

**SENATOR JOHN McCAIN PRESENTS**



**AMERICA'S MOST  
WASTED**



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**TIME TO ARREST  
WASHINGTON'S  
OUT-OF-CONTROL  
SPENDING**

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**#AmericasMostWasted @SenJohnMcCain**

Dear Taxpayer,

Government spending is spiraling out of control. The national debt recently exceeded \$18 trillion, while our \$486 billion deficit is projected to reach \$1 trillion over the next decade. Washington's repeat fiscal offenses are leading us down a dangerous path – sending hard-earned American tax dollars to mismanaged and wasteful programs.

Today I am releasing a report titled *America's Most Wasted*, which continues the remarkable work that Oklahoma Senator Tom Coburn did for years with his annual *Wastebook* by highlighting, naming and shaming outrageous pork projects funded with your taxpayer dollars. This is just the first in a series of reports I will release this year, which will also spotlight wasteful spending at the Pentagon that I am committed to fighting as Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Since coming to Congress, I have made it a priority to eliminate wasteful projects and special-interest-driven pork-barrel spending. I proposed thousands of amendments on the Senate floor to cut pork, and for years highlighted the corrupt, bipartisan plague of earmarks, which Senator Coburn called “the gateway drug to overspending” in Washington. After years of difficult and sometimes lonely battles, Congress finally banned the corrupt practice of earmarks in 2011. While that ban stands firm today, some of my colleagues are calling for the return of earmarks, which I believe serve little purpose other than to improve the re-election prospects of certain members of Congress. It is the duty of every elected official to oversee government spending, cut-out duplication, and eliminate waste – a duty that must not be shirked at taxpayers' expense.

*America's Most Wasted* highlights questionable Washington spending habits totaling \$1.1 billion. The report also identifies at least \$294 billion in spending on programs that are no longer authorized to receive funding due to Congress's persistent unwillingness to pass authorization bills and oversee the spending that follows. At a time when Americans' disapproval of government is at an all-time high, it has never been more important to reign-in spending and put our fiscal house back in order.

I believe the *America's Most Wasted* reports can serve as a wake-up call to Congress and help the American people demand an end to wasteful government spending once and for all.

Sincerely,



John McCain  
United States Senator (AZ)

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# WANTED

BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

## \$294 BILLION TO FUND 260 EXPIRED FEDERAL PROGRAMS



American taxpayers expect their representatives in Congress to be good stewards of the hard-earned tax dollars they send to Washington each year. As a result, Congress has a responsibility to exercise strong oversight of all federal programs and agencies, identify inefficient programs in need of reform, and carefully consider eliminating duplicative and wasteful programs that are no longer worthy of receiving taxpayer funding. While effective oversight is expected, an annual report compiled by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) tells a different and unfortunate story.<sup>1</sup>

This report, required by law, identified at least \$294 billion in spending on federal programs this fiscal year that are no longer authorized to receive tax dollars.<sup>2, 3, 4</sup> In fiscal year 2014, that number reached \$302 billion.<sup>5</sup> These findings raise serious questions about Congress's oversight and its ability to identify where limited tax dollars are being spent. For example, the CBO report identified the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as two agencies that have received tens of billions of tax dollars even though their authorization to receive federal funding has expired.<sup>6</sup>

While Congress should be funding NASA and NIH, waste is not uncommon in these two research agencies. For example, in his annual *Wastebook*, retired Oklahoma Senator Tom Coburn highlighted outrageous expenditures at both agencies,

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<sup>1</sup> Congressional Budget Office, "Unauthorized Appropriations and expiring Authorizations", January 15, 2015, [http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49871-UAEA\\_Appropriations.pdf](http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49871-UAEA_Appropriations.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Section 202(e)(3) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

<sup>3</sup> Public Law No: 113-235.

