

## The Federal, State, and Local Price of the Drug War

**\$714 billion in 2010 – Federal budget deficit.** “The federal government incurred a budget deficit of \$714 billion in the first six months of fiscal year 2010 ...”

Source: Congressional Budget Office, “Monthly Budget Review” (April 2010).  
[http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/114xx/doc11434/March\\_2010\\_MBR.pdf](http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/114xx/doc11434/March_2010_MBR.pdf)

**\$48.7 billion in 2008 – Cost of drug prohibition.** “...legalizing drugs would save roughly \$48.7 billion per year in government expenditure on enforcement of prohibition. \$33.1 billion of this savings would accrue to state and local governments, while \$15.6 billion would accrue to the federal government. Approximately \$13.7 billion of the savings would result from legalization of marijuana, \$22.3 billion from legalization of cocaine and heroin, and \$12.8 from legalization of other drugs.”

Source: Miron, Jeffrey A., PhD, “The Budgetary Implications of Drug Prohibition” (February 2010).  
<http://www.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/miron/files/budget%202010%20Final.pdf>

**\$6.5 billion from 2000-2005 – Disrupt international drug trafficking.** “...during fiscal years 2000-2005, the United States provided about \$6.2 billion to support counternarcotics and related programs in the source and transit zones.”

Source: Government Accountability Office, “Drug Control: Agencies Need to Plan for Likely Decline in Drug Interdiction Assets, and Develop Better Performance Measures for Transit Zone Operations” (November 2005).  
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06200.pdf>

**\$6.2 billion in 2007 – Imprison drug offenders.** “...the average daily cost per state prison inmate per day in the US is \$67.55. State prisons held 253,300 inmates for drug offenses in 2007. That means states spent approximately \$17.1 million per day to imprison drug offenders, or \$6.2 billion per year.”

Source: American Correctional Association, “2006 Directory of Adult and Juvenile Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies and Probation and Parole Authorities” (2006). Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Prisoners in 2007” (December 2008).  
<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p07.pdf>

**\$3.4 billion in 2009 – Drug treatment and treatment research.** The US Office of National Drug Control Strategy estimated that the federal government will have spent \$3.244 billion on treatment and treatment research in 2008, an enacted \$3.415 billion in 2009, and a requested \$3.566 billion in 2010.

Source: Office of National Drug Control Policy, “National Drug Control Strategy: FY2010 Budget Summary” (2009).  
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/10budget/fy10budget.pdf>

**\$2 billion from 2005-2009 – Counternarcotics programs in Afghanistan.** “The U.S. Government has been involved in counternarcotics in Afghanistan for over 20 years through various agreements to suppress the production, distribution, and use of illicit drugs and has spent approximately \$2 billion on counternarcotics programs in the last 5 years.”

Source: United States Department of State, “Status of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Counternarcotics Programs in Afghanistan Performance Audit” (December 2009).  
<http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/134183.pdf>

**\$1.7 billion from 1998-2010 – Influence adolescents with the media.** “The 2008, 2009, and 2010 budgets for the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign were respectively \$60 million (Final), \$70 million (Enacted), and \$70 million (Requested). For all years since inception, Congressional appropriations for campaign total more than \$1.7 billion.”

Source: Office of National Drug Control Policy, “National Drug Control Strategy: FY2010 Budget Summary,” (2009).  
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/10budget/ondcp.pdf>

**\$268 million in 2007 – Aviation units in counternarcotics operations.** “Aviation units (190) reporting actual expenditures for 2007 spent approximately \$283 million to purchase, lease or finance, maintain, and fuel their aircraft (table 4). Total expenditures for all 201 aviation units were estimated at \$301 million in 2007.” Since 89% of all aviation units participate in “Counternarcotics operations,” total unit spending attributable on this pursuit would approximate \$268 million.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Aviation Units in Large Enforcement Agencies, 2007” (July 2009).  
<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/aullea07.pdf>

**\$74.8 million in 2007 – Installation of wiretap devices for drug investigations.** Applying the average cost of \$70,536 for installing federal wiretapping devices and \$41,154 for installing state devices to the respective 386 federal and 1,505 state wiretaps in 2008 -- and noting that 84% of wiretaps involve drug investigations -- brings the estimated 2008 spending for the installation of wiretap device for drug investigations to \$22.8 million by the federal government and \$52 million by the states.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts, “2008 Wiretap Report” (April 2007).  
<http://www.uscourts.gov/wiretap08/2008WTTText.pdf>

**\$1.4 billion in 2009 – Lost California revenue.** “... the revenue effect of the bill [AB 390 to impose a fee of fifty dollars per ounce on the retail sale of marijuana in California] is an estimated total annual revenue gain of \$1.4 billion, as follows: \$990 million from the proposed \$50 per ounce levy on retail sales of marijuana [and] \$392 million in sales tax revenues.”

Source: Waltz, Debra A., “State Board of Equalization Staff Legislative Bill Analysis,” California State Board of Equalization, California Assembly, Bill No: AB 390 (July 2009)  
<http://www.boe.ca.gov/legdiv/pdf/ab0390-1dw.pdf>