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Call for a 'sensible' federal budget

To the Editor:

Governor Chet Culver and dozens more elected officials in our state have expressed their strong support for the efforts of Iowans for Sensible Priorities because they believe that sensible budget priorities on the federal level will really pay off for the State of Iowa.

"As Governor, I believe that the definition of 'national security' is about more than the Department of Defense budget. Our strength as a state and nation is in large part determined by how well we educate our children, care for our senior citizens and protect the environment," Governor Culver said in his endorsement.

The social needs of our state the Governor referred to — education, health care, and environmental concerns — can all be addressed when Congress takes a hard look at what the federal budget says about our priorities.

In the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 2008, more than half of the discretionary budget goes to the Pentagon — more than \$481 billion dollars, an 11 percent increase from the previous year. That figure does not include money spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it does reflect a large sum wasted on expensive, obsolete Cold War-era weapons and a needlessly large nuclear weapons stockpile. Cutting this waste — more than \$60 billion a year — could bring \$351 million a year back to Iowa, for our priorities.

Governor Culver says it's important for all Iowans to think about the federal budget.

"I hope you will consider joining the Sensible Priorities campaign in generating much-needed debate and action on how our federal tax dollars are being spent," said Governor Culver.

All Iowans should follow the governor's lead and question our nation's spending priorities. Iowans for Sensible Priorities is on the ground across the state educating all our citizens about the budget and calling on them to send a clear message to the presidential candidates that the status quo is not satisfactory. We must all encourage the people who want to be our next president to rise to the occasion by proposing a sensible federal budget that reflects the true will, and the true needs of all Americans. Taking the Caucus for Priorities pledge is the first step, and it's easy to do. Go to caucus4priorities.org to learn more.

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