<sup>4</sup> CBO describes authorization identified in the report as "a specific provision that authorizes the appropriation of funds to carry out the program or function established in the enabling statute. Such a provision constitutes guidance to the Congress regarding the amount of funding that may be necessary to implement the enabling statute. An authorization of appropriations may be contained in an enabling statute or may be provided separately. Such an authorization may set a specific dollar amount or allow the appropriation of "such sums as may be necessary" (an indefinite authorization), and it may be annual, multiyear, or permanent."

<sup>5</sup> February 21, 2014, [http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/45121-UAEA\\_House.pdf](http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/45121-UAEA_House.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Congressional Budget Office, "Unauthorized Appropriations and expiring Authorizations", January 15, 2015, [http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49871-UAEA\\_Appropriations.pdf](http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49871-UAEA_Appropriations.pdf).

including a \$387,000 NIH grant for Swedish massages for rabbits, a \$390,000 NASA grant for a “green ninjas” program for children, and a \$44.5 million grant for a NASA launch tower in Mississippi that was later cancelled.<sup>7, 8</sup> Congress should be vigilant in its oversight of all government agencies’ use of funding by reviewing their spending histories and enacting reforms to cut out waste.

This valuable CBO report is a must-read for all Members of Congress and their staff, and it should serve as a wake-up call for Americans to demand that their elected representatives do a better job overseeing federal programs.

Below is a list of Congressional committees that have oversight responsibility of the programs identified in the CBO report for which the authorization to receive federal funding has expired.<sup>9</sup>

House Committee	Number of Expired Programs	Amount (Millions)	Senate Committee	Number of Expired Programs	Amount (Millions)
<b>Agriculture</b>	8	\$253	<b>Agriculture</b>	8	\$257
<b>Education &amp; Workforce</b>	22	\$40,697	<b>Banking</b>	19	\$31,478
<b>Energy &amp; Commerce</b>	53	\$46,330	<b>Commerce</b>	42	\$32,206
<b>Financial Services</b>	20	\$31,454	<b>Energy &amp; Natural Resources</b>	33	\$11,254
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	22	\$49,960	<b>Environment &amp; Public Works</b>	41	\$5,655
<b>House Admin.</b>	4	\$81	<b>Finance</b>	6	\$139
<b>Judiciary</b>	33	\$28,742	<b>Foreign Relations</b>	21	\$49,960
<b>Natural Resources</b>	60	\$2,600	<b>Health, Ed., &amp; Labor</b>	41	\$77,221
<b>Government Reform</b>	8	\$154	<b>Homeland Security</b>	14	\$132
<b>Science, Space, &amp; Tech.</b>	14	\$33,300	<b>Indian Affairs</b>	12	\$86
<b>Small Business</b>	3	\$452	<b>Judiciary</b>	34	\$28,764
<b>Transportation</b>	29	\$3,522	<b>Rules</b>	4	\$80
<b>Veterans Affairs</b>	11	\$55,843	<b>Small Business</b>	3	\$452
<b>Ways &amp; Means</b>	4	\$139	<b>Veterans</b>	11	\$55,843
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>\$293,528</b>		<b>260</b>	<b>\$293,528</b>

<sup>7</sup> Senator Tom Coburn, “2014 Wastebook”, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/243970542/Wastebook-2014>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Congressional Budget Office, “Unauthorized Appropriations and expiring Authorizations”, January 15, 2015, [http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49871-UAEA\\_Appropriations.pdf](http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49871-UAEA_Appropriations.pdf).

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## \$50,000 TO RESEARCH THE BOMB-DETECTING CAPABILITIES OF ELEPHANTS



In July 2012, the Army Research Development & Engineering Command awarded a \$50,000 year-long grant to researchers at the Adventures with Elephants facility in South Africa to investigate whether African elephants' unique and highly acute sense of smell could be used to sniff-out bombs.<sup>10</sup>

The study aimed to build on previous anecdotal evidence from other researchers, who observed in 2007 that African elephants that had moved into Angola following years of war were able to avoid walking over land mines in the region.<sup>11</sup> While the first elephants that entered the area were not as fortunate, those that followed were surprisingly successful at circumventing the explosives.<sup>12, 13</sup>

Army Chief Scientist Stephen Lee has stated that current research into whether elephants could make better bomb-detectors than dogs is not yet conclusive, and researchers have indicated that the project would not result in a full “return of elephants to the frontline.”<sup>14</sup>

While finding new ways to enhance our bomb detection methods is important, it is unlikely that African elephants could feasibly be used on the battlefield given their

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<sup>10</sup> Information paper provided by the Army “Elephant Detection Capabilities.”

