

November 15, 2004

SCHAKOWSKY RESPONDS TO WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON GROWING FEDERAL DEFICIT

WASHINGTON, D.C. - {WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), in a letter to the editor, responded to a Washington Post article on the burgeoning federal deficit:

Letters to the Editor
The Washington Post
Via Email: letters@washpost.com

Dear Editor:

By glaringly omitting the effects of the Bush tax cuts on the federal deficit and budget, (Lame Duck May do Housekeeping, 11/14/04), The Washington Post has ignored the elephant in the room. It is true that the Iraq war will cost many times more than the Bush Administration originally told us, but it is also true that this is the first time in our nation's history that we are giving tax breaks - roughly half of which go to the wealthiest 5% according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities - during wartime.

Domestic initiatives from community policing to education are being underfunded to pay for those tax cuts, which the Administration's own Mid-Session Budget Review found to have contributed more to the worsening fiscal picture than all other new government policies combined - more than the sum of the Iraq war, the war on terrorism, homeland security, and all domestic spending increases.

To claim that this squeeze is only occurring "after years of rapid growth" in domestic spending is inaccurate. Domestic discretionary spending outside of defense and homeland security grew by just 1% last year, while CPI rose 2.5 %. Spending increases that don't even keep pace with inflation can hardly be called "rapid."

It is the responsibility of The Washington Post to fully report the news. To fail to report the role of the tax cuts in the decision to shortchange domestic needs is a disservice to your readers.

Sincerely,

**Jan Schakowsky, Chief Deputy Whip
Member of Congress
Illinois, 9th District**