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House of Representatives

FY2008 LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON
OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Chairman, in accordance with House earmark reforms, I would like to place into the record a listing of Congressionally-directed projects in my home state of Idaho that are contained within the report to the FY08 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

I'd like to take just a few minutes to describe why I supported these projects and why they are valuable to the nation and its taxpayers.

The report contains \$300,000 for the Literacy Matters! Program administered by the Lee Pesky Learning Center in Boise. The Literacy Matters! Program is aimed at educating new mothers on the importance of early childhood literacy and math skills and providing them with resources for educating their children. The funding is used to provide every mother of a newborn in Idaho with a book created by the Lee Pesky Learning Center that helps them with teaching early literacy and math skills. The books are distributed through Idaho hospitals and the program has been highly successful. This is the second year of federal funding for the program.

This project was requested by the Lee Pesky Learning Center in Boise, Idaho.

The report contains \$300,000 for the Idaho Caring Foundation's program to provide dental services to low-income, uninsured children who would otherwise have no access to such services. The program will provide access to needed dental care for 600 low-

income, uninsured children throughout Idaho. Eligible children will be identified by working in partnership with Idaho schools, health departments, Head Start programs, and YMCA programs. Dental services will be provided by over 90 dentists who are Caring Foundation providers, providing oral health services for reduced fees. Federal funding is only a portion of the total costs of the program. As a dentist, I understand the importance of proper dental hygiene at a very young age. Serious health and self esteem problems can quickly evolve if dental hygiene is neglected early in a child's development. This is an outstanding program that enjoys my complete support. This is the second year of federal funding for the program.

This project was requested by the Idaho Caring Foundation in Boise, Idaho.

The report contains \$250,000 for the Discovery Center of Idaho's new facility. The funding will assist with efforts initiated by the Discovery Center and the J.R. Simplot Foundation to build a new model of a "hands-on" science center to captivate the attention of and inspire tomorrow's leaders and innovators. The 70,000 square foot Center will be founded on three core strengths, inspiring stories of innovation including Mr. Simplot's story, iconic collection of working steam tractors and DCI's expertise in igniting curiosity, through interactive science exhibits and programs. The center will be a resource for the region, with particular interest in serving rural areas to help break the myth that innovation is a new urban

phenomenon - that ingenuity is found wherever and whenever an observant creative human being has a problem to solve. This is a tremendous opportunity to create a new approach to bridging the gap in science and technology education. The \$250,000 federal investment is a very small portion of what is expected to be a \$40,000,000 project.

This project was requested by the Discovery Center of Idaho in Boise, Idaho.

The report contains \$200,000 for the College of Southern Idaho's Pro-Tech Training Program which partners with local agencies and companies to identify training needs in the community and provide for those needs by training talented Idaho students. The College partners with other agencies to identify training needs and to identify potential candidates for employment. The most recent of these ventures are the training programs that were established for Dell Computers and its call center in Twin Falls. In addition, data provided by Region IV of the Idaho Economic Development Agency indicate that manufacturing will be a leading employment area in the Magic Valley with over 250 new jobs expected over the next two years.

This project was requested by the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls, Idaho.

The report contains \$200,000 for St. Luke's Hospital's Children Health Services Expansion. The Children's Health Services Expansion project provides essential growth in capacity for Pediatric Medical/Surgical, Pediatric Intensive Care, Neonatal Intensive Care, Pediatric Oncology, and Pediatric Surgical Suites and support areas, to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population in the hospital's service area. The hospital is spending millions of the expansion and federal funds will represent only a small portion of the project's total costs. This is the fourth year of federal funding for this program.

The project was requested by St. Luke's Regional Medical Center in Boise, Idaho.

The report contains \$200,000 for Teton Valley Hospital and Surgicenter's Revitalization Project. Teton Valley Hospital & Surgicenter, a 13-bed Critical Access Hospital, provides an emergency room and a full scope of primary care services to the residents in and around Teton Valley, a rural community of just over 7,000 residents, nestled against the Teton Mountains in Southeast Idaho and Western

Wyoming. Its population has grown by more than 99% over the past 15 years, ranking it in the top two fastest growing counties in Idaho for the last six years. This population growth has seriously strained the resources of the hospital and necessitated the revitalization project. Federal funds represent only a portion of the project's total costs.