<sup>11</sup> Leon Marshall, *National Geographic News*, “Elephants “Learn” to Avoid Land Mines in War-Torn Angola”, July 16, 2007, <http://www.elephantswithoutborders.org/downloadspapers/elephantslearn.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> ABC/Reuters, “African Elephants Trained to Sniff Out Explosives, Landmines, Poachers,” February 24, 2015, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-25/south-african-elephants-trained-to-sniff-out-bombs/6259598>; photo above included in the article.

large size and sensitive status as “threatened” under the *Endangered Species Act*.<sup>15</sup> Even Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus is sending its remaining Asian elephants to a conservation center, noting “shifting consumer preferences” regarding African elephants as one of the reasons for its decision.<sup>16</sup>

At a time when the defense budget faces serious cuts under the *Budget Control Act of 2011*, it is critical that Congress ensures our military branches spend their limited funds on worthwhile programs that effectively and efficiently enhance our military readiness.

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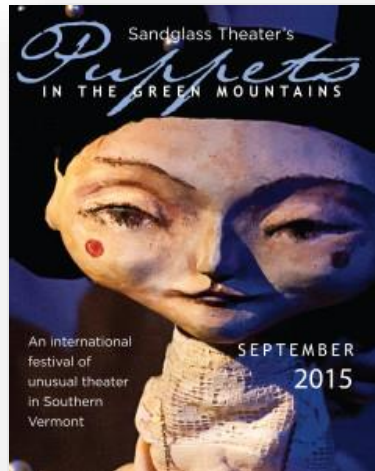
<sup>15</sup> "Species Profile for African Elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*)," accessed March 30, 2015, <http://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile?scode=A07U>.

<sup>16</sup> Feld Entertainment. “Feld Entertainment Announces Unprecedented Changes to Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, March 15, 2015, Accessed March 30, 2015. <http://www.feldentertainment.com/PressRoom/DisplayPressRelease/75870/>.

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### \$30,000 FOR PUPPET SHOWS IN VERMONT



The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awarded a \$30,000 grant to the Sandglass Center for Puppetry and Theater Research to support a series of puppet shows as part of its so-called “Art Works” grant program, which awards organizations that create art programs meeting “the highest standards of excellence.”<sup>17</sup>

Sandglass plans to use a portion of this grant to partially fund a 10-day international “Puppets in the Green Mountains Festival,” which will showcase “puppetry and unusual theater.”<sup>18</sup> One of the many “adult” themed puppet shows on the festival calendar is Paul Zaloom’s “White Like Me: A Honky Dory Puppet Show.” According to the Sandglass Center, the show will “tackl[e] the gnarly subject of the upcoming de-honky-ization of the United States when white people in America will be...‘just another other.’”<sup>19</sup>

This is not the first time taxpayer dollars have gone to fund questionable puppet shows. Retired Senator Tom Coburn’s 2013 *Wastebook* highlighted \$150,000 spent to promote a Long Island puppet festival.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> National Endowment of the Arts, 2014 Fall Grant Announcement, [http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/Fall\\_2014\\_Grant\\_List\\_by\\_State\\_FINAL.pdf](http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/Fall_2014_Grant_List_by_State_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Puppets in the Green Mountains Festival Website, <http://puppetsinthegreenmountains.com/>

<sup>19</sup> Puppets in the Green Mountains, White Like Me: A Honky Dory Puppet Show, <http://puppetsinthegreenmountains.com/?p=29>.

<sup>20</sup> Show me the Spending website, *Wastebook 2013*, pg. 121, <http://showmethespending.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Wastebook2013.pdf>.



