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THE 110TH CONGRESS:  
**A NEW DIRECTION  
FOR AMERICA**

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*“The American people have entrusted us with their hopes and aspirations for themselves, for their families, and for their future. We will honor that trust.”*

*- Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
November 8, 2006*





# A NEW DIRECTION FOR AMERICA

One year ago, the American people demanded a New Direction: to make America safer, to help restore the American dream, and to restore accountability and fiscal responsibility to the people's government.

The 110th Congress brought new faces, new energy and a steadfast commitment to a New Direction. In January, the first woman Speaker of the House in American history gavelled open the Congress in honor of all of America's children. Passage of the Six for '06 agenda, within the first 100 hours and with broad bipartisan support, signaled change and a new focus on American priorities.

Today, under Democratic leadership, the Congress is focused on a New Direction that makes American families and children, and our future generations, our highest priority. With faith in the future, we have begun to build a remarkable record of progress.

## MAKING AMERICA SAFER

- 9/11 Commission Recommendations to Protect America from Terrorism
- Largest Veterans' Health Care Funding Increase in History
- Energy Security and Reducing Global Warming
- Holding the Administration Accountable For the War in Iraq

## RESTORING THE AMERICAN DREAM

- Largest College Aid Expansion Since the GI Bill in 1944
- First Increase in the Minimum Wage in a Decade
- Innovation Agenda Promoting 21st Century Jobs in a Global Economy
- Aid to the Gulf Coast Recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
- Health Care for 10 Million Children

## RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY

- Widely-acclaimed Landmark Lobby and Ethics Reform
- Pay-as-you-go Budget Discipline - No New Deficit Spending

The House of Representatives is building consensus. More than two-thirds of major legislation has passed with significant support from both parties. We must strive to find common ground where we can. Where we cannot, we will stand our ground.

Signed Into Law

Passed House

# MAKING AMERICA SAFER

## 9-11 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The first order of business for the New Direction Congress, making America safer, was passage of H.R. 1, finally implementing the recommendations of the independent 9/11 Commission. While the Administration's own National Intelligence Estimate conceded the war in Iraq made us less safe from terrorism, the 9/11 legislation was the long overdue, smart approach to ensuring homeland security.

Nearly six years after the terrorist attacks of September 11th, the recommendations of the bipartisan report were passed by the New Direction Congress and signed into law:

- ★ requiring 100% screening of air cargo;
- ★ requiring 100% screening of cargo containers before they reach U.S. soil;
- ★ basing anti-terrorism funding to cities and states on risk, not political boundaries;
- ★ improving emergency communications among first responders;
- ★ strengthening information sharing with local law enforcement to help prevent potential terrorist attacks; and
- ★ taking aggressive steps to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

## LARGEST VETERANS' HEALTH CARE FUNDING INCREASE IN HISTORY

The House and Senate have passed the largest single increase in funding for veterans' health care in the 77-year history of the Veterans Administration. The historic investment exceeded the President's request and adds to the \$5.2 billion for veterans added by the new Congress earlier this year to strengthen health care for more than five million veterans. Our Wounded Warriors Act sets forth a series of improvements in care as well.

The legislation is strongly supported by the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Military Officers Association of America, AMVETS and other groups, who have labeled the effort "a major victory" and an "impressive commitment" to our veterans:

- ★ making critical investments for our wounded troops coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan, improving conditions such as those uncovered at Walter Reed and in other Congressional oversight;
- ★ focusing on those veterans returning with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury;
- ★ reducing the huge backlog of veterans' claims for benefits;
- ★ providing needed maintenance of VA health care facilities; and
- ★ preventing the President's proposed fee increases from hitting veterans.





# ENERGY SECURITY AND REDUCING GLOBAL WARMING

A major shift in our nation's energy policy has begun. Energy Security is a strong bipartisan effort. Our initiative makes the largest investment in homegrown biofuels in American history, repeals billions of dollars in unnecessary taxpayer subsidies to Big Oil earning record profits, and requires that 15 percent of our electricity come from renewable sources:

- ★ reducing the dependence on foreign oil that threatens our national security;
- ★ creating good new jobs that are home-grown and American-owned, fueled by farms across the country and American innovation, and including a Green Jobs initiative to train a quality workforce in new energy technologies;
- ★ lowering energy costs for consumers by more than \$300 billion through 2030, with landmark efficiency reforms for homes, appliances, and industry;
- ★ creating tax incentives for Hybrids, not Hummers;
- ★ reducing dangerous heat-trapping gases by an estimated 40 percent of what is needed by 2030 to save the planet; requiring the federal government to be carbon-neutral by 2050, and the Capitol to be carbon-neutral by the end of 2008; and
- ★ making the U.S. a leader on a binding global warming agreement, with commitments from all the major emitters.





