



## On Their Watch: How Republicans in Congress and the White House Have Failed to Address Key Concerns of Middle Class Families

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**“Battles fought and won by women [have] resulted in improvements in all aspects of American life.”**

**-- George W. Bush, March 20, 2001**

**Losing Ground:** *In 2001, President Bush heralded the battles fought and won by American women. But the truth is that, on the Republicans' watch, women have lost ground: Women's income has declined for the first time in a decade, and women's health has been compromised by the Administration's regular practice of letting conservative ideology - rather than science - dictate health policy, including bans on stem cell research. And though Republicans like to note the impact of women-owned small businesses on our economy, on their watch the federal debt has increased to record levels, imposing huge burdens on the next generation of Americans. Explain that to America's businesswomen!*

**The Bottom Line:** The Bush economy has been particularly hard on women. On the Republicans' watch, women's earnings have declined for the first time in a decade. And that's for the women who have been able to keep their jobs. According to one survey, nearly half of working women have either lost their jobs this past year, or know a close friend or family member who has. On their watch, the Federal budget went from a \$5.6 trillion projected ten-year budget surplus to a deficit of over \$400 billion just this year. And with over \$200 billion spent on the war in Iraq, Republicans in Congress have spent so much that by 2010, every child born in America will be carrying \$137,000 worth of debt.

**Weird Science:** On their watch, Republicans have put women's health at risk by suppressing science when it conflicts with conservative ideology. The Administration has distorted evidence to make abstinence-only sex education seem successful. The Food and Drug Administration has ignored the recommendations of its own advisory panel by ruling against allowing emergency contraception to be available over-the-counter. And despite scientific consensus to the contrary, government websites have suggested a link between abortion and breast cancer. The Bush Administration has even appointed a controversial, conservative activist - not a member of the scientific community - to chair the Reproductive Health Drugs Advisory Committee.

**Justice Not Served:** After decades of appointments of hard-line conservatives to the federal bench, the hard-fought rights of American women are very much at risk. To date, the courts have struck down anti-discrimination laws, part of the Violence Against Women Act, affirmative action programs, and other guarantees of equal opportunity. Federal courts have also limited workers' rights and weakened environmental protections, and nearly all of President Bush's nominees to the federal appeals courts pose a fundamental threat to privacy rights; many hold extreme or activist anti-choice records.

**Our View:** My colleagues and I have a very different view of how to address the important rights and concerns of women. Democrats are offering **a new partnership** with women - rewarding all work fairly and permitting working women to support their families; paying for our costs now, not passing debt on to our children; ensuring that our courts protect the rights of American women; and applying sound science, not right-wing ideology, to women's health issues. Read about it at: [HouseDemocrats.gov](http://HouseDemocrats.gov).

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