# WANTED BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

## **\$225.3 MILLION IN SOCIAL SECURITY OVERPAYMENTS TO 106,336 UNQUALIFIED STUDENT BENEFICIARIES**



The Social Security Administration (SSA) currently provides social security benefits to the children of individuals who are either deceased, retired or disabled, until they graduate from school or turn 19.<sup>21</sup> According to SSA, each month, \$2.5 billion in benefits goes to 4.4 million children nationwide.<sup>22</sup> With billions of dollars going out the door, it is vitally important for SSA to closely monitor this program to ensure there are no significant overpayments.

However, a recent report by the SSA Inspector General (IG) shows that SSA has a disturbing history of overpaying unqualified recipients of this program.<sup>23</sup> According to the IG, SSA overpaid \$225.3 million in benefits to 106,336 students. In addition, the IG found that SSA was missing evidence of attendance for \$968 million in benefits paid to 246,252 students recipients.<sup>24</sup> According to the IG report, SSA made these errors because recipients and their schools failed to report when students graduated or stopped attending, and SSA employees failed to obtain proper attendance records and monitor valuable information such as student graduation dates.<sup>25</sup>

But, this is not SSA's first violation. Overpayments and mismanagement of programs are ongoing and costly problems at the agency. A March 2015 report by the SSA IG found that 6.5 million people that were at least 112 years were still

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<sup>21</sup> Social Security Administration, "benefits for Children", <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10085.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Office of the Inspector General, Social Security Administration, "Payments to Students", A-09-13-13059, December 2014, <http://oig.ssa.gov/sites/default/files/audit/full/pdf/A-09-13-13059.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

linked to “living” Social Security numbers.<sup>26</sup> The report also highlighted examples of individuals ranging from 121 to 145 years old who had used expired Social Security numbers to open bank accounts.<sup>27</sup> Two other SSA programs – the Supplemental Security Income program and the Retirement, Survivors, and Disability Insurance program – have improperly paid \$5.1 billion and \$3 billion, respectively.<sup>28</sup>

With billions of dollars mistakenly going out the door, it’s no wonder we’re facing a national debt crisis.



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<sup>26</sup> Office of the Inspector General, Social Security Administration, “Numberholders Age 112 or Older Who Did Not Have a Death Entry on the Numident”, A-06-14-34030, March 2015, <http://oig.ssa.gov/sites/default/files/audit/full/pdf/A-06-14-34030.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> Krishnadev Calammur, NPR, “6.5 Million Social Security Numbers Linked To Those 112 or Older (And Likely Dead)”, March 10, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2015/03/10/392112708/6-5-million-social-security-numbers-linked-to-those-112-or-older>.

<sup>28</sup> Government Accountability Office, “Improper Payments” Government-Wide Estimates and Use of Death Data to Help Prevent Payments to Deceased Individuals”, March 16, 2015, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/669026.pdf>.

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## \$49 MILLION OF ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SPENDING ON PRO SPORTS ADVERTISING INSTEAD OF TRAINING



At the end of fiscal year 2014, officials from the National Guard Bureau and Army National Guard announced that they were facing a \$101 million shortfall in the account used to pay guardsmen.<sup>29</sup> As a result, National Guard units around the country braced for a possible delay in critical training and drills because they couldn't afford to pay soldiers.<sup>30</sup> At the same time that the Guard was running out of money to meet its primary mission and pay its current soldiers, it spent millions of taxpayer dollars on sponsorship and advertising deals with professional sports leagues to support its recruiting activities.

The most egregious of these deals involved contracts in 2014 worth \$32.2 million to sponsor NASCAR superstar #88 Dale Earnhardt Jr. and \$12.7 million to sponsor the Indy Racing League's #15 Graham Rahal.<sup>31</sup> Following a congressional hearing in May 2014, the Guard finally announced it was ending the sponsorships in the face of "significantly constrained resources and the likelihood of further reductions" – years after the active duty Army ended similar deals.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Dan Lamonthe, *Washington Post*, "Short on cash, the Army National Guard is cutting back on drilling nationwide," September 4, 2014, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2014/09/04/short-on-cash-the-army-national-guard-is-cutting-back-on-drilling-nationwide/>.

