



## **A SEVEN-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT: HOUSE DEMOCRATS ARE MOVING AMERICA IN A NEW DIRECTION**

*“This quarter is looking very good for [Democrats]. They can send their members home crowing about their accomplishments, and they've done it in a bipartisan way, which is exactly what they promised to do.”*

*- Ray LaHood (R-IL),  
Washington Post, 7/26/07*

### **DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY**



### **RESTORING THE AMERICAN DREAM**



### **ACHIEVING ENERGY INDEPENDENCE**



*Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 8/6/07*

# DEMOCRATS ARE WORKING HARD...

*“Democratic leaders, seven months in power, have set an ambitious agenda for themselves for the next 10 days.” – AP, 7/26/07*

This week, House Democrats will bring an impressive list of major legislation to the floor that will continue the progress we've made over the past seven months for the American people.

➤ **Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act:**

Improves the successful and bipartisan State Children's Health Insurance Program to cover 5 million children who are already eligible for the program but are not yet enrolled, bringing the total number of children covered to 11 million. This bill will also strengthen Medicare by allowing seniors to continue to see the doctor of their choice, and eliminating co-payments and deductibles for seniors for preventative benefits, among other provisions.

➤ **Energy Independence Act:**

Puts our nation on the path to energy independence, addresses global warming, and protects our environment. This bill will promote the use of homegrown renewable fuels and the production of vehicles that run on them; support cutting-edge research and the development of new technologies that will bring down energy costs and help create new jobs; and strengthen our national security.

➤ **Lobbying Reform:**

Follows through on Democrats' promise to change the way business is done in Washington. This bill will require new transparency for lobbyist bundling and political campaign activity, greater transparency in earmarking and the legislative process, end the K-Street project, ban gifts and privately funded travel from lobbyists, restrict corporate flights, strengthen revolving door restrictions, and expand public disclosure of lobbyist activities.

➤ **Defense Appropriations:**

Keeps our commitments to our troops and their families and prepares our forces to meet future needs. This bill addresses equipment shortfalls, ensures troops and their families have the pay, health care, and housing they deserve, and supports plans to increase the size of the Army and Marine Corps. Democrats also will continue to fight to change direction in Iraq.

➤ **Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Appropriations:**

Reinvests in rural America, protects public health, improves nutrition to the most vulnerable populations, invests in food safety, doubles funding for renewable energy loans, and supports conservation efforts.

➤ With the completion of these two appropriations bills this week, House Democrats will have completed all 12 spending bills.

➤ **The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2007:**

Rectifies a Supreme Court decision that makes it harder for workers to pursue pay discrimination claims by restoring the longstanding interpretation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to prevent unlawful employment discrimination.

# ...AND GETTING THINGS DONE

Since January, the new Democratic House Majority of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress has passed significant legislation that addresses the priorities of the American people and moves our nation in a new direction. House Democrats are making real progress on important issues in order to defend our country, restore the American dream, and achieve energy independence.



## DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY



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*House Democrats believe our highest duty is to strengthen our national security and defend our country. Our first bill, implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, is on its way to becoming law, and we continue to push for a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq. From ensuring the best health care for our troops and veterans, to rebuilding our military readiness, to strengthening the safety of public transportation, House Democrats are effectively making America safer.*

- **9/11 Commission Recommendations:** The House's very first bill – H.R. 1 – makes Americans safer by implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Many of these bipartisan recommendations, which were sent to Congress in 2004, were ignored by the Republican-controlled Congress. President Bush is expected to sign this legislation into law soon.
- **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. The first report required by this bill was released on July 15<sup>th</sup>, and forced the Administration to detail how progress was and was not being made in Iraq.
- **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.
- **Homeland Security Appropriations:** Provides first responders with training and equipment, increases security for American air travelers by providing for explosive detection systems at airports and doubling the amount of cargo screened on passenger aircraft, increases transit security on trains and ferries, and increases port security.
- **Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations:** Fulfills the promise America has made to our veterans by making the largest investment in the Department of

Veterans Affairs in its history. This funding will enable the VA to provide adequate health care for our veterans.

- **State and Foreign Operations Appropriations:** Among other things, continues efforts to stop the genocide in Darfur by directing funds to address the crisis there, and makes significant investments in global health efforts.
- **National Security FIRST Act:** Implements changes to the review process for foreign investments in the United States in response to the Dubai ports scandal, which will strengthen national security.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.



# RESTORING THE AMERICAN DREAM



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*House Democrats are fighting for the interests of the American people and working to ensure that all of us have a fair shot at the American Dream. Democrats are working to make college more affordable, make communities safer, and keep America competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century's global economy. Democrats are also changing the way business is done in Washington by restoring fiscal responsibility and the highest ethical standards.*

## ECONOMY/WORKER FAIRNESS

- **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.
- **Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act:** Gives our brave public safety officers the same rights as other Americans to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and working conditions.
- **Innovation Agenda:** The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competitiveness Act will strengthen America's competitiveness in today's global economy. Provisions include supporting young researchers, who are the source of some of the most innovative research today; increasing the number of qualified math and science teachers through education scholarships; and increasing investment in the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Standards and Technology.
- **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 working 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.

