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"Operation Offset"

Posted by [Kristina Rizga](#) at 3:32 PM on September 29, 2005.

...is the name of new budget cuts that will pay for Hurricane Katrina at the expense of the elderly and the poor.

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"[Operation Offset](#)" is what the Republicans are calling their new budget cut plan to pay for Hurricane Katrina. [[LINK](#)]

Most of the proposed cuts target the elderly and the poor, heavily targeting Medicare. [Senior Journal.com](#) reports:

"In a stunning announcement yesterday, the Republican Study Committee recommended shifting a big portion of the cost of Hurricane Katrina to the backs of America's senior citizens. Recommended program cuts impacting seniors include delaying the Medicare Prescription Drug Program, increase Medicare Part B Premium from 25% to 30%, impose a home health co-payment of 10%, reduce Medicaid administrative spending, increase allowable co-pays in Medicaid, block grant Medicaid acute services..."

The new plan eliminates all federal funding for energy conservation, [the "Energy Star" program](#), energy efficient vehicles, hydrogen vehicles, high-speed rail, and light rail.

No more federal money for PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. Nothing at all. Here's why:

"Eliminate Federal Funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting CPB. ... CPB and PBS continue to use federal funding to pay for questionable programming, such as a documentary on sex education funded by the Playboy Foundation. Additionally, much of the programming on PBS, such as Sesame Street, could bring in enough annual revenues to cover the loss of federal funding. Savings: \$5.6 billion over ten years (\$2.2 billion over five years)" [\[LINK\]](#)

Also facing cuts are AmeriCorps, [the "Even Start" program](#), security and anti-drug funding for inner-city schools, all federal loans to graduate students, the Global AIDS Initiative, the EPA, the Center for Disease Control, pensions and healthcare plans for retired federal workers, job programs and revitalization funds for poor neighborhoods, the school lunch program, and community health centers.

Are we still continuing with the tax cuts for the rich? But of course, trickle-down economy, stupid!

As American philosopher Lily Tomlin says, "No matter how cynical I get, I just can't keep up!"

Kristina Rizga edits WireTap—AlterNet's youth-oriented section.

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