



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## 2015 #Egregious8 Tournament of Waste

Throughout the year, Sen. Flake has been highlighting examples of egregious and unnecessary federal spending through a series called PorkChops. With March Madness upon us, Sen. Flake has selected eight of those PorkChops to face off in his second annual Egregious Eight Tournament of Waste.

How it works: Sen. Flake will launch the entire first round (4 matchups) on Tuesday, March 24 during an appearance on Fox & Friends. Each matchup pits two examples of wasteful spending against each other. Viewers can vote for which wasteful spending item they believe to be the most egregious and unnecessary by simply tweeting their pick to [@JeffFlake](https://twitter.com/JeffFlake) using the hashtag #Egregious8. Voting will also take place on Sen. Flake's website at [flake.senate.gov](http://flake.senate.gov) and Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/senatorjeffflake](http://www.facebook.com/senatorjeffflake)

### Bridge-to-Nowhere Region

*(#1) USDA CashCrops vs. (#4) NEA Hunk-a-Bully*



- **USDA CashCrops**
  - **Funded by:** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - **Summary:** Taxpayer funded subsidies to pay the premiums for a little-known crop insurance add-on called [Harvest Price Option \(HPO\)](#). HPOs go above and beyond the safety net offered through traditional crop insurance - which allows farmers to collect insurance payouts to soften the blow in a bad crop year – by

actually allowing farmers to collect insurance payouts on missed profits in those crop years as well. It's like taking out a policy on your Ford Taurus, totaling it, and then getting a payout for a Cadillac.

- **Cost to taxpayers:** [\\$19 billion over 10 years](#)
- **One-liner:** **This taxpayer-funded golden goose is no good for the tax-paying gander**
- **Additional info:** Sen. Flake has introduced S. 463, the Harvest Price Subsidy Prohibition Act, to eliminate taxpayer-funded subsidies to pay the premiums for HPOs.



- **NEA Hunk-a-Bully**
  - **Funded by:** National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)
  - **Summary:** Taxpayer-funded support for the production of RoosevElvis (pronounced Rose-of-Elvis), a hallucinatory buddy-comedy centered around Theodore Roosevelt and Elvis Presley taking a cross-country road trip
  - **Cost to taxpayers:** \$10,000 in 2014
  - **One-Liner:** **What in San Juan Hill are our tax-dollars doing funding this hunk-a-hunk-a-burnin' waste?**
  - **Additional info:**
    - Tickets were priced between [\\$25-\\$30](#) during the most recent run of RoosevElvis (Jan. 2015)
    - Sen. Tom Coburn highlight Sen. Flake's find in his [2014 Wastebook](#)
    - One performance critic encourage New Yorkers to see the play in a post titled ["Go See the TEAM Waste Your Tax Dollars at PS 122's COIL Festival"](#)

*(#2) HHS Monkey Junkies vs. (#3) NSF Porknados*



- **HHS Monkey Junkies**

- **Funded by:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Summary:** Series of taxpayer-funded studies to determine if [stressed-out monkeys](#) with access to cocaine are [vulnerable to cocaine abuse](#)
- **Cost to taxpayers:** [\\$1.4 million](#) since 2014
- **One-Liner:** Just say no to drugs for monkeys
- **Additional info:**
  - Since 2007, Wake Forest University has received more than [\\$8 million](#) to study cocaine-use in monkeys



- **NSF Porknados**

- **Funded by:** National Science Foundation (NSF)
- **Summary:** Ongoing taxpayer-funded project at Iowa State University (aka the Cyclones) to give [CT scans to sharks and rays](#) for the purpose of creating 3-D virtual skeletons
- **Cost to taxpayers:** [\\$150,000](#) since 2010
- **One-Liner:** I can think of several reasons to not fund Cyclones with sharks

## Shrimp-on-a-Treadmill Region

(#1) EPA Houdinis vs. (#4) HUD E-Cig Aficionados



- **EPA Houdinis**
  - **Funded by:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - **Summary:** Taxpayer dollars used to pay the salaries of eight [EPA employees who were on a total of 21,000 hours of administrative leave](#)
  - **Taxpayer cost:** [\\$1.1 million](#) between 2010 and 2014
  - **One-Liner:** TBD
  - **Additional info:**
    - Highlighted in Sen. Flake's [Science of Splurging](#) report on wasteful spending at the EPA
    - According to the EPA OIG, the EPA leave manual identifies a variety of circumstances where administrative leave can be authorized, including absence for voting, participation in funeral ceremonies, blood donations, sitting for examinations, and hazardous weather conditions. The leave manual also provides that one authorized use of administrative leave is when an employee's removal or indefinite suspension is proposed, and the employee's continued presence at the work site during the notice period would constitute a threat to public property or the health and safety of coworkers or the public.
    - EPA defended itself in a memo, highlighted in [The Hill](#), stating that only three EPA employees had more than a year of administrative leave during the four-year period studied. For two of them, the leave was not contiguous. EPA added that six of the eight employees were no longer on

leave - due to either leaving the agency or coming back to work - when  
OIG released its report



- **HUD E-Cig Aficionados**
  - **Funded by:** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
  - **Summary:** Taxpayer-funded [renovation](#) of a [manufacturing facility](#) for a [joint start-up venture](#) between Raleigh-based [Alliance One Specialty Products](#) and Brazil-based [IOTO USA](#) to produce flavoring for e-cigarettes
  - **Taxpayer cost:** [\\$210,000](#) in 2014
  - **One-Liner:** Funds shouldn't come to where the flavor is

*(#2) FHWA Titanic Wastes vs. G.I. Snow Dogs*



- **FHWA Titanic Wastes**
  - **Funded by:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- **Summary:** Raid of the taxpayer-funded [federal-aid highway fund](#) for the [renovation](#) of a [historic towboat](#) at the Ohio River Museum
- **Taxpayer Cost:** [\\$715,000](#) since 2014
- **One-Liner:** You should have never let go of those funds FHWA, never let go.
- **Additional info:**
  - Quote from news coverage of the towboat's renovation: "It's really gratifying that the Ohio Department of Transportation had this funding available through the Federal Government and the state of Ohio had 20 percent match for the 80 percent of the federal funds that allowed this to even happen -- because the boat is so expensive to maintain." – [Fred Smith, Ohio History Connection](#)
  - [The Hill: The next looming funding shutdown: Highway programs \(March 13, 2015\)](#)



- **G.I SnowDogs**
  - **Funded by:** Department of Defense
  - **Summary:** Taxpayer funding for the Alaska National Guard to be the [lead sponsor](#) of the [Iron Dog Snowmobile Race](#)
  - **Taxpayer Cost:** [\\$400,000](#) since 2014
  - **One-liner:** DOD wastes too mush
  - **Additional info:**
    - 2015 Iron Dog awarded a record [\\$254,648](#) in cash and prizes
    - The Alaska National Guard has been the Iron Dog lead sponsor for [5 years](#)