## EDUCATION

- **Making College More Affordable:** The College Cost Reduction Act is the largest single investment in college aid since the 1944 GI Bill. This bill will make college more affordable for millions of students by increasing the maximum Pell Grant by at least \$500 and by cutting interest in half on subsidized student loans over the next five years. It also continues Democrats' commitment to fiscal responsibility by including \$750 million in federal deficit reduction.
- **Student Loan Sunshine Act:** Will clean up the relationships between student lenders and colleges in response to a wide-spread scandal.
- **Improving Head Start Act of 2007:** Will provide 10,000 more children with access to Head Start services.

## HEALTH CARE

- **Giving Hope to Americans with Diseases:** The House voted to improve health care by expanding federal funding for life-saving embryonic stem cell research, a position supported by two-thirds of Americans. However, defying the will of the people, the President vetoed this bill.
- **Making Health Care More Affordable:** As health care costs continue to rise, the House voted to require the Secretary of HHS to negotiate lower prescription drug costs.
- **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.
- **Improving Drug Safety:** FDA Improvements/Improving Drug Safety contains the most sweeping drug safety provisions in years, creating a new FDA program to monitor the safety of drugs after they are on the market.
- **Living Kidney Organ Donation Act:** Will save thousands of lives by speeding the kidney donation process.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- **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.

- **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.
- **National Instant Criminal Background Check Improvement Act:** Improves the accuracy of the system and will enforce provisions of the 1968 Gun Control Act, including prohibiting individuals who have been adjudicated to be mentally ill from possessing a firearm.

### **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- **Restoring Fiscal Responsibility:** The House restored pay-as-you-go budget rules that prohibit deficit spending. PAYGO rules brought record surpluses in the 1990's but were allowed to expire in 2002.
- **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 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce and a growing economy, energy independence and global warming, while extending middle-class tax cuts.
- **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.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

- **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.
- **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.



## OVERSIGHT/ETHICS

- **Cleaning Up Washington:** As the first order of business, the House enacted the most sweeping ethics reforms since Watergate, and made earmarks more transparent.
- **U.S. Attorneys:** Limits the term of an interim U.S. Attorney appointed by the Attorney General to 120 days.
- **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.
- **Barring Spouses from Campaign Payrolls:** Prohibits federal office holders and candidates from employing their spouses in their campaign and requires the disclosure of all other immediate family members who are employed by their campaign.
- **Improving House Page Board Oversight:** Reforms the page board to strengthen its ability to protect pages in light of the Mark Foley scandal.

## KATRINA RECOVERY

- **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.



## APPROPRIATIONS

- **Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations:** Reinvests in priorities that are essential to our nation's future, including making modest investments to ensure that all Americans have access to a good education and quality health care.
- **Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations:** Provides resources for local communities to keep their streets safe, such as the successful COPS Program, and makes key investments to keep our nation on the cutting edge of science and technology.
- **Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations:** Invests in transit projects in urban areas to reduce commute times and in air service to rural communities, and includes investments in housing programs for the elderly and disabled.
- **Financial Services Appropriations:** Will help states implement the Help America Vote Act, close the tax gap, and increase efforts to cut off funding to terrorists.

## OTHER

- **Farm Bill:** This reform bill will end taxpayer subsidies for millionaires and will instead direct assistance to those who truly deserve and need it most. This bill also increases investments in nutrition, conservation, renewable energy, and rural development.
- **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.
- **Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act:** Designed to combat the numerous efforts to deceive or intimidate voters to keep them away from the polls by making voter deception a federal crime and increasing the penalties for voter intimidation.
- **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.
- **Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007:** Clarifies that territories and Indian tribes are eligible to receive grants for confronting the abuse of methamphetamine.
- **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.

**HOUSE DEMOCRATS HOLD GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE,  
THROUGH STRONG OVERSIGHT:**

**DEMOCRATS HOLD HUNDREDS OF HEARINGS:**

- 578: Oversight hearings by the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress (January – July 26, 2007)
- 433: Oversight hearings by the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress (January – July, 2005)  
*\*both counts include full and subcommittee oversight hearings*

**DEMOCRATS ADDRESS TOP ISSUES:**

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

**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



# ACHIEVING ENERGY INDEPENDENCE



*Achieving energy independence is crucial to our economic, environmental, and national security. House Democrats are committed to passing legislation that moves us closer to this goal, while also 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 \$14 billion in 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.
- **Energy and Water Appropriations:** Addresses the issues of energy independence and global warming by providing vital funding for research into climate change and energy efficiency and investing in renewable energy programs.
- **Interior and Environment Appropriations:** Invests in important research to make our nation energy independent and combat global warming, as well as investing in clean air and water programs.
- **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:** Continues Democrats' efforts to put America on a new energy path by encouraging research and development of markets for biofuels.
- **Energy Technology Transfer Act:** Authorizes funding for centers to demonstrate the commercial application of advanced energy technologies.

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

	<b>107<sup>th</sup> Congress (January – August, 2001)</b>	<b>108<sup>th</sup> Congress (January – August, 2003)</b>	<b>Do-Nothing Republican Congress (January – August, 2005)</b>	<b>New Direction Democratic Congress (January – August, 2007)</b>
<b>Roll Call Votes</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>846</b>
<b>Suspension Bills</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Bills Passed Under a Rule</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Days in Session</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>111</b>

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