either caucus. The typical RSC member proposed less spending and more savings than the average non-RSC Republican, and the same holds true when Blue Dogs are compared to non-Blue Dog Democrats.

If being “fiscally conservative” means that a Representative or Senator has a smaller net spending agenda than his or her peers and having a larger agenda is “fiscally liberal,” then the 38 current members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) – all of whom are Democrats – have, on average, compiled some of the most “fiscally liberal” net spending agendas within the Democratic party. The typical CBC Democrat had a net annual spending agenda that was nearly three times larger than all other Democrats.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the typical Representative in the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues, which is comprised of Members from both parties, had a net spending agenda that was nearly 2- times larger than the average agenda of all other Representatives.<sup>6</sup>

<b>Table 9. Average Spending Agenda of the 20 Richest Senators vs. Rest of Senate, and by Party (in Millions of Dollars)</b>			
	<b>Proposed Increases</b>	<b>Proposed Cuts</b>	<b>Net Agenda</b>
<b>20 Richest Senators</b>	\$173,875	(\$1,920)	\$171,956
<b>All Remaining Senators</b>	\$98,459	(\$1,331)	\$97,128
<b>11 Richest Democrats</b>	\$289,920	(\$150)	\$289,771
<b>All Remaining Democrats</b>	\$168,336	(\$390)	\$167,946
<b>9 Richest Republicans</b>	\$32,043	(\$4,083)	\$27,960
<b>All Remaining Republicans</b>	\$35,879	(\$2,184)	\$33,695
Note: Data from BillTally report and <i>Roll Call</i> ("The Roll Call 50 Richest: There's Kerry, Then There's Everyone Else," September 13, 2004). Numbers may not add due to rounding.			

<b>Table 10. Average Spending Agenda of the 20 Richest Representatives vs. Rest of House, and by Party (in Millions of Dollars)</b>			
	<b>Proposed Increases</b>	<b>Proposed Cuts</b>	<b>Net Agenda</b>
<b>20 Richest Representatives</b>	\$76,213	(\$1,834)	\$74,379
<b>All Remaining Reps.</b>	\$277,427	(\$2,318)	\$275,109
<b>4 Richest Democrats</b>	\$238,913	(\$54)	\$238,859
<b>All Remaining Democrats</b>	\$514,203	(\$203)	\$514,606
<b>16 Richest Republicans</b>	\$35,538	(\$2,280)	\$33,259
<b>All Remaining Republicans</b>	\$40,147	(\$4,382)	\$35,765
Note: Data from BillTally report and <i>Roll Call</i> ("The Roll Call 50 Richest: There's Kerry, Then There's Everyone Else," September 13, 2004). Numbers may not add due to rounding.			

*Roll Call* recently published its list of the 50 wealthiest Members of Congress.<sup>7</sup> Of this select group, 29 were Representatives and 21 were Senators. The average net agenda of the 20 richest Senators was nearly \$75 billion higher than the average net agenda of all other Senators. The difference was mainly driven by the wealthiest Democrats, four of whom were on the list of the Senators with the 10 highest net agendas. In

contrast, the results in the House were reversed: the average agendas of the wealthiest Representatives in total and by party were lower than the rest of the House.

### III. Conclusion

As the record shows, the historic election 10 years ago had a noticeable impact on Members' spending agendas. The 104<sup>th</sup> Congress was generally the high-water mark for taxpayers expecting their elected officials to exercise fiscal discipline. Since then, the spending agendas of most Members of Congress have steadily increased while the savings agendas have steadily declined. Although the average net agendas of both parties in both the House and the Senate are on track to reach new heights in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, there are a few underlying indications that Members may be regaining an interest in reining in spending. Time will tell whether these signs become a full-fledged trend. If they do not, the continued demand for increases in the federal budget will be detrimental to efforts to reform the Tax Code and modernize Social Security, and it will jeopardize vows by both Presidential candidates to cut the deficit in half.

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### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Representatives William Janklow (R-SD) and Larry Combest (R-TX), both of whom left Congress during the First Session in 2003, were excluded from this study. Rep. Ralph Hall (TX) switched to the Republican Party in January 2004, after the conclusion of the First Session. For this study, he is included with the Democrats. Rep. Rodney Alexander (LA) switched his party affiliation from Democrat to Republican on August 9, 2004. For this report, he is included with the Democrats.

<sup>2</sup> Sponsorship is just one vehicle through which legislators act and does not necessarily represent a complete picture of their record. For example, Members on an appropriations committee may work through the appropriations process to obtain and direct funding to their districts or policy interests rather than focusing on passing authorizing legislation. For a more detailed explanation, see the Methodology in Appendix C.

<sup>3</sup> <http://johnshadegg.house.gov/rsc/about.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://baronhill.house.gov/Biography/>.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on the caucus and its members, see its current web site home at

<http://www.house.gov/cummings/cbc/cbchome.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.womenspolicy.org/caucus/>. Member list was obtained from Leadership Directories, Inc. and by contacting Member offices.

<sup>7</sup> "The Roll Call 50 Richest: There's Kerry, Then There's Everyone Else," *Roll Call*, September 13, 2004.