

LARSON OBJECTS TO BUDGET CUTS IN EDUCATION

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WASHINGTON D.C. U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) today released the following statement denouncing cuts to education funding in the Republican budget.

The budget we will be debating this week gives further credence to the lawsuit filed by Attorney General Richard Blumenthal challenging No Child Left Behind and its under-funded mandates, said Larson. It cuts \$45.3 billion over the next five years. This means the federal government will continue to underfund No Child Left Behind at \$15 billion below its authorized level while eliminating vital education programs. It also decreases the federal contribution for special education programs that are mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Since its inception No Child Left Behind has been underfunded and the federal government has never come close to fulfilling its promise of funding forty percent of IDEA. Our states and municipalities are buckling under the financial pressure of these under-funded mandates. They are being forced to choose between cutting school programs or raising local taxes. There isn't a community in my district that doesn't struggle under this underfunded mandate.

A budget is a moral document and this budget highlights the priorities of the Republican leadership cutting more taxes for the wealthy while cutting aid to vital education programs for all our children. Despite the protests from moderate elements of their party, the misguided views of the most conservative Republicans always shape the final legislation that the House votes on. When you add up the cuts to education, homeland security, and veterans in this budget with the cost of prosecuting a war in the Middle East and the proposed tax breaks for the rich, you get a budget that is out of sync with the values and priorities of the American people. Enough is enough.

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