# HOLDING THE ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE WAR IN IRAQ

Our men and women in uniform have performed their duties with courage, patriotism, and success. But after nearly five years of war, the American people know the cost has been too high: to life and limb, to our reputation in the world, to our military readiness, and to American taxpayers.

This war has not made the American people safer, our military stronger, or the region more stable. We must responsibly redeploy our troops so we can refocus on the real war on terrorism and rebuild our military readiness.

This New Direction Congress has changed the debate, making the Bush Administration more accountable for the execution of the war, and the Iraqi government more responsible for its own future. We have instituted vigorous oversight, uncovering tens of billions of dollars in waste, fraud, and abuse in spending in Iraq by companies like Blackwater and Halliburton. The failed Iraq policy will change when the President's allies in Congress hear the voices of the American people.

The 110th Congress has a clear mandate from the American people to work for a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops out of Iraq. Congressional oversight and legislative pressure have changed the debate in Washington:

- ★ requiring reporting from the Administration on the conduct of the war in Iraq, both militarily and in establishing a stable Iraqi government;
- ★ supporting troops and military families with new funding for Mine-Resistant Armor Protected vehicles (MRAP) and addressing inadequate health care for our returning veterans
- ★ banning permanent American military bases in Iraq; and
- ★ meeting equipment shortfall needs of the Army National Guard, strained in its domestic mission from heavy deployment to Iraq.

A series of measures have won passage in the House, but have been rejected by the President and his allies in Congress who help sustain vetoes. The President has rejected:

- ★ setting a responsible timeline for phased redeployment of American troops; and
- ★ enhancing national security and military readiness—as well as quality of life for military families—by requiring regular rotations out of combat zones and back home for rest and training.



# RESTORING THE AMERICAN DREAM

## LARGEST COLLEGE AID EXPANSION SINCE THE GI BILL IN 1944

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act is the single largest investment in college financial assistance since President Roosevelt signed the GI Bill in 1944 to provide education and job training for veterans returning from World War II.

The historic legislation is funded, at no new cost to U.S. taxpayers, by ending excessive federal subsidies to the lending industry.

College costs have grown nearly 40 percent in the last five years—preventing an estimated 200,000 students from going to college each year. This legislation reverses that trend:

- ★ cutting student loan interest rates in half, saving the typical student borrower \$4,400 over the life of the loan;
- ★ increasing Pell Grant amounts by \$1,090 over five years;
- ★ forgiving loans for graduates who provide 10 years of public service, such as public school teachers or first responders;
- ★ guaranteeing that borrowers will never have to spend more than 15 percent of their yearly discretionary income on loan repayments, and allowing those in economic hardship to have their loans forgiven after 25 years;
- ★ making landmark investments in Historically Black Colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and other minority-serving institutions; and
- ★ reducing the federal budget deficit by \$750 million by cutting subsidies to the lending industry.

## FIRST INCREASE TO THE MINIMUM WAGE IN A DECADE

The first increase to the federal minimum wage in a decade was the first step in a broader American agenda to grow our economy and provide greater opportunity to all Americans, not just the privileged few. The ten year gap in the pay raise was the longest in the history of the law.

The benefits of the pay raise will be felt by nearly 13 million American workers—5.3 million directly and another 7.2 million indirectly as a result of the new wage floor—in addition to more than 6 million children of low wage workers:

- ★ increasing annual pay by \$4,400 a year by 2009, with an increase in the minimum wage of \$2.10 phased in over three years; and
- ★ raising the minimum wage in 20 states this past July, where state wages are not already higher.

## INNOVATION AGENDA PROMOTING 21ST CENTURY JOBS

The America COMPETES Act was signed into law as the first major step in the Innovation Agenda. America's greatest resource to compete in a global economy can be found in classrooms across the country. The COMPETES Act will address the technology gap in our workforce and help turn ideas into innovative technologies to boost our economy and create good-paying American jobs:

- ★ expanding the number of highly qualified math, science, engineering, and technology teachers in schools across the country;
- ★ putting us on a path to doubling funding for basic research at the National Science Foundation, National Institute for Science and Technology and Department of Energy;
- ★ maintaining the American edge in high-performance computing;
- ★ boosting energy research and innovation, creating a new Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy; and
- ★ making small businesses even bigger players in the technology innovation sector, spurring new manufacturing processes and techniques, and supporting high-risk, high-reward technology development.

