

THE BUSH CREDIBILITY GAP ONLY WIDENS

Promises Made...

“My economic security plan is summed up in one word: jobs.”

President George W. Bush,
State of the Union Address, 01/23/02



...And Promises Broken

The American economy has lost 2.3 million jobs under George W. Bush.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Broken Promises and Misrepresentations Leave the Bush Administration Sinking in a Credibility Gap

President Bush has broken so many promises and made so many misrepresentations on so many issues during the past three years that the American people need a scorecard to keep track of them all. That is precisely what this document is intended to do – to catalogue the President’s demonstrably false statements, which have undermined the credibility of his Administration. As this document makes plain, George W. Bush’s credibility gap is real and growing. The facts speak for themselves.

What George W. Bush Said ...

... Was In Fact Not True

TAX CUTS & JOB CREATION

“The tax bill we passed is really good for the American economy and will make it more likely somebody is going to find a job.”
- President Bush [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 06/20/03]

“With a robust package of at least \$550 billion in across-the-board tax relief, we will help create more than a million new jobs.” -
President Bush [CNN, 04/28/03]

The White House Council of Economic Advisors pledged that the Presidents “Jobs and Growth” package would create 1,836,000 new jobs by the end of 2003. Yet, that guarantee fell 1.5 million jobs short of the mark. In 2002, he predicted 3 million new jobs but lost 1.9 million jobs.

President Bush will be the first president since Herbert Hoover, during the Great Depression, to end his four-year term with a net job loss record – to date more than 2.3 million jobs lost since 2001.

The January 2004 job gain of 112,000 is 194,000 jobs below the promised monthly increase and well short of the 150,000 new jobs needed each month just to keep pace with population growth.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BUSH TAX CUTS

“The vast majority of my [proposed] tax cuts go to the bottom end of the spectrum.”

- George W. Bush [2000 Campaign]

The top 1% of earners – those with income of \$373,000 or more – will reap 37.6% of the benefits of the President’s 2001 tax cut, according to an analysis by Citizens for Tax Justice. By comparison, the lowest 60 percent of earners – those earning no more than \$44,000 – will receive 14.7% of the benefits of the 2001 tax cut. Similarly, Citizens for Tax Justice found that the President’s 2003 tax package is skewed toward top earners. The top 1% will receive 36.3% of the benefits of the 2003 tax cut, while the bottom 60% of earners will receive only 7.8%.

“Ninety-two million Americans will keep an average of \$1,083 more of their own money.”

- President Bush [Speech, 02/20/03]

The Tax Policy Center of the Brookings Institution and the Urban Institute found that nearly 80 percent of tax filers would receive less than \$1,083 and almost half would pocket less than \$100. Taxpayers in the middle of the income range would receive \$265.

TAX CUTS & SMALL BUSINESSES

“If you are worried about job growth, it seems like it makes sense to give a little fuel to those who create jobs. So, I’ll vigorously defend the permanency of the tax cuts, not only for the sake of the economy, but for the sake of the entrepreneurial spirit.” - President Bush [Address to Republican Governors Association, 2/23/04]

The President’s contention that upper-income tax cuts primarily benefit entrepreneurs conflicts with some of the government’s own data. Nearly 88% of business filers reported incomes of less than \$100,000, well below the top two tax brackets of 33% and 35%.

THE ESTATE TAX AND THE FAMILY FARM

President Bush said that his tax plan would “keep family farms in the family.”- [Release, 04/15/02]

Farm-industry experts could not point to a single case of a family losing a farm because of estate taxes, according to the New York Times.

PRESIDENT BUSH THE DEFICIT “HAWK?”

“We can cut the deficit in half over the next five years.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/20/04]

“No one should expect significant deficit reduction as a result of austere non-defense discretionary spending limits. The numbers simply do not add up. Non-defense discretionary represents less than one-fifth of the federal budget and freezing this spending reduces the deficit by a marginal amount.” - House Appropriation Committee Chairman Bill Young (R-FL) [2/3/04]

“[O]ur budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term.” - President Bush [BBC News, 01/07/03]

The President’s budget for FY05 fails to include the costs of additional military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; fails to address the Working-Class Tax Time Bomb – the Alternative Minimum Tax; and fails to include the costs of the initiatives such as the Administration’s ill-conceived Social Security privatization plan or space travel to Mars.

