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Barrow Votes Against Raid on Student Aid; Opposes Cuts for Rural Communities and Family Farmers

Misguided budget bill also slashes billions in funding for child support enforcement, foster care, & Medicare and Medicaid

Washington, DC – For the third time in three months, 12th District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) today voted to put the brakes on a reckless budget bill that aims to cut funding for vital government services by nearly \$40 billion.

“This piece of legislation is nothing but a slap in the face to students, seniors, children, and family farmers,” Barrow said. “If Congress is serious about getting our nation’s financial house in order, this bill is not the answer. Now’s the time to focus our attention on government waste, fraud, and abuse, not to pass sham bills that target the most vulnerable Americans.”

In the first full day of the 2006 session, the House of Representatives considered House Resolution 648, which sought to eliminate \$38.8 billion in spending from the federal budget. Some of the cuts written into the legislation include:

- \$11.9 billion in cuts to student aid programs, the largest student aid cut in our country’s history. The measure raises the cost of college for students and their families by increasing interest rates and loan fees.
- \$6.9 billion in Medicaid cuts to health services for the poor. It also raises the cost of prescription drugs for beneficiaries through increased asset transfer provisions, premium increases, and benefits cuts. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that these cuts will result in about 13 million Medicaid enrollees having to pay new or higher co-payments for medical services.
- \$6.4 billion cut from Medicare, which comes from increasing Medicare Part B premiums, and cutting funding for home health care providers.
- \$2.7 billion in cuts to commodity, conservation, and rural development funds.
- \$1.5 billion cut from child support enforcement. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that these cuts will result in \$8.4 billion in reduced child

support collections for the more than 16 million families with children that rely on child support programs.

- \$320 million cut from Foster Care services for abused and neglected children.
- \$712 million from Supplemental Security Income for the elderly and disabled.

Earlier versions of the bill were voted on in December of 2005, and both times the measure passed the House by slim margins. This more recent version of the legislation voted on earlier today incorporated changes from the Senate, after passing that chamber by a vote of 51-50.

House Resolution 648 passed the House of Representatives today by an extremely close vote of 216 to 214. Barrow voted against the legislation. As a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition, Barrow is committed to finding responsible solutions to deficit reduction that do not neglect the government's commitments to the people it represents.

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