



Ethical Action Report



A joint publication of the American Ethical Union and the American Humanist Association

Number 07-09

September 2007

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Stop the War: Tell Congress Additional Funding for the Iraq War Won't be Tolerated!

President Bush recently submitted a proposal to Congress asking for an additional \$25 billion in funds for the Iraq war. Call your congressional representatives and tell them that no additional funds should go towards a failing war, waged under false pretenses, which has taken thousands of American lives and continues to damage the image of the United States across the globe.

BACKGROUND

The Bush Administration's request for addition money, which would be added to the more than \$400 billion already sought for military uses worldwide in fiscal 2005, would go to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan starting October 1 of 2007. War spending in Iraq

and Afghanistan already costs nearly \$5 billion a month, and the total cost for next year is estimated to be between \$50 and \$60 billion.

In addition to the exorbitant funding requested, the proposal lacks specific details and seeks to circumvent the Senate's oversight role. This amounts to another request for a blank check from President Bush, who has proven time and again he has a severe detachment from the reality on the ground. Moreover, a newly released Government Accountability Office report finds that little progress has been made on the Iraq goals set for the President in the past: Iraq has met only three out of eighteen benchmarks for political and military progress mandated by Congress.

We shouldn't throw money at the war in Iraq in a weak attempt at fixing the numerous problems we face. Rather, we need to develop better strategies so that we can stabilize Iraq and bring our troops home. Tell your congressional representatives an increase in funding will not be tolerated.

Stop the Death Penalty: Don't Let the Bush Administration Refuse Appeals to Death Row Inmates!

The Bush administration is about to implement plans to "fast-track" death row inmates to their execution with minimal time for appeals. Under the proposals, states would be able to turn to the Justice Department, as opposed to federal courts, as the sole arbiter in deciding whether a prisoner lives or dies – completely ignoring an inmate's right of appeal.

The administration should not be allowed to get away with removing such an important safety net for those who feel they have been wrongly convicted or poorly represented. The proposed regulations are an affront to human decency and compassion. Write to President Bush and demand he abandon the proposal to fast-track executions.

BACKGROUND

The proposal to fast-track executions was drawn up by disgraced Attorney General Alberto Gonzales prior to his resignation. Under the new policy, in cases where the inmate questions whether he/she received a fair trial or adequate representation – both constitutionally guaranteed rights – the Attorney General alone would make the final decision.

In other instances, inmates will have far less time to file an appeal, and appeals courts will have far less time to consider those appeals, meaning there is less chance of recognizing flaws in the case and setting innocent people free.

123 people on death row have had their convictions overturned on appeal, and it is exceedingly likely that innocent people are sometimes executed by the state. Take action now to stop the Bush administration from circumventing the safeguards put in place to prevent such tragedies.

Save Darfur: On September 16 Tell the UN General Assembly Not to Look Away from Darfur!

In Darfur between 200,000-400,000 people have lost their lives and an estimated further 1.3 million displaced. Write to U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Zalmay Khalilzad and urge him to call for the full and swift deployment of the UNAMID force to help protect civilians and to put pressure on all sides until attacks on civilians stop once and for all. Tell him that we “must not look away” at this critical point.

U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad
UN Headquarters
First Avenue at 46th Street
New York, NY 10017

BACKGROUND

September 16, 2007, will mark the second anniversary of the “responsibility to protect” agreement by which governments around the world agreed to stop genocide. Yet, as to date, those governments have not fulfilled that responsibility. Thus Darfur activists from around the world have marked September 16 as the day to “send off” their respective world leaders to the UN General Assembly with a call to “not look away” from the Darfur atrocities. Advocates in dozens of countries will host local events urging their leaders to help end the ongoing crisis in the western region of Sudan, which has raged since 2003.

Governments the world over have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to preventing genocide and mass atrocities, especially in the wake of disasters such as Rwanda and Cambodia. Yet they have not come to the aid of the innocent civilians in Darfur, where hundreds of thousands have been killed and over a million displaced. Many more millions are at risk as the violence continues unabated: now is the time to act.

There has been an encouraging recent development: the UN Security Council has passed Resolution 1769, which authorizes a joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission to Darfur and demands an immediate end to hostilities. But it’s important to recognize that nothing yet has changed on the ground. Only a concerted effort by Darfur activists will keep up the pressure on national governments to deliver on their promises.

Responsible Sex Ed: Urge your Representative to Vote Against Increased Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education (H.R. 3043)

Your Representative is about to waste a huge amount of taxpayer money on funding for a method of sex education that has been proven to be completely ineffective in improving public health: abstinence-only-until-marriage. Write to your Representative demanding that in the name of public health this bill (H.R. 3043) be altered or stopped.

BACKGROUND

The FY2008 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill, which includes an historic increase in abstinence-only-until-marriage funding, was approved on July 19 by the House of Representatives and is soon to be finalized by lawmakers. Worryingly, the majority of

Democrats in the House voted *for* the bill, proving yet again that public health is secondary to political maneuvering.

Promoting abstinence-only-until-marriage flies in the face of all the scientific research that points to its ineffectiveness. This increase in funding is a product not of a careful weighting of evidence but instead a religious agenda: policy makers have repeatedly spoken out against conservatives who put ideology before science and public health. Yet the current Democrat-led Congress still approved this bill, seemingly treating it as politics as usual. Don't let Congress ignore the imperatives of public health.

Contacting Elected Officials

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Visit www.senate.gov or www.house.gov to use your representatives' e-mail contact forms.

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