The 10-year deficit projection by CBO (assuming extending tax provisions) is \$4.7 trillion. In just two years, there has been almost a \$12 trillion swing in the deficit outlook. The \$5.6 trillion ten-year surplus projected when the President took office has been replaced by deficits as far as the eye can see. For 2004, the President’s budget proposes a record deficit of \$521 billion — \$146 billion more than the 2003 deficit, which was also a historic record.

“The reason we are where we are in terms of the deficit is because we went through a recession, we were attacked, and we’re fighting a war.” - President Bush

The Congressional Budget Office reports that 36% of the deficit is attributable to the tax cuts, 31% to spending on defense, and the remainder to the economic slowdown.

THE EXPLODING NATIONAL DEBT

“[M]y budget pays down a record amount of debt. We will pay off \$2 trillion of debt over the next decade. That will be the largest debt reduction in any country, ever. Future generations shouldn’t be forced to pay back money that we have borrowed. We owe this kind of responsibility to our children and grandchildren.” - President Bush [Associated Press, 03/03/2001]

President Bush has requested an increase in the national debt ceiling three times. The national debt has continued to increase an average of \$2.12 billion per day since September 30, 2003. The total national debt held by the public is now more than \$7 trillion, the highest in history. When the President took office, the publicly held debt was 33.1% of GDP. If his tax cuts are made permanent, that figure is projected to rise to 48% by 2014.

“My plan pays down an unprecedented amount of our national debt. - President Bush [Remarks to Congress, 02/27/01]

The Treasury Department reported on 2/20/04 that the federal government debt totaled \$7 trillion for the first time as of 2/17/04. Treasury officials expect the debt limit (\$7.384 trillion) to be hit between June and October of this year.

THE “INHERITED” RECESSION, AKA “BILL CLINTON DID IT”

“Two-and-a-half years ago, we inherited an economy in recession.” President Bush [Bush-Cheney ‘04 reception, 06/30/03]

The recession officially began in March 2001 – two months after President Bush was sworn in, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research.

“I want you all to remember that when Dick Cheney and I got sworn in, the country was in recession.” - President Bush [Address to Republican Governors Association, 09/19/02]

“This week, the official announcement came that our economy has been in recession since March [2001].” President Bush [Radio Address, 12/01/01]

HELPING THE UNEMPLOYED . . . SOMETIMES

“Americans who have lost their jobs need our help and I support extending unemployment benefits and direct assistance for health care coverage.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/29/02]

President Bush failed to weigh in and urge Congressional Republicans to extend the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation program before it expired in December 2002. As a result, thousands of jobless Americans were cut off from any assistance at Christmastime. The program was extended when Congress returned in 2003, but again expired in December 2003, even though long-term unemployment is at its highest level in 20 years. Since then, hundreds of thousands of jobless Americans have no paycheck and no state or federal jobless benefits.

EDUCATION – LEAVING MILLIONS BEHIND

“Our schools will have greater resources to help meet those goals [in the No Child Left Behind Act] ... The money is now available, and it's up to each local district to make sure it happens. - President Bush [At the signing of the NCLB, 01/08/02]

The President's FY05 budget, for the third consecutive year, would fail to provide the promised resources for the No Child Left Behind Act. His budget falls \$9.4 billion short of fully funding NCLB this year, and since President Bush signed the bill into law, his Administration has shortchanged NCLB by \$27 billion.

President Bush's 2005 budget provides a 3 percent increase – barely enough to cover inflation – in education funding, the lowest increase in nine years. President Bush also eliminates dozens of key programs, including literacy, leadership, and drop-out prevention, reducing the Federal investment in education by \$1.4 billion.

“We have [been] increasing Pell Grants.” - President Bush [Address to Republican Governors Association, 2/23/04]

The Bush Administration has frozen the maximum Pell grant available to students at \$4,050, despite President Bush's campaign pledge in 2000 to increase the award to \$5,100.

HEALTH CARE – EVEN MORE UNINSURED

"Our second goal is high quality, affordable health care for all Americans." - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/28/03]

In the first two years of President Bush's term, nearly 4 million Americans lost their health insurance coverage, bringing the total number of uninsured to 43.6 million in 2002. These losses wiped out the gains of 1999 and 2000, in which the trend in rising numbers of uninsured Americans was reversed and an additional 2.3 million citizens were newly insured.