<sup>30</sup> Steve Liewer, *World Herald*, "Unable to pay soldiers due to \$101M budget shortfall, National Guard units in Nebraska, Iowa scrap drills," September 9, 2014, [http://www.omaha.com/news/military/unable-to-pay-soldiers-due-to-m-budget-shortfall-national/article\\_ca3a2b52-7b2a-54f1-a7d9-70bf3347d22b.html](http://www.omaha.com/news/military/unable-to-pay-soldiers-due-to-m-budget-shortfall-national/article_ca3a2b52-7b2a-54f1-a7d9-70bf3347d22b.html).

<sup>31</sup> Data provided by the Army National Guard and through [www.usaspending.gov](http://www.usaspending.gov).

<sup>32</sup> Kenny Bruce, *NASCAR.com*, "National Guard Ending Hendrick Sponsorship," August 7, 2014, [http://www.nascar.com/en\\_us/news-media/articles/2014/8/7/national-guard-sponsor-dale-earnhardt-jr-hendrick-motorsports.html](http://www.nascar.com/en_us/news-media/articles/2014/8/7/national-guard-sponsor-dale-earnhardt-jr-hendrick-motorsports.html) and Memorandum for Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), ATTN: Hon. Thomas R. Lamont, SUBJECT: Discontinuance of Army NASCAR Car Sponsorship, 2012, <http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/download/?id=212656FB-36B9-4BA4-A34B-67113E587C6B>.

Yet, NASCAR isn't the only professional sport to benefit from the Guard's advertising dollars. In 2014, the Guard spent an additional \$4.2 million on deals with teams in the National Football League (NFL), Major League Baseball, the men's and women's National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League, Major League Soccer, the Tiger Woods Deutsche Bank Professional Golf Association Championship, and the Alaskan Iron Dog snowmobile race. Under the NFL partnerships, state Guard organizations paid NFL teams to have players visit local high schools or honor local coaches, in addition to paying for things like in-stadium advertising, game-day presence, and non-game day use of team facilities. The \$225,000 deal between the New England Patriots and the Massachusetts and New Hampshire Guard included these activities, as well as the "True Patriot" program, in which the team recognized members of the Guard during half-time at home games.<sup>33</sup>

The Guard has claimed that states receive significant return-on-investment from these deals, but has provided no evidence to prove it. Using taxpayer funds to pay for the less tangible benefits of cobranding with billion-dollar sports leagues raises serious questions, particularly as the Guard reduces its end-strength. Instead, these funds could be put to better use in training, force modernization, or other, more directly beneficial recruiting activities.

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<sup>33</sup> Data provided by the Army National Guard.

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## \$753 MILLION AND 10 YEARS TO RENOVATE AN OFFICE BUILDING FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS



Built in 1908, the Cannon House Office Building is the oldest congressional office building on Capitol Hill and in serious need of renovation.<sup>34</sup> According to the Architect of the Capitol (AOC), restoration is necessary to “improve the functionality of the building for both Members and staff” and to “mak[e] it far more efficient, comfortable and safer, while retaining the historic grandeur of building.”<sup>35</sup>

While the building is certainly in need of repair, the three-quarters-of-a-billion-dollar cost projection and the 10-year construction timeframe have raised eyebrows. In 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), at the request of Congressional Committees, reported on the planned renovation of the Cannon building and noted concerns about AOC’s cost estimates.<sup>36</sup> GAO further questioned the reliability of AOC’s renovation estimates in a March 2014 report, stating that the cost estimates only partially met accepted leading practices.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the AOC’s assurances, Members of Congress are rightfully wary – especially after having witnessed the beleaguered Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) construction project, which cost \$350 million more than the initial budget projection and took years longer than planned to complete.<sup>38</sup> Strong oversight is needed to ensure the same costly mistakes do not happen again.

