

## Castle Will Not Tolerate Cuts to Education and Health Care Funding in Budget Resolution -- March 28, 2006

Will attempt to amend budget resolution on House Floor

Washington, D.C. -- Speaking out against \$4.2 billion in funding cuts in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget for important health and education programs, such as the National Institutes of Health, student loans, low income heating assistance and vocational education, Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today held a rally with health and education advocates to demand more funding for discretionary programs in the House budget resolution. The House Budget Committee is expected to mark up the resolution tomorrow and floor action is considered likely next week.

"While I have always advocated for reducing the deficit and using fiscal discipline, it is the taxpayers at the local level in our districts who are bearing the burden of cuts to social programs like education, health care and housing. It is each of our constituents that will be asked to make up the difference, paying more of the federal government's share of the education, housing, and services that our cities and towns provide. I have met with my own constituents and I can tell you the impact of these cuts is real.

"Over the past several years I have become increasingly concerned about the choices we are making . Instead of closing tax loopholes and addressing corporate welfare, we too often look to eliminate the programs that are utilized by the neediest among us. We continue to fund the war with emergency spending and turn a blind eye to the waste in the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security. We continue to show restraint in only 16% of the federal budget, and only in domestic programs.

"I will attempt to amend the budget resolution on the House Floor to include \$7 billion the Senate added to domestic discretionary and to have 302 2 (b) allocations included in future budgets. My message is clear: I will not vote for a House Budget Resolution that would result in real cuts to critical federal investments in education, health care, housing, veterans' services, social and community block grants AND encourage my colleagues who share these priorities to do the same."

The President's proposed FY07 budget would slash \$4.2 billion from the FY06 Labor-HHS bill and is \$7 billion below the level in the FY05 bill. In response, moderates are leading efforts similar to the adoption of the Specter-Harkin amendment in the Senate two weeks ago, which increased funding for Labor HHS Education Appropriations by \$7 billion. Two weeks ago, 23 moderates signed a letter authored by Reps. Fred Upton and Nancy Johnson urging a two percent increase in domestic discretionary programs.

A one page fact sheet is attached

House Budget Resolution Should Protect

Labor-HHS Programs

From No Child Left Behind to LIHEAP, from NIH to Pell Grants, from rural health to workforce training - the Labor-HHS appropriations bill funds the federal programs that keep America competitive and provide health, education, and job opportunities to those who need it most.

These and other programs are in danger under the President's proposed FY07 budget, which would slash \$4.2 billion from the FY06 Labor-HHS bill and is \$7 billion below the level in the FY05 bill.

The Senate passed the Specter-Harkin amendment restores those cuts by providing an additional \$7 billion over the President's budget request - allowing Congress to fund the FY07 Labor-HHS bill at the level enacted two years ago, in FY05. Funding is provided by increasing the cap on FY08 advance appropriations by \$7 billion.

The House should mirror this increase, either by increasing the amount of discretionary funding or guaranteeing that the appropriation allotments will not contain these cuts.

Key Labor-HHS programs that are endangered by the President's budget

**National Institutes of Health:** The President's budget cuts funding for 18 of the 19 institutes at NIH. Funding for cancer research would be cut by \$40 million.

**Human Services for the Poor:** The President's budget cuts the Social Services Block Grant by \$500 million and completely eliminates the Community Services Block Grant.

**Education Programs:** The President's budget eliminates 42 programs, including all the vocational and technical education programs, Educational Technology State Grants, GEAR UP, Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Grants, TRIO Talent Search and Upward Bound.

**Student Financial Aid:** The President's budget freezes the maximum Pell Grant award at \$4,050, the same amount as four years ago, while tuition costs have risen dramatically.