The President opposed support for programs that have protected coverage during the recession, such as Medicaid and SCHIP. Last year, he proposed to cap federal spending on these programs, which could cause over 7 million people to lose coverage by 2013.

Workers are paying more for health care: the average amount workers pay toward their premium for family coverage rose nearly 50% from 2000 to 2003, to an average of \$2,412 a year from \$1,619. At the same time, workers' out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs rose between 46% and 71%, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

MEDICARE

"With this law, we're giving older Americans better choices and more control over their health care, so they can receive the modern medical care they deserve."- President Bush [AP, 12/08/03]

Millions of Medicare beneficiaries will have fewer benefits due to the Republican prescription drug law. Seniors who have supplemental drug coverage through Medigap must drop it if they want to join the new drug benefit, or be charged more if they later decide to join. The bill encourages employers to drop or reduce good drug coverage that retirees currently enjoy. Surveys show that under the bill, employers will drop coverage for 2.7 million retirees and reduce drug coverage for up to 9 million additional retirees.

6.4 million poor and low-income seniors who currently have comprehensive drug coverage through Medicaid now will lose those benefits and instead be forced to enroll in the Medicare drug benefit. As a result, most will have higher cost sharing and may be denied coverage entirely for some drugs. The new Medicare law lets private drug plans (e.g., HMOs and other private health insurers), in conjunction with drug companies, establish the prices beneficiaries and taxpayers will pay for prescription drugs under the Medicare drug benefit. The Secretary of Health and Human Services is specifically barred from negotiating lower drug prices.

THE COST OF THE MEDICARE BILL

“My budget will commit an additional \$400 billion over the next decade to reform and strengthen Medicare.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/28/03]

President Bush’s FY05 budget now estimates the 10-year cost of the Medicare prescription drug bill at \$534 billion.

PATIENTS’ BILL OF RIGHTS

“Together, this Congress and this President will find common ground to make sure doctors make medical decisions, and patients get the health care they deserve with a patients’ bill of rights.” - President Bush [Joint Address to Congress, 2/27/01]

The House passed bipartisan legislation in October 1999 by a vote of 275 to 151 and was poised to pass similar legislation in August 2001. However, at the eleventh hour, President Bush prevailed in urging House Republicans to add draconian liability reforms that all but doomed passage of a meaningful patients’ bill of rights. A watered-down version of the legislation passed 226-203, but differences with the Senate were not reconciled and the legislation has languished.

BACKTRACKING ON AIDS FUNDING

“I ask the Congress to commit \$15 billion over the next five years, including nearly \$10 billion in new money, to turn the tide against AIDS in the most afflicted nations of Africa and the Caribbean.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/28/03]

President Bush’s FY04 budget was almost \$1 billion short of the \$3 billion he promised Congress for his AIDS initiative. Last July, the Administration fought off attempts in Congress to speed up the initiative using emergency funding, but Congress was able to reinstate \$300 million. For FY05, the President only proposed \$2.8 billion, a \$200 million shortfall. The President promised his plan would provide AIDS treatment to 2 million people by 2008. But after more than a year he has provided this desperately needed medicine to less than 1 percent of the people he promised to help.

THE ENVIRONMENT *Environmental Protection*

“Good stewardship of the environment is not just a personal responsibility, it is a public value.”- President Bush [Speech at Sequoia National Park, 05/30/01]

The President has undermined longstanding protections for America’s public lands, leaving them vulnerable to unrestrained mining, oil and gas drilling, logging, road building, and other commercial activities. His Administration has limited public hearings, silenced government and environmental scientists and experts, and cut off judicial review of regulations for national forests and parks.

President Bush has sided with industries by slowing or halting clean-ups of toxic waste dumps while making taxpayers, not polluters, pay. President Bush also included energy executives in the writing of the energy bill, which strongly benefited oil and gas companies.