This project was requested by Teton Valley Hospital & Surgicenter in Driggs, Idaho.

The report contains \$200,000 for Madison County Memorial Hospital. Madison County Memorial Hospital services a growing area encompassing five counties and quite simply has outgrown its facilities. Increased capacity for obstetrics (Madison County Memorial Hospital has more births than any other hospital of its size in the State of Idaho and possibly the nation) and inpatient and outpatient surgeries is needed. The size of this project is 70,000 sq. feet of new construction and 85,000 sq. feet of remodeling, with an overall budget of \$49 million and an equipment budget of over \$7 million. Federal funding will be used for necessary medical equipment for the expanded and remodeled facility and represents a very small portion of the overall funding for this project.

This project was requested by Madison County Memorial Hospital in Rexburg, Idaho.

The report contains \$400,000 for a Community Detox Center in Boise, Idaho. The need for a detox facility is both pressing and long-standing. According to a 2002 study by Boise State University's Center for Health Policy, rates of drug and alcohol abuse are worse in the Treasure Valley than in the rest of Idaho. Over 17,000 individuals in Ada and Canyon Counties were deemed at-risk for substance dependence in 2000, and the region severely lacks beds for detox patients, particularly those on limited incomes. To fill this void, hospital emergency rooms are acting as de facto drug and/or alcohol detox centers which adds to rising health care costs. The proposed facility is a 24-hour medically monitored alcohol and drug sobering station and 36-bed detox center for indigent patients treated by a professional, qualified staff. Typical stays for sobering will be 12 hours and typical stays for detoxification will be 5-6 days; following sobering and/or detoxification, patients will be referred to appropriate education and treatment programs.

This project was requested by the United Way of Treasure Valley in Boise, Idaho.

The report contains \$200,000 for the Advanced Clinical Simulation Laboratory at Idaho State University. This funding will be used to develop an Advanced Clinical Simulation Laboratory (ACSL) to strengthen nursing education, practice and research in Idaho. The ACSL will enable students, faculty, and practice partners to become actively involved in clinical simulation learning and conducting research related to student learning, effectiveness of clinical education models and improving patient care outcomes. The ACSL will also provide a research and practice laboratory for nurse faculty and clinical educators to learn and update knowledge about clinical educational models and teaching with technology.

This project was requested by Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho.

The report contains \$200,000 for Idaho SySTEMic Solution: Plant Early for STEM Learning (science, technology, engineering, & math) at Boise State University. Idaho SySTEMic Solution is a nationally relevant, hands-on, project-based STEM learning system (science, technology, engineering, & math) designed to spur achievement and confidence among elementary-age learners and their teachers. Key project components will include: 1) a comprehensive teacher training model that includes a one-week summer institute and ongoing site-based follow-up training to boost the ability and confidence of elementary teachers; 2) implementation into demographically diverse schools (grades 1-5/6, urban to suburban to rural, multicultural) of curriculum-aligned learning lab systems that have been shown to improve student scores in math, science, and technology; and 3) research and evaluation of results in accordance with Idaho and national assessment standards to maximize the effectiveness of transplanting this solution to other U.S. states.

This project was requested by Boise State University in Boise, Idaho.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide a list of Congressionally-directed projects in my region and an explanation of my support for them.

- 1.) *\$300,000 for Early Literacy Matters; Lee Pesky Learning Center*
- 2.) *\$300,000 for Idaho Caring Foundation Dental Project*
- 3.) *\$200,000 for Children's Health Services Expansion; St. Luke's Regional Medical Center*
- 4.) *\$400,000 for Community Detox Center; United Way of Treasure Valley*
- 5.) *\$200,000 for Advanced Clinical Simulation Laboratory; Idaho State University*
- 6.) *\$200,000 for Idaho SySTEMic Solution; Boise State University*
- 7.) *\$200,000 for Madison County Memorial Hospital Revitalization Project*
- 8.) *\$200,000 for College of Southern Idaho Pro-Tech Program; College of Southern Idaho*
- 9.) *\$200,000 for Teton Valley Hospital Revitalization Project; Teton Valley Hospital*
- 10.) *\$250,000 for the Discovery Center of Idaho Expansion; Discovery Center of Idaho*