








A FIVE-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT: HOUSE DEMOCRATS ARE MOVING AMERICA IN A NEW DIRECTION

DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY	
GROWING THE ECONOMY	
PROTECTING & STRENGTHENING CHILDREN & FAMILIES	
PRESERVING OUR PLANET	
ENSURING OUR GOVERNMENT IS ACCOUNTABLE & EFFICIENT	



NATIONAL SECURITY * ECONOMY * FAMILIES * ENVIRONMENT * ACCOUNTABILITY

DEMOCRATS KEEP UP STEADY PACE OF SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION

After only five months of the 110th Congress, the new Democratic majority in the House is passing important legislation that addresses the key priorities of the American people and moves our nation in a new direction. House Democrats have passed significant legislation that will defend our country, grow the economy, protect our children and strengthen families, preserve our planet, and make our government accountable and efficient.



DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY



House Democrats are committed to strengthening our national security, and have passed numerous pieces of legislation to that end. From offering a responsible plan to change course in Iraq, to ensuring the best health care and treatment for our troops and veterans, to strengthening the safety of public transportation, defending our country is the highest priority for House Democrats.

- **Iraq Supplemental Spending Bill:** President Bush insisted on a spending bill with “no strings attached,” but this legislation provides for a new direction in Iraq by tying economic aid to 18 benchmarks on political, security, and economic progress. This was signed by the President on Friday, May 25th.
- **U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans’ Health and Iraq Accountability Act:** Supports our troops and veterans, holds the President and the Iraqi government accountable to the President’s own benchmarks for progress, and refocuses our investments on the war on terror. The President vetoed this legislation, defying the will of the American people.
- **9/11 Commission Recommendations:** The House very first bill – H.R. 1 – makes Americans safer by implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Many of these recommendations, which were sent to Congress in 2004, were not passed by the Republican-controlled Congress.
- **Iraq Resolution:** Expresses support for the troops and opposes the President’s escalation of the war in Iraq.

- **National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008:** Makes military readiness a top priority so that our nation is fully prepared to face today's *and* tomorrow's threats and challenges, and focuses on improving health care, benefits, and pay for our troops.
- **Intelligence Authorization for Fiscal Year 2008:** Authorizes the largest amount of funding in history for 16 U.S. intelligence agencies and intelligence-related activities for the U.S. government.
- **Rail and Public Transportation Security Act of 2007:** Will improve the security of railroads, public transportation, and over-the-road buses in the United States.
- **Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008:** Keeps America safe by increasing funding for homeland security supporting first responders, increasing contractor accountability, and strengthening and streamlining the Department of Homeland Security.
- **Wounded Warrior Assistance Act of 2007:** In response to the scandal at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, this bill includes measures to ensure our troops and veterans receive quality care.
- **Memorial Day Veterans Package:** Consists of seven bills that expand veterans' health care and benefits, including measures pertaining to traumatic brain injuries and rehabilitation.
- **Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment:** Increases the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities.
- **National Security FIRST Act:** Implements changes to the CFIUS review process in response to the Dubai ports scandal, which will strengthen national security.
- **Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act:** Improves compensation benefits for veterans in certain cases of impairment of vision involving both eyes.
- **Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention:** Directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans.



GROWING THE ECONOMY



House Democrats are focused on improving our economy and under our “Innovation Agenda” we have passed several pieces of legislation that will keep America competitive in the 21st century global economy, through increased funding for math and science education and cutting-edge research. House Democrats have also supported small businesses and fair labor practices.

- **Fighting for Fairness and Fair Pay:** By a wide margin, the House passed the first increase in the minimum wage in almost a decade, raising the wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25. This measure was included in the Iraq funding bill and was signed by the President.
- **Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for FY08:** Invests in America’s priorities in a fiscally responsible way, with more investment in health care for our children, care for our soldiers and veterans, education for a 21st century workforce and a growing economy, energy independence and global warming, while extending middle-class tax cuts.
- **Sowing the Seeds Through Science and Engineering Research Act:** Will provide support to young researchers, who are the source of some of the most innovative research today.
- **10,000 Teachers, 10 Million Minds Science and Math Scholarship Act:** Will increase the number of qualified math and science teachers through education scholarships.
- **Employee Free Choice Act:** Establishes fairness in the workplace by providing America’s workers with a free choice to bargain for better wages, benefits, and work conditions.
- **Shareholder Vote on Executive Compensation Act:** Will empower shareholders to express their views on their company’s executive compensation practices.
- **Taxpayer Protection Act:** Will increase IRS outreach to provide taxpayers with stronger protections from identity theft and tax fraud.

