

# SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: SM 1888  
SPONSOR: Senator Dockery  
SUBJECT: Defense Appropriations Bill  
DATE: February 25, 2004 REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Dodson</u>	<u>Skelton</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

## I. Summary:

This memorial urges Congress to give first priority to passing and enacting the Defense Appropriations Legislation before all other spending bills in 2004 and in future years.

## II. Present Situation:

### Federal Appropriations

The federal budget process takes approximately nine months to complete, in some years longer. In February of every year, the President submits his annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year to Congress. Congress annually considers 13 or more appropriations measures which provide funding for a variety of activities including national defense, education, disaster assistance, crime programs, and general government operations.<sup>1</sup>

Federal fiscal years begin on October 1 and end the following September 30. If Congress does not complete action on all 13 appropriations bills before October 1, the House and Senate must pass a continuing resolution to keep the federal government open and federal programs operating until regular appropriations bills are enacted.<sup>2</sup>

The U.S. Congress missed the October 2002 deadline for passage of the fiscal year 2002-2003 budget and was unable to pass a new budget for federal FY 2003-2004 until March 2003. The

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<sup>1</sup> *The Congressional Appropriations Process: An Introduction*, by Sandy Streeeter, Analyst in American National Government, Congressional Research Service, July 29, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, at 12.

defense appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2002 (H.R. 3338, P.L. 107-117) passed on December 20, 2001, after the October 1 deadline for passage of funding bills. In considering spending for FY 2003, Congress took up the defense appropriations bill before considering the other 12 appropriations bills that comprise the annual federal budget. The defense spending bill for FY 2003 (H.R. 5010, P.L. 107-248) was signed by the President on October 23, 2002.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

This memorial expresses legislative findings that the security of the nation and people is the first and foremost obligation of the United States Federal Government. The men and women of the United States Armed Forces have shown great courage and self-sacrifice and deserve to be equipped with the best weapons and resources to protect the nation. There have been concerns that in past years politicians have delayed passing the Defense Appropriations Bill until late in the budget year so that the Defense Appropriations Bill could be used as an instrument for pork-barrel spending and as a political hostage to pork-barrel spending in other appropriations bills. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush asked Congress to pass that year's Defense Appropriations Bill before passing other spending bills. Congress passed the Defense Appropriations Bill first in the Spring of 2002.

This memorial commends the Congress of the United States for making the nation's defense its first priority in 2002 and requests that Congress continue the tradition by passing and enacting the Defense Appropriations Legislation before all other spending bills in 2004 and in future years.

The Legislature of the State of Florida resolves that a copy of this memorial be delivered to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the Florida delegation to the Congress of the United States.

### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

#### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

#### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

#### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

#### **D. Other Constitutional Issues:**

**V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

C. Government Sector Impact:

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.

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