



# BUDGET COMMITTEE



Judd Gregg, Ranking Member  
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## **Senator Gregg Opposes Manipulation of Reconciliation Process in Senate Higher Education Package**

### *Reconciliation Being Abused to Expand Entitlement Spending by Billions*

Senator Judd Gregg, ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee and a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today decried the abuse of reconciliation – a way for Congress to review spending on autopilot – in a plan to increase federal entitlement spending by more than \$20 billion.

“The reconciliation process is supposed to give Congress a chance to review entitlement spending programs that grow unchecked year after year,” said Senator Gregg. “To find massive amounts of savings in entitlement programs, and use only a tiny fraction of it for deficit reduction while hijacking the rest for the creation and expansion of new programs, is a blatant abuse of this process. Reconciliation is being used as a stalking horse for billions in new spending, and it sets a terrible precedent.

“I am also concerned that loan issues and the higher education reauthorization are being separated. I hope they will be considered in tandem by the full Senate to ensure we address the higher education reauthorization this year.”

Reconciliation instructions in the Democrats’ fiscal year 2008 budget resolution were limited to a request that the HELP Committee reduce entitlement spending by \$750 million over five years, savings that must be used to reduce the federal deficit. This compares to \$34.6 billion reconciliation instructions included in the fiscal year 2006 budget resolution when Senator Gregg chaired the Senate Budget Committee, which resulted in deficit reduction of nearly \$40 billion over five years.

However, Democrats this year threw out a bi-partisan provision in the Senate-passed budget resolution that would have limited any new spending in response to reconciliation instructions to 20 percent.

“By playing political and budgetary gamesmanship with the reconciliation process, new spending is likely to be as much as 3,000 percent of, or 30 times, the savings instruction,” said Senator Gregg. “Deficit reduction should be a top priority for Congress; this significant expansion of the federal government under the guise of deficit reduction is something I simply cannot support.”