- **Small Business Tax Relief:** Assists business most affected by an increase in the minimum wage.
- **Small Business Fairness in Contracting Act:** Takes steps to create a fair and open federal contracting system so that all businesses – including small businesses – have a fair shot at winning a federal contract.
- **Small Business Lending Improvements Act of 2007:** Will make capital more accessible for small businesses, which often spur technological innovation.
- **Joint Funding Resolution:** Ensured that the government remained open and providing services to the American people after the Republicans failed to enact 9 of 11 appropriations bills. The measure was fiscally responsible, adhering to the spending limit Republicans passed last year and eliminating earmarks, while investing in critical needs including: meeting new needs in healthcare; increasing funding for scientific research; and increasing funding for education and health care programs to keep up with inflation, a promise the Republican leadership had made but never delivered.
- **National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2007:** Authorizes \$21 billion in funding over three years for the National Science Foundation, including funding for math and science education.
- **Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act of 2007:** Will fully reauthorize the National Institutes of Standards and Technology for the first time in more than 15 years – an organization that has enabled breakthrough technologies and improved our safety and quality of life.



PROTECTING AND STRENGTHENING OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



House Democrats are working to keep communities safe, improve education, and increase funding for programs that promote healthy practices.

- **Making College More Affordable:** With a significant amount of Republican support, the House passed the College Student Relief Act, which will make college more affordable and accessible by cutting interest rates in half on certain student loans.
- **Giving Hope to Americans With Diseases:** The House voted to improve health care by expanding federal funding for life-saving embryonic stem cell research.
- **COPS Improvements Act of 2007:** Will put 50,000 additional police officers on the streets over the next six years, and provides funds for COPS technology grants and for hiring community prosecutors.
- **Student Loan Sunshine Act:** Will clean up the relationships between student lenders and colleges.
- **Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007:** Gives state and local law enforcement the tools and resources they need to prevent and prosecute hate crimes, and closes the gaps in federal law to help combat hate crimes committed against persons because of their race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.
- **Improving Head Start Act of 2007:** Will provide 10,000 more children with access to Head Start services.
- **Federal Housing Finance Reform Act:** Will reform oversight of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Home Loan Banks and create a new fund to promote affordable housing in the Gulf Coast and nationwide.
- **Trauma Care Systems Planning and Development Act of 2007:** Will provide grants to improve access to and development of trauma care systems.

- **Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act:** Will strengthen education, prevention, and treatment programs.
- **National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act of 2007:** Amends the Public Health Service Act to provide waivers relating to grants for preventive health measures with respect to breast and cervical cancers.
- **Making Health Care More Affordable:** As health care costs continue to rise, the House voted to require the Secretary of HHS to negotiate for lower prescription drug costs.
- **Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007:** Clarifies that territories and Indian tribes are eligible to receive grants for confronting the use of methamphetamine.
- **Living Kidney Organ Donation Act:** Will save thousands of lives by speeding the kidney donation process.
- **Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007:** Provides critical funding to help law enforcement locate and shut down meth labs, and supports research to determine the best way to clean up old labs and eliminate the chemicals that can harm our environment and health.



PRESERVING OUR PLANET



With gas prices on the rise heading into the summer driving season, the need for energy independence is more clear than ever. House Democrats are committed to passing legislation that moves us closer to this goal. Efforts are also concentrated on addressing global warming and climate change.

- **Increasing America's Energy Independence, Tackling Global Warming:** As a step on the path to energy independence, the House passed the CLEAN Energy Act, which will roll back taxpayer subsidies for big oil companies and increase investment in renewable energy.
- **Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming:** Panel created to inform Congress and the public on energy independence and climate change as well as develop policy initiatives and assure that progress is made toward reducing our dependence on foreign oil.
- **Dozens of hearings** on energy independence, global warming, and Republican and Bush Administration efforts to influence or distort the science on climate change.
- **Federal Price Gouging Prevention Act:** Combats price gouging by investigating and punishing those who artificially inflate the price of gasoline.
- **No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act (NOPEC):** Authorizes the Justice Department to take legal action against OPEC state-controlled entities that participate in conspiracies to fix the price of oil.
- **Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act:** With the support of 186 Republicans, this bill continues Democrats' efforts to put America on a new energy path by encouraging research and development of markets for biofuels.
- **Water Resources Development Act:** Authorizes the Army Corps of Engineers to conduct water resources studies and undertake projects for flood control, inland navigation, shoreline protection, and environmental restoration.

- **Energy Technology Transfer Act:** Authorizes funding for centers to demonstrate the commercial application of advanced energy technologies.
- **Water Quality Financing Act:** Reauthorizes the Clean Water State Revolving Fund – the primary source of federal funding for clean water - to help states and local communities build and improve wastewater treatment facilities.
- **Healthy Communities Water Supply Act:** Will increase the usable water supply by encouraging innovation in water reclamation, reuse, and conservation.
- **Water Quality Investment Act:** Will aid cities and states in preventing dangerous sewer overflows that pose public health hazards and impair the environment.



