



Americans are calling for a New Direction after years of inaction on the toughest challenges: a costly war without an end; skyrocketing fuel prices without a plan for energy security; a housing crisis which threatens to force more families from their homes. All have pushed us to the brink of recession.

The New Direction Congress moved quickly to address the downturn and rebuild our economy. With bipartisan support and unprecedented speed, we enacted an economic stimulus plan that put Recovery Rebates in the hands of 130 million American households and will help create 500,000 jobs. We extended Unemployment Insurance to the growing number of Americans looking for work ... made healthy food affordable to millions of American ... and launched a new GI Bill for a full, four-year education for the veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan

We are working now to tackle the housing foreclosure crisis ... combat record prices at the pump ... and help restore consumer confidence by protecting our children from toxic toys.

We are building on a strong record.

We made America more secure ... by making the 9/11 Commission recommendations the law of the land to protect Americans and fight terrorism with cargo container and airline screening, security funding distributed on the basis of risk not politics, and improved first responder communications ... and by reducing global warming and our dependence on foreign oil with an historic Energy Independence law that improves vehicle fuel efficiency for the first time in 32 years and makes an historic commitment to American-grown bio-fuels.

We helped put the American Dream back within reach ... with the first minimum wage increase in a decade, and the second increase coming in July ... the largest college aid expansion in six decades ... and a national science, technology, math, and engineering teacher corps to spur innovation across our economy.

We met our commitments ... with the largest increase in funding for veterans' health care in history ... overdue aid to the Gulf Coast recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita ... landmark ethics reform ... the first election-year budget agreement in 8 years ... and a new commitment to fiscal responsibility.

We have listened to Americans who demanded a New Direction in Iraq-but our efforts have been resisted again and again. The cost to our troops and their families, our military readiness, our ability to defeat terrorism, our reputation in the world ... and our economy ... has been staggering.

The New Direction Congress must and will do more to:

- ★ rebuild the American economy and create good-paying jobs here at home,
- ★ strengthen America's national security and rebuild our military,
- ★ reduce the cost of health care,
- ★ and reverse global warming.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

- ★ [Recovery Rebates to jumpstart economy, help Americans with rising costs](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Extended Unemployment benefits for 3.5 million Americans](#) **ON WAY TO PRESIDENT'S DESK**
- ★ [First increase in the minimum wage in a decade](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Highway Bill, creating 40,000 good-paying jobs](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Farm Bill with historic new investments in nutrition, energy, and conservation,](#)
and launching reforms to farm payments to reflect farmer need **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Terrorism risk insurance extension, aiding economic growth](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Closing tax loopholes for companies and executives that ship American jobs or investment off shore](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

HOUSING FORECLOSURE CRISIS

- ★ [Comprehensive housing foreclosure crisis bill, preventing families from losing their homes, and a critical step in an American economic recovery](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Reform of the Federal Housing Administration, expanding access to affordable mortgages, and to "reverse mortgages" for seniors who need equity from their homes](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Stopping tax on "income" when lender forgives part of mortgage in foreclosure](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Helping states/localities purchase foreclosed homes, stabilizing communities](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

EDUCATION AND COMPETITIVENESS

- ★ [Largest college aid expansion since the GI Bill in 1944](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Uninterrupted access to low-cost student loans, despite credit crunch](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Giving colleges incentives to rein in tuition increases](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Cleaning up abuses in the student loan industry](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Innovation agenda creating a math/science teacher corps; doubling basic research funding](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Extended tax cut for innovative research & development](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Head Start preschool improved and expanded](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Key investments in education](#) **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**

REDUCING TAXES

- ★ [A tax cut for 19 million middle-income American families facing the AMT](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Internet tax moratorium extension](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Extended tax cuts for homeowners, families with children, college students, teachers](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

AMERICAN WORKERS

- ★ [Minimum wage increased for the first time in a decade, 2nd phase this July](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Extending & improving help for workers who lose jobs to foreign competition](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Allowing women & other workers to pursue pay discrimination claims](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Collective bargaining rights for first responders](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Free choice for workers to choose their own bargaining representative](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Reversing Supreme Court decision that had weakened Americans with Disabilities Act](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

- ★ [Health care coverage for 10 million American children](#) **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ [Expansion of life-saving stem cell research that could cure or prevent chronic diseases](#) **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ [Key investments in health care](#) **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ [Ban on genetic information discrimination in health coverage](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Ending discriminatory treatment of mental health care coverage](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Medicare required to negotiate cheaper drugs for seniors and disabled Americans](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Preserving access to and improving Medicare by reforming provider reimbursements and expanding benefits **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Blocking \\$18 billion cut in health care for low-income children & seniors](#) **ON WAY TO PRESIDENT'S DESK**

NATIONAL SECURITY

- ★ [9/11 Commission terrorism recommendations given force of law](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Investments to begin to fix the military readiness crisis](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Iraq benchmarks, progress reports required](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Providing for responsible redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq](#) **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ [Extending ban on torture to U.S. intelligence personnel](#) **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ [Tighter foreign investment rules, after Dubai Ports scandal](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**

TROOPS AND VETERANS

- ★ [New GI Bill to give free college education to Iraq and Afghanistan veterans](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Largest veterans' health care funding increase in history](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Wounded Warrior Act, improving health care after Walter Reed scandal](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Major pay raise for troops](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Significant tax relief for military families](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL WARMING

