

2006 House of Representatives Pork Report

As the Civitas Institute reviewed bills introduced in the House of Representatives for the 2006 Short Session, we were shocked at the number of appropriation bills that are included. We found almost \$750 million.

As the House begins to finalize its proposed budget, it is puzzling why the Legislature continues to operate without a sense of priorities for state spending.

It will be interesting to observe how the House leadership directs the budget debate. They claim the budget is “clean.” But does that mean appropriations are off the table? Apparently not.

Whether these appropriations show up in the budget as a separate spending bill, in a Technical Corrections bill or in something else, spending is spending. Is this the way taxpayer’s want their money spent? Are these things taxpayers would be willing to pay more taxes for?

Civitas went through all the bills filed in the House of Representatives for this session searching for low priority spending, using a two-prong analysis. First, we picked any line item that benefited a single non-profit organization, town, county or entity. Second, we asked, is this item a high enough priority to justify raising taxes? When the surplus revenue from this year is gone, what obligations will remain? We believe the lack of prioritizing state spending will result in unnecessary tax increases.

We’ve identified the bills, the short titles, the sponsor of the bills, whether the sponsorship is a Democrat, Republican, or both, and the amount of funding. You can sort this list by any criteria to see who is requesting what and track who is getting the pork.

Attached is a spreadsheet of bills we’ve identified as pork. You may not agree with every one on the list, and you may even think we missed some. This represents what Civitas has located so far. The budget is now being discussed in the House. Undoubtedly it will be amended and changed. The spending is far from over.