

**March 30, 2011**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) testified before the House Budget Committee today to lay out his priorities for the Fiscal Year 2012 budget. Congressman Altmire urged the Committee to write a budget that cuts wasteful spending, ensures America's veterans receive the support they deserve, effectively combats illegal immigration, and fosters American innovation.

**"We must take action to reduce our nation's budget deficit by finding ways to cut federal spending and maximize the value of every dollar," Congressman Altmire said. "As we do this, we should continue to honor our commitment to care for America's veterans and support initiatives that will enhance our national security and global competitiveness. I will work with members of both parties to write a budget that will strengthen our nation and put us on the path to a fiscally sustainable future."**

During his testimony, Congressman Altmire urged the House Budget Committee to accept the recommendations made in the veterans community's Independent Budget to effectively meet the needs of America's aging veterans population and those returning home from overseas operations. Specifically, Congressman Altmire highlighted the importance of continuing to fund initiatives dealing with suicide prevention, claims backlog reduction, care for female veterans, and reducing veterans homelessness.

Congressman Altmire also highlighted the need to fund homeland security initiatives that will protect our nation and help to stop illegal immigrants from entering our country. In particular, he asked the House Budget Committee to adopt the president's recommendation to provide funding to support 21,370 Border Patrol agents and to hire an additional 300 Customs and Border Protection Officers to improve passenger and cargo screening. Congressman Altmire also urged the Committee to provide funding to complete the U.S. – Mexico border fence.

To ensure that America can continue to lead the world in science and biomedical research, Congressman Altmire asked the House Budget Committee to provide adequate funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Doing this would help to create high-quality and high-paying jobs and strengthen America's comparative advantage in cutting edge fields.