- ★ [Landmark Energy Independence law: first new fuel efficiency standards in 32 years, building efficiency standards, historic commitment to bio-fuels](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Extending and expanding tax incentives to invest in clean, renewable energy](#) **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ [Historic new support for non-food bio-fuels in the Farm Bill](#) **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Directing the President to lower gas prices by suspending deposits to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Holding OPEC and Big Oil accountable for price fixing](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Cracking down on price gouging by oil companies](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Greening the Capitol, making Congress carbon neutral](#) **ENACTED BY HOUSE**
- ★ [Reducing public transit fares and expanding service for commuters pinched at the pump](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

REBUILDING AMERICA

- ★ [Aid to the Gulf Coast recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Major new commitment to flood control & environmental restoration projects](#) **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Omnibus Public Lands Bill, with new protections for national parks, wilderness, historic sites, trails, and water resources from coast to coast](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Modernizing and improving Amtrak and other inter-city passenger rail for energy efficiency](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

CONSUMER PROTECTION

- ★ [Most sweeping FDA drug safety provisions in more than a decade](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Banning toxic toys from China and other countries](#) **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Passenger Bill of Rights for airline travelers](#) **PASSED HOUSE**

FIGHTING CRIME

- ★ [Improved background checks for gun purchases](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [3,000 New Border Patrol Officers](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Saved the critical COPS program, proposed for elimination by the President
SIGNED INTO LAW
- ★ [Tools and resources to prevent and prosecute hate crimes](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE**

FISCAL DISCIPLINE

- ★ Pay-as-you-go budget discipline **ADOPTED IN HOUSE RULES**
- ★ [A fiscally responsible budget that balances by 2012 and invests in key priorities](#)
PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE, NO PRESIDENTIAL ACTION REQUIRED

RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY

- ★ [Widely-acclaimed landmark lobbying and ethics reform](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [New historic independent Office of Congressional Ethics](#) **ADOPTED IN HOUSE RULES**
- ★ [Banning pensions for Members of Congress convicted of certain crimes](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Strengthening Freedom of Information Act for government transparency](#)
SIGNED INTO LAW
- ★ [U.S. Attorney appointments depoliticized](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Reducing enormous backlog in passport processing](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Closing offshore tax loopholes for federal contractors](#) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ [Cracking down on "no-bid" contracts](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Whistleblower protections strengthened](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Strengthening independence of federal Inspectors General](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ [Holding private security firms in war zones accountable for criminal actions](#)
PASSED BY HOUSE
- ★ [Prohibiting profiteering by U.S. contractors operating in war zones](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE**
- ★ [Withholding federal contracts from tax-delinquent companies](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE**
- ★ [Closing off shore tax loopholes for federal contractors](#) **PASSED BY HOUSE**

- ★ [Requiring mandatory fraud reporting for U.S. contractors](#) PASSED BY HOUSE
- ★ [Requiring more transparency by companies that rely on federal contracts](#) PASSED BY HOUSE

A NEW DIRECTION FOR VETERANS & TROOPS A PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 110th CONGRESS



The new Congress has pledged to put our troops and veterans first.

By restoring GI Bill veterans education benefits, improving veterans' health care, rebuilding our military, and strengthening other benefits for our troops and military families, we are working to keep our promises to our courageous and faithful men and women in uniform.

For too long, officials in Washington have neglected our troops and veterans in a time of war.

On the battlefield, the military pledges to leave no soldier behind. As a nation, let it be our pledge that when they return home, we leave no veteran behind.

	Passed By Congress	Signed Into Law
STRENGTHENING VETERANS' SERVICES		
<u>Increasing veterans funding by nearly \$12 billion since January 2007 - including the largest single increase in the 77-year history of the VA.</u>		
<u>Strengthening quality health care for 5.8 million patients and earned benefits for all veterans.</u>	★	★
<u>Focusing quality care on the 325,000 veterans who have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan, particularly those with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury.</u>	★	★

Reducing the 400,000 claims backlog and the 177 day average wait for veterans to access earned benefits by adding 3,100 new claims processors.

Providing much-needed maintenance of VA health care facilities.

Earning the endorsement of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and other major veterans' groups who hailed this historic legislation as a "major victory" and an "impressive commitment" to our veterans.

Building on this progress by providing another historic increase for 2009-11 percent more than last year and \$3.3 billion more than the President's request -to bolster veterans' health care.



STRENGTHENING BENEFITS FOR TROOPS & FAMILIES

Providing a New GI Education Bill, a pay raise, better military health care and family leave to care for wounded soldiers

Restoring the promise of a full, four-year college education for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, making them part of the economic recovery through a new GI Bill for the 21st Century.

Giving troops a pay raise of 3.5 percent in 2008 and 3.9 percent in 2009 - larger than the President's budget in both years.
(House)

Providing significant tax relief for military families

Cleaning up the scandal of inadequate care for our wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and facilities nationwide.



Strengthening Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury care at military facilities and preventing TRICARE and veterans health care fee increases.

Providing relief and homeownership opportunities for returning veterans by extending the ban on housing foreclosures from 90 days to 1 year and increasing VA home loan limits.

Providing Family Medical Leave for families of soldiers wounded in combat.

Conducting oversight on the Walter Reed Army Medical Center scandal, gaps in the DOD and VA health care systems, veterans suicide, and excessive bonuses for top VA officials.



N/A



STRENGTHENING THE AMERICAN MILITARY

Rebuilding our military readiness-at its lowest level since the Vietnam War

Providing more Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles than the President, which are proven to save lives in Iraq.

Creating a Strategic Reserve Readiness Fund to rapidly address military equipment shortfalls, including Army National Guard equipment.

Ensuring more equipment, training, and body armor for our troops.

Strengthening National Guard preparedness for disaster response here at home, including providing more equipment.



[Giving troops adequate time at home to reduce strain on those serving multiple deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.](#)



 =Complete  =Incomplete

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