

Statement of FY2005 advance appropriations under section 501 of H. Con. Res. 95 reflecting action completed as of February 6, 2004

[In millions of dollars]

		Budget authority
Appropriate Level		23,158
Current Level:		
Homeland Security Sub-		
committee:		
Bioshield ¹	2,528	
Interior Subcommittee: Elk		
Hills	36	
Labor, Health and Human Serv-		
ices, Education Sub-		
committee		
Employment and Training		
Administration	2,463	
Education for the Disadvan-		
tagged	7,383	
School Improvement	1,435	
Children and Family Services		
(head start)	1,400	
Special Education	5,413	
Vocational and Adult Edu-		
cation	791	
Transportation and Treasury		
Subcommittee		
Payment to Postal Service	37	
Veterans, Housing and Urban		
Development Sub-		
committee: Section 8 Re-		
newals	4,200	
Total	25,686	

Current Level over (+)/under(-)

Appropriate Level

¹This advance appropriation was not on the list of accounts identified for advance appropriations included in the joint explanatory statement of the committee of conference in the conference report to accompany H. Con. Res. 95. Still, since the provision has been enacted, it is included as part of the current level for advance appropriations.

EXTEND BAN ON ASSAULT WEAPONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, on January 17, 1989, a gunman used a weapon like this one behind me to fire 102 bullets into a crowded elementary school in California. The weapon is the AK-47, and it is very good at what it does. It kills as many people as possible as quickly as possible. Before the shooting stopped, 34 children and teachers had been shot. In less than 2 minutes, the gunman was able to spray the school yard with more than 100 bullets. America was rightly outraged.

On December 7, 1993, another gunman came on a train on the Long Island Railroad. This gunman had large-capacity clips and was able to shoot and kill six people, one of them my husband, and wound 21 people, one of them my son. It was at that time that I decided that I would do whatever I could to reduce gun violence in this country.

We were also having a debate here in Washington on having an assault weapons ban, and I became part of that debate. We were very lucky that when it came up for a vote, it won by one vote.

But there is good news for criminals, gangs and terrorists. Soon they will be

able to buy an AK-47 once again. Soon criminals, gangs, terrorists can go into any gun store and buy any kind of assault weapon that they want. The assault weapons ban expires this September 14. Some in Congress wish this issue would just go away, but Americans overwhelmingly support the ban. Even 66 percent of gun owners support the ban. They support it because it worked and because it protected the rights of law-abiding citizens to own handguns, hunting rifles and shotguns. Once again, every major law enforcement agency in the country has endorsed the ban. The Supreme Court has even upheld a stronger version of the ban.

But nothing will get done if President Bush refuses to add his voice to the effort. He has promised to sign a new assault weapons ban if it reaches his desk, but if his leadership is not here, and if he does not tell TOM DELAY to bring the bill up for a vote, it is never going to reach his desk.

I have introduced H.R. 2038, which would renew the ban while closing its most gaping loopholes. I came to Congress to fight for gun safety. I have fought for common-sense, effective gun measures, but too many of my colleagues seem beholden to gun pressure groups. Yet we know the American people want to have assault weapons kept off their streets. We cannot let special interests trump the safety of American families and our police officers.

We have 202 days to renew the ban. Failing to do so would be an outrage, and the American people will demand an explanation in November. But there is something that they can do today. I urge all Americans to contact their Members of Congress and their Senators and tell them we want to keep assault weapons off the street. We have got to band together for the safety of our families, our children and our communities. This is something we can do.

People talk about they never have a voice in government. I happen to know that having a voice in government is very important. Here in this House, how many times have we seen bills pass by one vote? Or fail by one vote? It is up to the American people to get involved in this.

This evening we have heard so many of my colleagues talk about all the things that are going on in this world, budget deficits, medications that cannot get to our patients. These are all serious problems. But allowing assault weapons back onto our streets again to kill our officers, to go into our schools, this is something we can do. This is something where the American people can have their voices heard. We outnumber the NRA. We outnumber those that are trying to stop this.

Since I have been in Congress, I have always tried to uphold the second amendment, but this kind of a gun is only meant for one thing. It is to kill as many people as possible. It is guns like this that we are seeing in Iraq,

Israel, Haiti. These are the kind of guns that are used to wipe out people as fast as they can. You are telling me a sportsperson wants these back on the streets again?

Mr. Speaker, I will be back here every single week until the American voices are heard, and I will be here to voice those voices.

HAITI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to ask the Bush administration why in the world our country appears to be allowing a violent coup d'etat to occur in Haiti. Through a wink and a nod, our administration is allowing this violence to occur, and we must not stand for it.

The democratically elected President of Haiti could be overthrown any minute. At risk, of course, is the safety of over 8 million lives in Haiti. We cannot play politics with rebels and with thugs. They are trying to change their government through the use of force, not by democratic elections. We do not allow coups to take place in the United States, and we should uphold that standard for neighboring countries, neighboring democracies, especially one in our own hemisphere.

Throughout Haiti's 200 years of independence, it has experienced 32 coups, but it seemed that the tragic cycle ended in 1991 with President Aristide's first Presidential victory. After a coup, the United States helped restore then-exiled President Aristide in 1996, and later he ran and was reelected in the fall of 2001. Tonight as we speak, President Aristide is warding off yet another coup attempt and a potential civil war, and democracy is under fire again in Haiti.

Two weeks ago now I wrote to Secretary Powell and asked the following questions:

One: Does the State Department support the democratically elected Government of Haiti? What practical steps is our government taking to support the democratic process?

Two: Is our country supporting and sanctioning an overthrow of the Aristide government by giving a wink and a nod to the opposition? There are also reports that we are covertly funding the opposition.

Third: Is it true that the Haitian opposition parties and leaders have received USAID funding?

Fourth: We understand the Haitian Government made several requests over the last 2 years for equipment and training of Haiti's police force. Why were these requests never responded to?

Secretary Powell said, and I quote, "We cannot allow thugs and murderers to overthrow the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide," but now there appears to be a major disconnect between

the Bush administration's words and actions. Their rhetoric says one thing, and their actions say something else.

This Friday, prior to the international diplomatic team traveling to Haiti, members of the Congressional Black Caucus asked the administration to act immediately and prevent the rebels from taking over more cities in Haiti. We are awaiting a response to both of these letters.

We are working to protect democracy in Haiti day and night, but unfortunately people in Haiti are still dying as a result of rebel attacks, hunger and the like. The ongoing negotiations to broker a peace plan are failing, and it is not at all a result of President Aristide. President Aristide has shown good faith by accepting the Catholic bishops' plan, the CARICOM plan and now this peace plan.

Haiti is embroiled in violence. Armed rebels are burning down jails and pillaging villages, toting M-16s and M-50s. Haiti only has 3,500 police for over 8 million people. It is only common sense that disarming thugs and murderers and forging a cease-fire go hand in hand.

□ 2045

The United States cannot sit back and watch a country especially in our own hemisphere spiral further down into a state of turmoil. Bush must show some leadership and speak out against the violence and the disregard for the rule of law in Haiti. President Bush should speak out in support of the democratically elected President of Haiti and provide President Aristide the assistance that he needs to promote peace on the ground, allow free and fair elections to take place, and to uphold the Haitian constitution.

How can we sit back and witness a violent attempt to overthrow a government? Is this part of the Bush administration's regime change policy?

Democracy in Haiti is in grave danger. Turmoil rages on the ground, in the streets, at the university, through the halls of government, and in the homes of Haitians. Haitians are dying, and it is apparent that the hope for peace is diminishing.

If we believe, if we truly believe in the power of democracy and the potential for global peace, we must not turn a blind eye to our neighbor and longtime ally. This is an urgent cry to our administration, specifically President Bush, to formally request a meeting of the United States Security Council with the hope of bringing the world community's resources to bear in support of the government of Haiti.

The United States must stop dragging its feet and answer the call President Aristide made again yesterday. He said, "Should those killers come to Port-au-Prince, you may have thousands of people who may be killed." We need the presence of the international community as soon as possible.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 20, 2004.

