

For Immediate Release

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House Conservatives Call for a Balanced Budget

~RSC says CBO numbers indicate balanced budget within reach~

WASHINGTON – Congressman John Shadegg (R-AZ) Chairman of the House Republican Study Committee (RSC), an organization of more than seventy House conservatives, today called on Congress to adopt a balanced budget for fiscal year 2003.

Yesterday's Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projection – which provides increases for all spending programs and accounts for an additional twenty billion dollars for our response to September 11th -- puts the government in the red by only 14 billion dollars in 2003. In light of these numbers the RSC believes that adopting a balanced budget is not only reasonable, but the responsible thing to do.

“While Washington's big spenders want you to believe that deficit spending is unavoidable, CBO's surplus projections paint another picture,” said Shadegg. He added, **“Fourteen billion represents less than one percent of the federal budget. Surely, a fiscally responsible Congress could find one percent of fat to trim from last year's budget.”**

Next week, at their annual retreat, Republican Study Committee members will outline a proposal that balances the budget while providing full funding for the war on terrorism and homeland security.

Congressman Pat Toomey (R-PA), chairman of the RSC budget task force said, “The more I look at the numbers, the more I am convinced that if we prioritize our spending and show some restraint, we can and should balance the budget this year.”

Toomey also pointed out, “If Congress had stuck to the spending caps we set for the last several years, we would still be discussing what to do with the surplus. Instead, we have seen discretionary spending increase at almost three times the rate of inflation — our budget problem is too much spending!”

Shadegg stated, “I do not believe that the members of the Republican Study Committee will look favorably upon any budget proposal not in balance.”

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