

Statement of Rep. Mike Castle Regarding Release of President Bush's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget -- February 5, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle, a leading Republican Moderate, today released the following statement regarding the release of President Bush's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget.

"Anytime a President submits a budget proposal to Congress, there is going to be close scrutiny and even more so during a time of divided government -- and deservedly so. Overall, it is important to understand the Administration's priorities and learn how federal agencies evaluate their programs' strengths and weaknesses.

"In general, I obviously support the idea of moving towards a balanced budget and am hopeful the numbers with respect to deficit reduction are accurate; however, we would be remiss if we didn't take into account significant obstacles like record spending on entitlement programs due to the baby boom generation as well as a very difficult alternative minimum tax fix and the impact that will have on the overall goal. Honest accounting must preclude politically motivated gimmicks. We must make some hard choices in order to ensure the solvency of our entitlement programs and maintain American's trust.

"Additionally, I am concerned that this budget request may fall short in balancing non-war Defense Department funding with the need for critical domestic spending priorities. I will also continue to push for greater transparency in the appropriations process and I am pleased that the proposal includes a more detailed war funding estimate as part of the regular budget. As this process moves forward, I intend to closely scrutinize these funding levels with a focus on cutting bureaucratic waste and mismanagement.

"This year is going to be quite different than the past six because for the first time, it will be a Democrat majority that responds to this proposal with one of their own. It is my hope the Democrat budget resolution we will actually vote on will be a balanced approach reflecting the priorities of the American people and not simply a partisan budget that Republicans cannot support."

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