Clear Skies

“I have sent you Clear Skies legislation that mandates a 70-percent cut in air pollution from power plants over the next 15 years. I have sent you a Healthy Forests Initiative to help prevent catastrophic fires that devastate communities, kill wildlife, and burn away millions of acres of treasured forest.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/28/03]

“Today, I call for new Clean[sic] Skies legislation that sets tough new standards to dramatically reduce the three most significant forms of pollution from power plants, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury.” - President Bush [Speech, 02/14/04]

The Bush Administration's "Clear Skies" initiative would rewrite the Clean Air Act to benefit some of the nation's biggest polluters while weakening health protections for millions of Americans. The initiative would rewrite the Clean Air Act to benefit some of the nation's biggest polluters while weakening health protections for millions of Americans. The initiative will result in an increase in emissions of toxins including nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, and mercury. Additionally, it fails to limit carbon dioxide pollution, the prime cause of global warming.

Arsenic Standard for Drinking Water

“At the very last minute my predecessor made a decision, and we pulled back his decision so that we can make a decision based up on sound science and what's realistic.” -- President Bush [Explaining the withdrawal of the new arsenic standard]

President Bush tried to delay the implementation of the revised arsenic standard allowed for drinking water (and cut clean water state revolving funds by \$500 million in his FY05 budget.) The Administration also pressured the EPA to lower the standards for mercury and toxic emissions from power plants to levels even the industry called inadequate.

The Environmental Protection Agency worked on the new arsenic standard for a decade. Congress had directed the agency to establish a new standard, and authorized \$2.5 million a year for studies from 1997 to 2000. The National Academy of Sciences concluded in 1999 that the existing 50-parts-per-billion standard "could easily" result in a 1-in-100 cancer risk and recommended that acceptable levels be lowered "as promptly as possible." EPA officials believed that a 3-ppb standard would have been justified, but chose a less-stringent 10-ppb standard.

Kyoto Protocol on Global Warming

“My Administration’s climate change policy will be science-based.”- President Bush Statement, 03/13/01]

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an international body of thousands of scientists assembled by the UN and World Meteorological Organization, has stated that global temperatures were dramatically on the rise and that this increase was a result of human-induced emissions. NAS reported in 2001 that global warming was underway and “most likely due to human activities.”

“Since taking office the Bush administration has consistently sought to undermine the public’s understanding of the view held by the vast majority of climate scientists that human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gasses are making a discernable contribution to global warming.” – Union of Concerned Scientists [February 2004]

HOMELAND SECURITY

“We must continue to give our homeland security and law enforcement personnel every tool they need to defend us.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/20/04]

“The President’s budget regrettably cuts a billion dollars from the basic Homeland Security grant program, leaving only \$700 million. Ultimately, we may be able to cut back on the amount of money that is flowing to state and local government, but now is not the time.”- Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) [CongressDaily, 02/24/04]

“We will increase funding to help states and communities train and equip our heroic police and firefighters.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 1/29/02]

“By the end of December 2003, 76% of the survey cities had not received their first responder/critical infrastructure funding through their states,” according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

President Bush's FY02 budget eliminated funding for the Firefighter Assistance Program. Members of Congress had to restore funding to the program in FY02, FY03 and FY04. President Bush has proposed a \$250 million decrease in the Fire Grant Program for FY05, which helps provide training and equipment to local fire departments.

IRAQ/WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

“Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves *no doubt* that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised.” - President Bush [Associated Press, 03/17/03] [Emphasis added.]

“Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof – the smoking gun – that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.” - President Bush [Address in Cincinnati, 10/05/02]

The Iraqi regime is a threat to any American. They not only have weapons of mass destruction, they used weapons of mass destruction...That's why I say Iraq is a threat, a real threat.” - President Bush, [Speech, 1/3/03]

“Already, the Kay Report identified dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/20/04]

“It turns out we were all wrong [regarding Iraq's possession of nuclear weapons], and that is most disturbing.” Dr. David Kay, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 01/28/04]

“CIA analysts differed on several important aspects of these [WMD] programs, and those debates were spelled out in the [National Intelligence Estimate of October 2002.] They never said these were an imminent threat.”- CIA Director George Tenet [Address at Georgetown University, 2/05/04]

The IAEA and U.N. both told the Administration it had no evidence that Iraq possessed WMD. On 2/15/03, the IAEA said that, “We have to date found no evidence of ongoing prohibited nuclear or nuclear-related activities in Iraq.” On 3/7/03 IAEA Director Mohamed ElBaradei said nuclear experts have found “no indication” that Iraq has tried to import high-strength aluminum tubes for centrifuge enrichment of uranium. At the same time, the AP reported that “U.N. weapons inspectors have not found any 'smoking guns' in Iraq during their search for weapons WMD.”

