

Budget Reflects Western Pa Values

(Washington, DC)-Today, Rep. Jason Altmire (PA-4) voted for a new direction for western Pennsylvania and for America by supporting a budget that rejects record deficits, strengthens our national defense, and invests in our region's future. The FY 2008 budget will put our nation's fiscal house in order without raising a single tax.

According to Rep. Altmire, the House budget builds on progress made in the first 100 hours and will begin to reverse six years of harmful cuts and fiscal mismanagement. The FY 2008 budget's priorities better reflect western Pennsylvania's values by expanding health care for our children, providing our military and veterans with improved care and support, and investing in a 21st century workforce in order to strengthen our economy and move our region forward.

The House passed H. Con. Res.99, the Budget Resolution for FY 2008 by a vote of 216 to 210.

"The House budget invests in critical priorities for the future of the country, provides middle-class tax relief, and returns the budget to balance in 2012 in a fiscally responsible manner," said Rep. Altmire. "After six years of the same failed policies and misguided priorities of the Bush Administration and the Republican-controlled Congress, we are passing a budget that reflects the values and priorities of western Pennsylvania's families. Our nation's veterans, seniors, middle-class families and their children will all benefit from the sensible down payments we are making for them in the House budget passed today."

"For veterans, we are providing the largest funding increase in American history-\$3.5 billion more than the Administration's proposal - to ensure they receive the excellent health care coverage they deserve," said Rep. Altmire. "For seniors, we reject the deep cuts to Medicare and Medicaid proposed by the President and provide a reserve fund to accommodate efforts to improve Medicare. For children, we invest in their future with increased resources for No Child Left Behind, Head Start, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program. For middle-class families, we provide tax relief through reform of the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) and extensions of the child tax credit and marriage penalty relief."

Rep. Altmire added, "All of this is accomplished within tough pay-as-you-go rules without raising taxes one penny."

Within a context of a balanced budget, the resolution achieves the following key policy objectives:

- Defends Our Nation-The budget provides the necessary resources to meet critical threats to our nation and to deliver quality health care to our veterans and military personnel. The budget increases funding for veterans' services by \$6.6 billion over the 2007 level and by \$3.5 billion above the President's request for 2008. It also provides more homeland security funding than requested by the Administration to fund the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, restores funding to frontline first responders, and adequately address port security needs.

- Puts our Children and Families First-The House budget accommodates an increase of \$50 billion to expand children's health insurance to cover millions of additional uninsured children. The budget increases resources for No Child Left Behind, special education, and Head Start, and provides more funding for Pennsylvania's 1,785,000 children enrolled in public elementary, middle, and high schools-providing nearly \$8 billion more in 2008 and 11 percent more over the next

five years for education and training programs. The budget also improves the accessibility and affordability of health care for many Pennsylvanians by rejecting the President's proposed cuts to Medicare.

- Invests in a 21st Century Workforce and a Growing Economy-The House budget includes a sustained commitment to research and development and education by putting us on the path to double funding for NSF and providing significant increases in K-12 math and science education. It also increases funding for programs such as Community Block Grants to promote economic development in local communities and helps support Pennsylvania's 983,000 small businesses by rejecting the President's proposal to cut the Small Business Administration by 26 percent.

- Restores Fiscal Responsibility-The resolution would bring the budget back to surplus by 2012 by adhering to a strict pay-as-you-go principal passed by the House in January.