

Did you know that, in 2011, the federal government spent seven times more on national defense than on all of our education programs – from Early Head Start through job training services – combined?

You probably have a good sense of what the federal government does: protecting national security, investing in education, supporting seniors through Social Security and Medicare, advancing medical research, and much more. But how many of your tax dollars support each activity?

You have a right to know what your tax dollars fund and, under our representative government, an opportunity to have a say on that spending.

Some people would have us believe that America could balance its budget solely by cutting back on programs such as foreign aid. Yet America's international development and humanitarian programs – which help many people and do a tremendous amount to burnish our nation's reputation around the globe – make up only 0.8 percent of your income tax bill. Education and job training programs are larger but still consume only 3.6 percent. National defense, on the other hand, consumes about 25 percent.

Want to learn more? Visit the White House's [2011 Federal Taxpayer Receipt](#) .

Delaware and Raritan Canal

Last weekend, my wife and I joined the almost annual Great Canal Walk along the D&R Canal towpath. The 70-mile Delaware and Raritan Canal – originally built in the 1830s to transport freight between Philadelphia and New York – is a popular destination for cycling, jogging, and walking.

The D&R Canal is designated part of the East Coast Greenway, a developing trail system connecting cities and towns from Maine to Key West. Already more than a quarter of the

Greenway's length runs on safe, traffic-free paths, and advocates are working with state and local governments to further expand the trail's reach.

For years the D&R towpath was interrupted in Trenton by a gap between Old Rose Street and Mulberry Street created during the construction of the Route 1 bypass many decades ago. But back in 2009, I worked with the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the D&R Canal Commission to close the gap. The new construction has been completed, helping to create an uninterrupted path for recreation and exploration in central New Jersey and as part of the East Coast Greenway.

An Update on Brazil

President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil paid a formal visit to the U.S. this week. You will be hearing much more about Brazil in coming years. Now the world's sixth-largest economy, Brazil is asserting herself on the world stage. Generally taking a non-military approach to international relations and an egalitarian, multi-cultural approach to domestic affairs, the country is applying its rich natural resources to build on its agricultural past and to move into a future of world trade in many different goods and services, as well as to elevate the living standards of her poor. The previous practices of deforestation and degradation of the Amazon and other natural areas have slowed greatly, and the government says it is committed to a future of exemplary environmental practices with small net carbon emissions, although the deep-water offshore petroleum discoveries may prove to be the undoing of that commitment.

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress