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## COMMITTEE FOR A RESPONSIBLE FEDERAL BUDGET

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 19, 2005

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### **The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget Urges Congress to Maintain Spending Control**

WASHINGTON, DC -- The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget expressed concern over the shift the appropriations process appears to be taking.

The Committee applauded the House for passing all eleven appropriations bills prior to the Fourth of July recess and managing to keep within the tight spending limits contained in the budget resolution, with relatively few gimmicks.

However, the Senate now appears to be veering off course. Several of the spending bills under consideration rely on timing shifts and other gimmicks to obscure increased spending. The Labor-HHS appropriations bill alone contains nearly \$3.7 billion in paper savings from accounting maneuvers.

Moreover, the White House requested that Congress add another \$1.977 billion for veterans' healthcare for FY 2006 on top of \$975 million for FY 2005 that they have already requested. Unlike the additional funds for FY 2005, which would technically stay within the spending limits in the budget resolution, the FY 2006 request would be above the spending limits in the President's budget and the budget resolution. The Senate has already voted to increase spending for the current fiscal year above the levels in the budget resolution by adopting an amendment providing \$1.5 billion in supplemental spending for FY 2005.

"There is a real risk that the recent positive budget news will lead Members of Congress to go on a spending spree" said Maya MacGuineas, President of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. "We need to stick to the budget that was passed. If Congress and the Administration decide that funding needs to be increased in one place in the budget, they need to offset that increased spending elsewhere."

MacGuineas noted that the White House has emphasized that the recently improved deficit forecasts rely on keeping a tight lid on spending. "If we blow through the spending limits assumed in the Administration's budget forecast, those projections, which would still increase the debt by over a trillion dollars, will prove to be overly optimistic."

"A \$300-billion-plus deficit should in no way be seen as a free pass to spend more. Rather, it serves as a reminder that deficits continue to be a real problem. Beyond the five-year budget window, things only get worse."

*The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget is a bipartisan organization committed to educating policy makers and the public about issues related to fiscal policy. The Co-Chairs of the Committee are Bill Frenzel and Leon Panetta. The Committee is located at the New America Foundation. For more information, go to [www.CRFB.org](http://www.CRFB.org).*