

Congress sends budget to Bush

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. House of Representatives Wednesday accepted a Senate amendment that would add \$70 million in defense funding for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The House approved the defense measure and the underlying \$555 billion spending bill on a 272-142 vote, The Wall Street Journal reported. The Senate approved the measure 76-17 in a late-night session Tuesday. The House's approval of the emergency defense appropriation was a reversal of the Democratic leadership's position of refusing to continue funding the war in Iraq. The defense money was included in a massive appropriations package that incorporated 11 of 12 government spending bills for 2008, CNN said. The bill now goes to President George Bush for his consideration. The U.S. Senate approved a \$555 billion federal budget in line with Bush administration demands and the House revisits the measure Wednesday. Congress faced a Friday deadline to get a budget to president, as the government -- except for the Defense Department -- has been operating on an emergency basis since October. The White House has indicated Bush would sign the bill only if the Iraq funding was added, which the Democratic-led Senate did reluctantly, CNN said.

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