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<sup>34</sup> Architect of the Capitol, “Cannon Renewal Project FAQs”, <http://www.aoc.gov/cannon/faqs>.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Terrell Dorn, United States Government Accountability Office, “Architect of the Capitol: Plans for Renovating the Cannon House Office Building”, May 6, 2009, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/130/122465.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> United States Government Accountability Office, “Architect of the Capitol: Incorporating All Leading Practices Could Improve Accuracy and Credibility of Projects’ Cost Estimates”, March 2014, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/661901.pdf>.

<sup>38</sup> Megan Wilson, The Hill, “Cannon office building due for a major overhaul”, November 25, 2012, <http://thehill.com/homenews/house/269213-cannon-house-office-building-due-for-major-overhaul>.

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BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

## \$14 MILLION FOR DUPLICATIVE CATFISH INSPECTION OFFICE



Among the many wasteful provisions in the FY15 appropriations bill, better known as the “Cromnibus,” was a costly and duplicative provision directing the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to continue developing a catfish inspection office even though another government agency, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), already runs a catfish inspection office.<sup>39</sup>

What’s so special about catfish that they need two inspection centers? When American families dine on shrimp, tilapia, or the occasional fried catfish, they tend to prefer good-tasting seafood at the best prices, which generally comes from the vast supply of imported Asian seafood. In contrast, southern catfish farmers, rather than face competition, asked their powerful senators to support a law that essentially forces Americans to buy domestic catfish. They want you to think Americans have been eating unsafe foreign catfish even though the FDA, the Centers for Disease Control, and USDA say that’s untrue. Out of the 1.8 billion catfish enjoyed by Americans each year, only two catfish-related illnesses are reported on average.

The USDA’s program also seriously disrupts important international trade efforts with Asian countries and increases food costs for American consumers.<sup>40</sup> According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the Vietnamese Pangasius catfish – the sixth most-popular fish in the U.S. – could soon go off the market because of onerous regulations that block international imports and artificially protect domestic

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<sup>39</sup> Public Law No: 113-235

<sup>40</sup> Ron Nixon, *The New York Times*, “New Catfish Inspections Are Posing a Problem for a Pacific Trade Pact”, November 13, 2013, [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/14/us/politics/second-catfish-inspection-program-by-us-complicates-pacific-trade-pact.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/14/us/politics/second-catfish-inspection-program-by-us-complicates-pacific-trade-pact.html?_r=0).

suppliers.<sup>41</sup> It took USDA four years and \$20 million to set up its Catfish Inspection Office – without inspecting a single fish.<sup>42</sup>

In its annual report on duplicative government programs, GAO highlighted the unnecessary office and recommended that Congress repeal the provision funding it, which it estimates will cost roughly \$14 million a year once up-and-running. According to GAO, eliminating USDA’s Catfish Inspection Office would get rid of a duplicative federal program and “*could save taxpayers millions of dollars annually without affecting the safety of catfish intended for human consumption.*”<sup>43</sup> The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has also recommended that Congress repeal the catfish program.<sup>44</sup>

Supporters of good government should demand a repeal of the duplicative catfish inspection program – one fishy deal that needs to be fried on behalf of the American taxpayer.

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<sup>41</sup> Tennille Tracy, *The Wall Street Journal*, “U.S. Catfish Fight Expected to sink a popular Import”, March 23, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-catfish-fight-expected-to-sink-a-popular-import-1427131633>.

<sup>42</sup> David Kerley, *ABC News*, “\$20 million in Taxpayer Money Spent on Catfish Inspection Office”, <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/video/20-million-taxpayer-money-spent-catfish-inspections-20075770>.

<sup>43</sup> The Government Accountability Office, *Improving Efficiency and Effectiveness*, March 6, 2014, [http://www.gao.gov/duplication/action\\_tracker/Catfish\\_Inspection/action1](http://www.gao.gov/duplication/action_tracker/Catfish_Inspection/action1), (emphasis added).