## AID TO THE GULF COAST RECOVERING FROM HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA

Before the second anniversary of the nation's most devastating hurricane, the new Democratic majority in the 110th Congress sent the President recovery legislation that was signed into law.

The Gulf Coast aid jumpstarts recovery efforts crippled by FEMA's failures and a lack of government support, that compounded the initial mismanaged government and private contractor response. The aid includes:

- ★ waiving the local matching requirement under the Stafford Act, that governs disaster assistance, saving the region \$1.9 billion and allowing work to begin on an estimated 20,000 stalled projects;
- ★ providing \$6.4 billion in assistance to help bolster levees, restore the coastline, recruit teachers, keep schools open, maintain health facilities, assist farmers and fishermen, provide housing assistance, assist small businesses, and retain law enforcement and other essential government employees; and
- ★ exercising much-needed Congressional oversight—House Committees have held over 30 hearings on Katrina recovery, including revealing billions of taxpayer dollars lost to contractor waste, fraud, and abuse.







# HEALTH CARE FOR 10 MILLION CHILDREN

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) is a bipartisan and cost-effective way to meet the health care needs of children of families struggling to make ends meet.

The President opposed a fair, bipartisan compromise to continue the program and sign up more children. In vetoing the compromise legislation, the President, and his Congressional allies who upheld his veto, opposed the will of the American people, a wide-ranging coalition of doctors and other health care providers, disease advocacy groups, children's advocates, including the March of Dimes and Easter Seals and long-time supporters of SCHIP in both parties.

The health and well-being of 10 million children will be provided for by this Congress. SCHIP legislation will become law:

- ★ protecting coverage for the more than 6 million children already enrolled, and enrolling 4 million more children who are already eligible but lack health coverage now;
- ★ helping families of 10 million children avoid bankruptcy and foreclosure on their homes under the crushing weight of medical catastrophes; and
- ★ saving taxpayer dollars that are spent now providing the most expensive care possible to uninsured children, in hospital emergency rooms.



# RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY

## LANDMARK LOBBY AND ETHICS REFORM

The New Direction Congress made restoring trust in government its fundamental commitment. On its first day, the House passed a sweeping rules package—the toughest ethics reform in a generation—that broke the link between lobbyists and legislators: no gifts, no private jets, and no meals from lobbyists.

With the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act now signed into law, Congress is demanding an unprecedented level of disclosure by lobbyists and lawmakers.

The reforms have been hailed by independent public interest groups as “landmark,” “fundamental,” and “a sea change for citizens”:

- ★ mandating new transparency for lobbyists bundling donations and political campaign fund activity;
- ★ ending the ‘K-Street Project’ by prohibiting Members of Congress and their staff from attempting to influence employment decisions in exchange for political access;
- ★ enacting a strong lobbyist gift ban, limits on privately-funded travel, and a ban on House Members accepting trips on private planes;
- ★ expanding public disclosure by requiring lobbyists to file twice as often each year, and for the first time to file electronically in a public, searchable database; and
- ★ denying Congressional retirement benefits to Members convicted of bribery, perjury and other similar crimes.





## PAY-AS-YOU-GO BUDGET DISCIPLINE

The 110th Congress has returned to the principle of pay-as-you-go budget discipline that produced historic budget surpluses during the Clinton Administration, but was abandoned under Republican leadership in the last six years. At the 10-month mark, the New Direction Congress has a 100% record of compliance on non-Iraq war spending: no new deficits!

The non-partisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget hailed the record: “[CRFB] is pleased that Congress has adhered to the principle of PAYGO. We believe that the requirement has forced Congress to face important budgeting tradeoffs and delay actions they were unwilling to pay for, all of which helps to prevent the budget picture from deteriorating.”

This Congress will not pass billions of dollars of debt onto future generations. Democratic leadership has earned the mantle of fiscal responsibility with a strong record:

- ★ allowing no new deficit spending;
- ★ balancing the budget by 2012—which the President’s budget does not;
- ★ passing legislation in the House to save U.S. taxpayers billions by cleaning up government contracting abuses, including getting rid of no-bid contracts;
- ★ instituting unprecedented disclosure of which Members are requesting earmarked projects and who is benefiting, and dramatically cutting the number of earmarks; and
- ★ uncovering billions of misspent taxpayer dollars in Iraq and the Gulf Coast region.

*“In our first year, we are taking our country in a New Direction worthy of the sacrifice of our troops, the vision of our Founding Fathers, and the aspirations of our children.”*

*- Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
November 1, 2007*

# A NEW DIRECTION

The American people demanded change. With faith in the future, we have begun to build a remarkable record of progress.

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OFFICE OF SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI

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NOVEMBER 2007