“I believe that the effort that has been directed to this point has been sufficiently intense that it is highly unlikely that there were large stockpiles of deployed, unmilitarized chemical and biological weapons there.” Dr. David Kay, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, [01/28/04]

Uranium In Africa

“The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.” - President Bush [State of the Union, 01/28/03]

“It did not take long to conclude that it was highly doubtful that any such transaction [the sale of yellowcake uranium from Niger to Iraq] had ever taken place. . . . If my information was deemed inaccurate, I understand (though I would be very interested to know why). If, however, the information was ignored because it did not fit certain preconceptions about Iraq, then a legitimate argument can be made that we went to war under false pretenses.” - Former Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson, who investigated such transactions for the CIA, in the New York Times [07/06/03]

Uses of Two Iraqi Trailers

“We found the weapons of mass destruction.”
- President Bush [Polish TV, 05/30/03, referring to the two trailers, which were called “conclusive” proof of Iraq’s illicit weapons program by Vice President Cheney

“There is no consensus within our community over whether the trailers were for that use [weapons] or if they were used for the production of hydrogen.” - CIA Director George Tenet [Address at Georgetown University, 2/05/04]

“45-Minute Claim”

“The Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons, is rebuilding the facilities to make more, and, according to the British government, could launch a biological or chemical attack in as little as 45 minutes after the order is given.” - President Bush [09/28/02]

“[President Bush] ignored the fact that U.S. intelligence mistrusted the source [of the 45-minute claim] and that the claim never appeared in the October 2002 U.S. estimate,” according to the Washington Post [02/07/04]

AFGHANISTAN

“In Afghanistan, we helped liberate an oppressed people. And we will continue helping them secure their country, rebuild their society, and educate all their children.”
- President Bush [State of the Union, 01/28/03]

President Bush’s 2003 budget omitted Afghanistan funding completely (Congress later found \$300 million). For FY04, his budget request was just \$687 million. The President’s FY05 budget excluded any funding for operations in Afghanistan.

PROLIFERATION OF WMD

“There is a consensus among nations that proliferation cannot be tolerated. Yet this consensus means little unless it is translated into action. . . . I propose to expand our efforts to keep weapons from the Cold War and other dangerous materials out of the wrong hands.” - President Bush, [National Defense University, 02/11/04]

President Bush’s FY05 budget has proposed a funding cut for the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (Nunn-Lugar) of more than 9 percent, or almost \$42 million. The President’s budget calls for a paltry 1.1 percent increase in funding for the Department of Energy’s nuclear non-proliferation programs.

SEPTEMBER 11TH COMMISSION

“We have given extraordinary cooperation with Chairmen [Thomas] Kean and [Lee] Hamilton.” - President Bush, regarding his Administration’s cooperation with the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States [Interview on “Meet the Press,” 2/8/04]

“Commissioners have complained repeatedly that the White House has impeded its work by delaying the release of documents, imposing conditions on access to information, and hindering access to officials.” - The Wall Street Journal [2/24/04]. Chairman Kean also told the Journal: “Some of the negotiations [with the White House over documents and interviews] have been long and somewhat tortured and have taken up a tremendous amount of time.”

“MISSION ACCOMPLISHED”

“The ‘Mission Accomplished’ sign, of course, was put up by the members of the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln, saying that their mission was accomplished. I know it was attributed somehow to some ingenious advance man from my staff. They weren’t that ingenious, by the way.” - President Bush [Press Conference, 10/28/03]

“White House officials say that a variety of people, including the president, came up with the [Mission Accomplished] idea, and that [White House advance man Scott] Sforza embedded himself on the carrier to make the preparations days before Mr. Bush’s landing in a flight suit and his early evening speech... Mr. Sforza and his aides had choreographed every aspect of the event, even down to the members of the Lincoln crew arrayed in coordinated shirt colors over Mr. Bush’s right shoulder and the ‘Mission Accomplished’ banner placed to perfectly capture the president and the celebratory two words in a single shot.” - New York Times [5/16/03]