

## Cost of U.S. wars surpasses \$600 billion

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The cost of the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have surpassed \$600 billion, the Congressional Budget Office reported Wednesday. In the report seen in advance by USA Today, the CBO also upgraded its forecast of future costs, saying the cost of maintaining troops in the countries will reach \$2.4 trillion during the next 10 years. The CBO said that will mean \$8,000 for every person in the United States. A previous estimate of \$1.6 trillion was upgraded to factor in interest, as both wars are being fought with borrowed money, the report said. Prior to the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration estimated the Iraq war would cost no more than \$50 billion. Sean Kevelighan, a spokesman for the White House budget office, refused to give the newspaper a revised administration estimate and was critical of the CBO report. "Congress should stop playing politics with our troops by trying to artificially inflate war funding levels," he said.

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