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Congressman Akin Lauds House Passage of Legislation to Reduce Spending, Bolster National Defense and Control Illegal Immigration

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Akin (R-MO), a member of the House Armed Services Committee, today lauded the passage of legislation during a weekend session that lasted until the early hours of Monday morning. Included in the bills passed by the House is legislation to reduce the Deficit by nearly \$40 billion, while providing for critical defense authorizations and appropriations. On Friday, the House also passed important antiterrorism and illegal immigration controls.

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 conference report provides \$39.732 billion of savings over 5 years in the government's automatic-pilot, mandatory spending programs. The Act will begin a longer-term effort at slowing the growth of entitlement spending, which now consumes about 54 percent of the total budget, and will rise to 62 percent in 10 years if no action is taken.

"As a fiscal conservative I am encouraged to see House passage of the Deficit Reduction Act. I view its success in the House as a much needed step that significantly reduces spending by the Federal Government," said Akin. "I am also particularly pleased with our efforts to offset the spending on Katrina relief and the Bird Flu by reducing spending in other areas rather than adding to the deficit."

On Friday, the House passed the Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 by a vote of 239-182. The Act will combat the hiring of illegal workers by providing a reliable method of determining whether persons are legally eligible for employment. It also ends the "catch and release" practice for illegal immigrants from countries other than Mexico. In the past year alone, an estimated 120,000 illegal immigrants from countries other than Mexico have been released due to the lack of mandatory detention prior to adjudication. The building of 700 miles of fences along the U.S. border with Mexico to prevent illegal crossings is also authorized.

"Illegal immigration must be addressed in a meaningful way," said Akin. "The enforcement of immigration law is not only crucial to national defense, but is also an issue of basic fairness to those immigrants that have rightfully chosen to obey the laws of this nation and complied with the requirements of legal immigration," said Akin.

The House also passed the FY 06 Defense Authorization Conference Report. The legislation sets the policies, programs and funding levels for the nation's military. The \$441.5 billion bill was approved by the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 374 - 41. The bill included a 3.1 percent across-the-board pay raise for our men and women in uniform. The Act also provides for force protection needs in Iraq and Afghanistan including Up-Armored High Mobility Mutipurposed Vehicles, tactical wheeled recapitalization and modernization of the most heavily used vehicles, night vision and improvised explosive device counter-measures, including jammers.

"Among the many important provisions, we increased the number of authorized active duty personnel significantly and insured our war-fighters have the most sophisticated equipment and training to enhance their ability to win decisively any conflict," said Akin, a member for the House Armed Services Committee and who served as a conferee for the House of Representatives for the Defense Authorization.