

## LARSON: REPUBLICAN CUTS PUNISH POOR AND MIDDLE CLASS TO PRESERVE TAX BONUSES FOR WEALTHIEST AMERICAN

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – More than \$8 billion in cuts that Republicans forced through the House Ways and Means Committee will drive more children and single mothers into poverty, reduce assistance to the disabled and increase taxes on the middle class, Congressman John B. Larson said Wednesday. Made under a reconciliation requirement, the proposals passed along a party line vote of 22 to 17.

The cuts targeted federal funding for enforcement of deadbeat dads to pay child support, assistance to poor children and single mothers, social security supplemental income payments for the disabled and foster-care support for family members who take in relatives' children. In addition, the Republicans took away compensation to businesses hurt by unfair trading practices.

Larson warned that the measures will have a ripple effect beyond \$8 billion in program cuts over the next five years. The Congressional Budget Office has released an estimate showing that the reduction of \$5.4 billion in spending for enforcement of child-support payments will translate to \$16.8 billion in unpaid support for children over the next 10 years. Cuts to single mothers include day care assistance they rely on for job training and employment. The reductions in foster care fall upon grandparents and other relatives, creating an added barrier to families staying together.

"In a one-party town, this Administration and this Republican-controlled Congress remain indifferent to the needs of Hurricane Katrina victims, the nation's poorest children and the debt that is being passed onto the nation's middle class – all because they are wed to tax cuts for the nation's wealthiest," Larson said. "These cuts that fall on mothers and children, on businesses plagued by unfair foreign trade, on the struggling and desperate aren't rebuilding the gulf coast. As the record shows, they were targeted long before Katrina roared down. They aren't reducing the deficit, which under the GOP's reign of borrowing and spending continues to spiral. Their underlying purpose is to protect and extend tax cuts for the top one percent."

The additional effect of these cuts is a backdoor tax on the middle class, Larson said.

States, already burdened by reduced federal spending, will have to pick up more of the responsibility for programs indispensable to low-income individuals and families. In turn, state and local governments have increased taxes.

"Instead of balancing our money and our responsibilities, the Republican fringe has embraced a reckless, callous indifference. Katrina exposed the breadth of poverty that lives in the midst of the nation of plenty. As these cuts show, the Republicans answer is that it is all right as long as it is unseen, as long as there are not floods to attract television crews capturing the poor on film for the rest of the world to see. The billions they've thrown to oil companies posting record profits have not kept heating costs from skyrocketing. The tax cuts for multi-millionaires have not kept workers' incomes from lagging. The gutting of community safeguards have not kept companies from shipping American jobs overseas. How can they expect to build a nation abroad when they're tearing down our own?"

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