<sup>44</sup> Josh Hicks, *The Washington Post*, “White House budget would eliminate duplicative catfish inspections”, April 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/federal-eye/wp/2013/04/09/white-house-budget-would-eliminate-duplicative-catfish-inspections/>.

# WANTED

BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

## **\$23 MILLION ON A DHS CONTRACT THAT WAS EVENTUALLY TERMINATED**



The Science and Technology Directorate (S&T), the primary research and development arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with a mission “to deliver effective and innovative insight, methods and solutions for the critical needs of the Homeland Security Enterprise” has made its fair share of delinquent spending mistakes since its establishment in 2003.<sup>45</sup> A recent report by the DHS Inspector General (IG) highlights that poor management, duplicative and fragmented work, and wasteful spending continue to plague the agency and cost millions in wasted taxpayer dollars as a result.<sup>46</sup>

One example the IG highlighted in its report was a \$30 million contract for NVS Technologies to develop a system that would easily detect pathogens and other biothreats.<sup>47</sup> After spending several years and at least \$23 million on the development of the detection system, S&T cancelled the contract. According to the DHS IG’s audit, S&T claimed the system was no longer needed and that the government could use other technology available in the commercial marketplace instead.<sup>48</sup> Upon further inspection, the IG found that most of S&T’s reasons for cancelling the contract were not substantiated and that there was plenty of evidence showing the technology was still needed.<sup>49</sup>

What caused such a costly mix-up? The IG found that S&T terminated the program primarily because it “did not have adequate standards for documenting its review and oversight of contracts by the program office” – an easily avoidable problem that must be rectified moving forward to ensure spending on good programs is not done in vain.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Science and Technology Directorate, <http://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/our-work>.

<sup>46</sup> Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security, “Science and Technology Directorate Needs to Improve its Contract Management Procedures”, February 27, 2015, [http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2015/OIG\\_15-38\\_Feb15.pdf](http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2015/OIG_15-38_Feb15.pdf).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

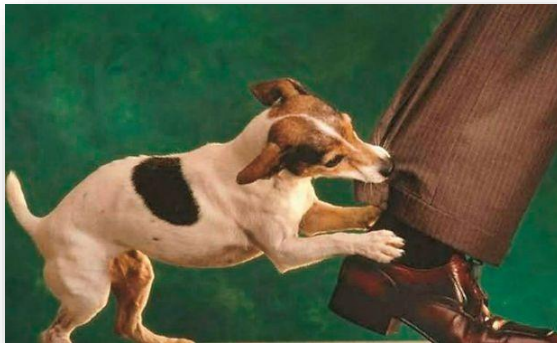
<sup>50</sup> Ibid



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## BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

### \$390,798 ON NIH'S DOG BITE PREVENTION WEBSITE



According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), roughly 4.5 million dog bites take place each year – potentially calling into question the common assumption that these pets are “man’s best friend.”<sup>51</sup> To raise awareness of this nipping matter, AVMA designated a week in May “National Dog Bite Prevention Week,” and created a Facebook page, a website, and several videos and podcasts to teach children about dog bite prevention and safety.<sup>52</sup> Other organizations, such as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals (ASPCA) and the Humane Society of the United States, have posted extensive information on their websites and social media channels to help parents and children train and socialize their dogs, as well as learn the best ways to avoid an attack.<sup>53, 54</sup>

Despite all of the resources already available to families, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) decided to award two grants totaling \$390,798 to the University of Alabama at Birmingham to develop yet another website to teach children and parents about dog bites.<sup>55</sup> According to NIH, researchers will build from “*existing child dog bite prevention programs*” to develop and then evaluate a website to teach children safe interactions with dogs.” The researchers go on to note that “the website will be interactive, entertaining, and engaging, allowing children... to learn

<sup>51</sup> American Veterinary Medical Association, “Dog Bite Prevention”, [https://www.avma.org/public/Pages/Dog-Bite-Prevention.aspx?utm\\_medium=widget&utm\\_content=infographic](https://www.avma.org/public/Pages/Dog-Bite-Prevention.aspx?utm_medium=widget&utm_content=infographic).