President GEORGE BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for your Administration's new initiative to resolve the current political crisis in Haiti. The Congressional Black Caucus agrees that we cannot allow "thugs" and "murderers" to overthrow the democratically-elected government of President Jean Bertrand Aristide, as Secretary Powell stated on February 17, 2004. Additionally, we are pleased that the United States, France, Canada, CARICOM, and the OAS will meet with the Government of Haiti to discuss how we can work together to secure the country, stop the escalating violence, restore the rule of law, and take steps forward to implement the CARICOM proposal.

There must be an immediate cease-fire, and as these talks move forward, we hope that the United States insists that all parties lay down their arms and stop the violence. Haitians are dying every day, and the United States must do its part to guarantee a cease-fire, uphold democracy, and promote stability in a sovereign nation in our own hemisphere. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus agree that these emergency talks will be critical to ending the current violence.

We respectfully encourage you to invite experienced, independent observers to travel to Haiti to monitor and observe the meeting. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to working with you to help resolve this crisis.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lee; John Conyers, Jr.; Donald M. Payne; Bobby L. Rush; Sheila Jackson-Lee; Elijah E. Cummings; Maxine Waters; —; Diane E. Watson; Gregory W. Meeks.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2004.

Hon. COLIN POWELL,
Secretary of State,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: Thank you for coming to the House International Resources Committee today. While we ran out of time before I could raise my questions in committee, I enjoyed speaking to you afterwards.

As you know, conditions in Haiti are rapidly deteriorating. People are dying, and our own commitment to democracy is under siege. We have a moral and regional obligation to help one of our closest neighbors. Furthermore, Article 17 of the OAS Inter-American Democratic Chapter requires that all OAS nations come to the aid of a democratic government under siege.

I must say, Mr. Secretary, that our failure to support the democratic process and help restore order looks like a covert effort to overthrow a government. There is a violent coup d'etat in the making, and it appears that the United States is aiding and abetting the attempt to violently topple the Aristide Government. With all due respect, this looks like "regime change."

This situation demands sustained U.S. engagement to promote democracy, yet disturbing reports indicate our actions—or inaction—may be making things worse. The opposition is well-funded and well-armed, even though President Aristide's pleas for resources to better train police forces have fallen on deaf ears. Yet, State Department officials have implied that President Aristide's departure could be an option in solving the current crisis. How can we call

for democracy in Iraq and not say very clearly that we support democratic elections as the only option in Haiti?

Since I did not have the opportunity to raise the following questions in committee, I would appreciate it if you could provide a written reply so that I might have a better understanding of Administration policy toward Haiti:

1. Does the State Department support the democratically-elected government of Haiti? What practical steps is our government taking to support the democratic process?

2. Is our country supporting and sanctioning an overthrow of the Aristide Government by giving a wink and a nod to the opposition? There are also reports that we are covertly funding the opposition.

3. Does the United States support the CARICOM proposal, and will we work through the OAS to broker a peaceful solution, not an overthrow of the Aristide Government?

4. Is it true that Haitian opposition parties and leaders have received USAID funding?

5. We understand the Haitian government made several requests over the last two years for equipment and training of Haiti's police force. Why were these requests never responded to?

Thank you for your attention,

BARBARA LEE,
Member of Congress.

THE BUSH ECONOMIC PICTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we have much serious business to attend to on Capitol Hill these days. Many of us on our side of the aisle are deeply concerned about the Bush economic picture, how sad it is for most of America, including my State, which has struggled with very high unemployment for most of the Bush administration. The administration has fallen 1.8 million jobs short of the promises that were made to the Americans and to this Congress to justify the first two massive tax cuts from the Bush administration. There are significant issues to deal with the national government's fiscal health, the guarantees of an extra trillion dollars that was going to be available when the tax cuts were brought forward that the President repeated here in Washington, D.C., and out in the hustings.

Now the administration wants to spend another trillion dollars in the face of hemorrhaging red ink to make these tax cuts that benefit a tiny number of Americans, those who need help the least, make their tax cuts permanent. This is something we could debate here in Washington, D.C.

There appears to be no concern for the millions of Americans who are being caught in the payment of the millionaires tax, the alternative minimum tax, that was inspired because there were a handful of people who were earning \$1 million or more in today's dollars that escaped taxation altogether. Congress in its wisdom passed the alternative minimum tax.