ENSURING OUR GOVERNMENT IS ACCOUNTABLE AND EFFICIENT



“For most of its first six years, the Bush administration operated with a Republican-controlled Congress that asked few questions as the White House sought to boost the authority of the executive branch.”

- The Baltimore Sun, 5/21/07

During the 2006 campaign, Democrats pledged to clean up Washington and make government more accountable, transparent, and efficient. Beyond the ethics reforms adopted as the 110th Congress’ first order of business, Democrats have continued to uphold their pledge by passing several bills that work to ensure that our government is open and accountable.

- **Lobbying Reform:** The House passed two bills that will return transparency, accountability, and honesty to government, and that will address the Republicans’ “culture of corruption.” One bill expands and strengthens lobbying disclosure requirements, and the other makes the practice of bundling more transparent.
- **Cleaning Up Washington:** As the first order of business, the House enacted the most sweeping ethics reforms since Watergate, and made earmarks more transparent.
- **Restoring Fiscal Responsibility:** The House restored pay-as-you-go budget rules prohibiting deficit spending, which brought record surpluses in the 1990’s but were allowed to expire in 2002.
- **Accountability in Contracting:** Helps end waste in federal contracting by limiting how long no-bid contracts can last, requires agencies to minimize the use of no-bid contracts, and directs agencies to justify any such contracts awarded.
- **Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2007:** Gives whistleblower protections to federal workers who specialize in national security issues as well as federal contract workers.
- **Presidential Library Donation Reform Act of 2007:** Requires the disclosure of donors to presidential libraries.

- **Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2007:** Nullifies a 2001 presidential executive order and restores public access to presidential records.
- **Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 2007:** Will increase public access to government information by strengthening FOIA.
- **District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act:** Will give the residents of the District of Columbia a voting representative in the House of Representatives after more than 200 years of disenfranchisement.
- **RECOVER Act:** Will help small businesses on the Gulf Coast through grants, and requires the Small Business Administration to develop a written disaster response plan.
- **Katrina Housing Tax Relief Act of 2007:** Modifies legislation passed in 2005 to encourage and ease rebuilding in the Gulf region.
- **Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007:** Provides more flexibility and funding for housing and help for those who need housing assistance more quickly and effectively.
- **U.S. Attorneys:** Limits the term of an interim U.S. Attorney appointed by the Attorney General to 120 days.
- **Improving House Page Board Oversight:** Reforms the page board to strengthen its ability to protect pages in light of the Mark Foley scandal.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS HOLD GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE, CONDUCT IMPORTANT OVERSIGHT

For the past six years, Congress abdicated its Constitutional responsibility to conduct oversight of the executive branch, allowing the Bush Administration to develop and implement disastrous policies. Now that Democrats are in control, oversight is finally being conducted on important issues, such as the war in Iraq and global warming. Recent scandals in the Justice Department and student loan programs, and the lack of accountability for the war in Iraq demonstrate the clear need for oversight. Oversight is part of Democrats' efforts to bring real change to Washington.

OVERSIGHT OVERVIEW:

DEMOCRATS HOLD DOZENS OF HEARINGS:

- **208:** Full committee oversight hearings already held in the 110th Congress, as of Friday, May 18th
- **194:** Number of House and Senate oversight hearings on Iraq already held in the 110th Congress, through May 18th (includes full committee and subcommittee hearings)

DEMOCRATS ADDRESS TOP ISSUES:

- Student Loan Scandal
- Global Climate Change
- Firings of 8 U.S. Attorneys
- Hurricane Katrina
- Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Global War on Terror
- Veterans – Walter Reed Army Medical Center scandal, poor conditions at VA Hospitals

Democrats' oversight efforts have produced real results:

- U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act
- Wounded Warrior Assistance Act
- U.S. Attorneys Bill
- Student Loan Sunshine Act
- Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act
- Katrina Housing Tax Relief Act
- Recover Act

In the months ahead, House Democrats will continue to focus on the American people's priorities.

**THE DO-NOTHING REPUBLICAN CONGRESS
VS.
THE NEW DIRECTION
DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS**

	107th Congress (January – May, 2001)	108th Congress (January – May, 2003)	Do-Nothing Republican Congress (January – May, 2005)	New Direction Democratic Congress (January – May, 2007)
Roll Call Votes	149	226	227	425
Suspension Bills	49	81	58	120
Bills Passed Under a Rule	14	17	19	43
Days in Session	54	55	56	74

**All numbers from the House Office of the Clerk*