<sup>52</sup> American Veterinary Medical Association, Dog Bite Prevention Week, <https://www.avma.org/Events/pethealth/Pages/Dog-Bite-Prevention-Week.aspx>; American Veterinary Medical Association, “Teaching Children How to Prevent Dog Bites”, <https://www.avma.org/public/Pages/Teaching-children-about-dog-bite-prevention.aspx>.

<sup>53</sup> The Humane Society of America, “How to Avoid a Dog Bite”, [http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/tips/avoid\\_dog\\_bites.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/tips/avoid_dog_bites.html).

<sup>54</sup> The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals, “Dog Bite Prevention”, <https://www.aspc.org/pet-care/virtual-pet-behaviorist/dog-behavior/dog-bite-prevention>.

<sup>55</sup> National Institute of Health, Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools (RePORT), “A Website to Teach Children Safety with Dogs: Development and Evaluation”, (*emphasis added*) [http://projectreporter.nih.gov/project\\_info\\_description.cfm?aid=8787479&icde=23426735](http://projectreporter.nih.gov/project_info_description.cfm?aid=8787479&icde=23426735).

in a technologically-sophisticated and interactive environment.”<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately, Americans will need to wait to access this duplicative information, as the website’s director, Dr. Schwebel, indicated in a recent interview with the *Washington Free*

*Beacon* that the website is still under development and will not be public for some time.<sup>57</sup>



With so many public health concerns facing the United States, including the recent outbreak of Ebola and a lack of funding to fight deadly diseases across the globe, it is vital that Congress ensure NIH spends its funding on essential – not duplicative – programs.

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<sup>56</sup> National Institute of Health, Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools (RePORT), “A Website to Teach Children Safety with Dogs: Development and Evaluation”, [http://projectreporter.nih.gov/project\\_info\\_description.cfm?aid=8787479&icde=23426735](http://projectreporter.nih.gov/project_info_description.cfm?aid=8787479&icde=23426735).

<sup>57</sup> Elizabeth Harrington, *The Washington Free Beacon*, NIH creating \$390,798 Website to teach Kids Dog Safety”, February 11, 2015, <http://freebeacon.com/issues/nih-creating-390798-website-to-teach-kids-dog-safety/>.

# WANTED

## BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

### \$15,000 FOR EPA TO STUDY POLLUTION FROM YOUR BACKYARD BBQ



It's not summer in America without an outdoor barbeque. While Americans have been grilling for generations, bureaucrats at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are now worried that this time-honored tradition might be causing too much air pollution and issued a \$15,000 grant to the University of California, Riverside to study the threat.<sup>58</sup>

According to the grant proposal, researchers will use taxpayer dollars to understand how to “reduce air pollution as well as health hazards” posed by “barbecue pit masters” who flip burgers on propane barbecues.<sup>59</sup> To accomplish this, the researchers proposed creating a grease collection tray accompanied by a secondary air filtration system, which they believe could reduce emissions and mitigate health hazards for barbecue-goers.

Rather than focusing its limited time and resources to tackle issues of national concern, the EPA is directing its funds to investigate backyard barbecues' impact on the environment. According to an article in the *Washington Examiner*, the agency has also investigated other “pollution emitting tools,” such as lawn mowers.<sup>60</sup> The EPA's use of taxpayers' dollars to further regulate our summer fun should not be a priority for the federal government – especially in a time of limited tax dollars.

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<sup>58</sup> “Technology for the Reduction of Particulate Matter Emissions for Residential Propane BBQs,” United States Environmental Protection Agency, March 20, 2015, [http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncer\\_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/display.abstractDetail/abstract/10266/report/0](http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/display.abstractDetail/abstract/10266/report/0).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Paul Bedard, *Washington Examiner*, “Backyard burger and wiener roasts targeted by EPA,” March 16, 2015, <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/backyard-burger-and-wiener-roasts-targeted-by-epa/article/2561474>.