



Don Nickles, Chairman  
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May 21, 2003

**NICKLES, BUDGET COMMITTEE LAUNCH INITIATIVE  
TO IDENTIFY WASTE, FRAUD AND ABUSE**

WASHINGTON—Senate Budget Committee Chairman Don Nickles today unveiled savings targets for Senate committees, launching a three-month, Congress-wide project to identify waste, fraud and abuse within government agencies and spending programs.

The plan is provided for under the FY2004 Budget Resolution. The budget requires authorizing committees in the House and Senate to identify instances of waste, fraud and abuse in mandatory spending programs within their jurisdictions sufficient to meet savings targets set out by the Budget Committees (see attached table).

Nickles today provided those guidelines - the equivalent of 1 percent in savings - in letters to Senate committee chairmen. The budget requires committees to submit findings to the Budget Committee no later than September 2.

“During the years of surpluses when government coffers were flush with cash, Congress perhaps became more lax in its duty to police these programs to make sure American taxpayers are getting their money’s worth,” Nickles said.

“We cannot shirk this important responsibility. Congress periodically hears stories of fraud. The Earned Income Tax Credit has an over-claim rate in the range of 25-30 percent. Earlier this month, the VA Inspector General told a House committee that VA medical centers suffer from ‘rampant mismanagement of funds and overpayment of both physicians and beneficiaries.’ But it is rare when there are consequences for such mismanagement.

“Taxpayers are overcharged when Congress’ back is turned. Worse, limited funds are being siphoned away from legitimate programs and individuals who need these government services. We cannot allow such findings to go unaddressed. The budget resolution provides for a focused and unified process for addressing these concerns so resources are not squandered in future budgets.

“I compliment Chairman Nussle for his leadership in setting out a marker in the House-passed budget this year. His courage has paved the way for this important exercise in the coming months.”

**Savings From 1 Percentage Point Reduction in Mandatory Spending  
By Authorizing Committee**

(by fiscal year in billions of dollars)

		<u>2004</u>	<u>2004-08</u>	<u>2004-13</u>
<b>SENATE:</b>				
Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry	BA	-0.603	-3.162	-6.568
	OT	-0.563	-2.982	-6.251
Armed Services	BA	-0.778	-4.201	-9.178
	OT	-0.777	-4.195	-9.165
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs	BA	-0.139	-0.719	-1.436
	OT	-0.017	-0.058	-0.092
Commerce, Science, and Transportation	BA	-0.117	-0.601	-1.244
	OT	-0.074	-0.382	-0.807
Energy and Natural Resources	BA	-0.027	-0.118	-0.218
	OT	-0.024	-0.108	-0.201
Environment and Public Works	BA	-0.264	-1.493	-3.018
	OT	-0.023	-0.106	-0.195
Finance	BA	-7.340	-41.323	-98.601
	OT	-7.379	-41.407	-98.735
Foreign Relations	BA	-0.100	-0.599	-1.289
	OT	-0.119	-0.563	-1.181
Governmental Affairs	BA	-0.831	-4.518	-10.042
	OT	-0.816	-4.446	-9.904
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	BA	-0.080	-0.471	-1.016
	OT	-0.072	-0.433	-0.944
Judiciary	BA	-0.085	-0.324	-0.621
	OT	-0.079	-0.326	-0.618
Veterans' Affairs	BA	-0.342	-1.833	-3.864
	OT	-0.341	-1.827	-3.852
Total	BA	-10.706	-59.362	-137.095
	OT	-10.284	-56.833	-131.945

Note: Section 301(d) of H.Con.Res. 95 does not include Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee on Rules and Administration, the Committee on Indian Affairs, and the Committee on Small Business.