

# **NEW CONGRESS MAKES SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS FIRST YEAR**

## **BRINGING AN END TO THE IRAQ WAR**

The U.S. House passed legislation to provide our troops with the equipment they need, require Iraqis to take control of their country and establish a date for withdrawal from Iraq. The House also passed two bills that were the first to exercise any level of oversight and accountability on the president's Iraq war. The bills tied economic aid to 18 benchmarks on political, security, and economic progress and required the president to develop and report to Congress a comprehensive troop redeployment strategy. (*HR 1591; HR 2206; HR 2956; HR 3087*)

## **MAKING AMERICA SAFER**

The U.S. House passed legislation to implement the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, including improvements in border security, port security, and aviation security. This legislation marked a long-awaited first step toward making Americans safer.

The House authored defense spending bills to include a greater focus on equipment shortfalls, training, troop pay, health care, and housing. These new priorities contribute to our military being fully prepared to face the threats and challenges of today and tomorrow. (*HR 1; HR 3222; HR 1585*)

## **BUILDING A MORE ENERGY SECURE FUTURE**

The U.S. House passed legislation to reduce our dependence on foreign oil by increasing investments in homegrown renewable and alternatives energies and raising gas mileage standards for the first time in 32 years. The House also increased funds for climate change research and held dozens of oversight hearings to ensure the science on climate change is not distorted. (*HR 6; HR 2641; HR 2643*)

## **INCREASING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE**

The U.S. House twice passed legislation to improve and expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program, which provides uninsured children with access to affordable health care. The House also increased life-saving stem cell research and granted the federal government the authority to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices for seniors. (*HR 976; HR 3963; S 5; HR 4*)

## **INVESTING IN THE AMERICAN ECONOMY & THE AMERICAN WORKER**

As part of the new Congress' Innovation Agenda, the U.S. House passed several pieces of legislation to invest in an educated, skilled workforce in science, math, engineering and information technology. Legislation also continued successful private-public partnerships that combine federal tax dollars with private investments to help businesses and the research community maintain their economic edge in the global economy. (*HR 362; HR 363; HR 1867; HR 1868*)

## **SPENDING TAX-PAYER DOLLARS MORE RESPONSIBLY**

The U.S. House restored pay-as-you-go budget rules that prohibit deficit spending. These rules require that the federal government live within its means. PAYGO rules brought record surpluses in the 1990's but were allowed to expire in 2002. (*HRES 6*)

## **INCREASING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

The U.S. House passed lobbying reform legislation that will help end the tight-knit relationship between lobbyists and lawmakers. The bills increased the disclosure requirements of lobbyists' contributions to lawmakers, established an online public database of lobbyist disclosure information, and banned gifts and privately-funded travel.

The House also held hundreds of oversight hearings open to the public this year, many more than the previous Congress. Oversight hearings provide the public the opportunity to witness policy discussions about federal efforts. Laws protecting federal whistleblowers from retaliation were strengthened and the Freedom of Information Act was amended to allow for more timely disclosure of government documents to the public. (*S 1; HRES 6; HR 985; HR 2488*)

## **RESTORING INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION**

The U.S. House passed the single largest increase in college aid since the 1944 GI Bill, helping millions of students and families pay for college – and doing so at no new cost to taxpayers. The legislation increased college financial aid by about \$18.25 and paid for itself by reducing excessive federal subsidies paid to lenders in the college loan industry by \$19 billion.

The House passed legislation to reauthorize and amend Head Start, a federal program that has shown to improve the lives of disadvantaged kids and to close the achievement gap. The legislation increased funding to enroll more kids and includes strong accountability measures to ensure programs are succeeding. (*HR 2669; HR 1429*)

## **TAKING CARE OF OUR NATION'S VETERANS**

The U.S. House passed legislation to ensure our wounded soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan receive the health care they need and deserve. This legislation responded to the unacceptable living conditions and bureaucratic hassles soldiers had been experiencing at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and other military health care facilities around the country. It also ensures that soldiers experience a seamless transition from active duty service to Department of Veterans' Affairs programs. (*HR 1538*)

## **MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER**

Methamphetamine abuse and production, unlike other drug epidemics, leaves toxic waste sites wherever it has been made. The U.S. House passed legislation to develop standards for cleaning up homes used as methamphetamine labs. This bill will provide local law enforcement officers with the additional information needed to protect the health of children and current and future residents and neighbors. (*HR 365*)

The House passed 12 bills to better protect children. These bills make certain that our children are provided internet safety education and parents receive greater notification of product recalls, including those for toys, food and medicines. (*HR 814; HR 1699; HR 2474; HR 1721; HR 3845; HR 4136; HR 3461; HR 4134; HR 719; HR 4120; HR 3791; HR 2517*)