

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**January 8, 2001**

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107TH CONGRESS BEGINS - On Wednesday, January 3, 2001, the 107th Congress began, as incoming and returning Members took their oaths of office in both the Senate and House of Representatives. Both the House and Senate completed a number of procedural and housekeeping motions necessary to begin business for the year.

HOUSE LEADERSHIP SELECTION - Rep. Dennis Hastert (R-IL) was re-elected as Speaker of the House. Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-MO) will continue to serve as Minority Leader.

PARTY RATIO- The party ratio for the 107th Congress is as follows:

	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Senate	50	50	
House	221	211*	3**

*Includes the seat left vacant by the death of Julian Dixon.

**Includes the seat of Rep. James A. Traficant, Jr. who has been expelled by the Democratic Party Caucus.

SENATE REORGANIZATION - The Senate has a 50/50 split thus enabling Sen. Tom Daschle (D-SD) to be elected Majority Leader in the Senate for 17 days during the remaining term of Vice President Al Gore. Sen. Trent Lott (R-MS) will then serve as Majority Leader for the remainder of the session once Vice President-elect Richard Cheney is sworn in on January 20, 2001.

SENATE COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP TO BE SHARED-Senate Republican and Democratic leaders developed a plan that would give the parties equal representation on committees in the 107th Congress. The plan is contingent on the Senate leadership's ability to devise a new way to ensure that Republicans could force nominations and bills to the floor in the event of a tie votes in committee.

RULE CHANGES IN SENATE AND HOUSE - There are new rule changes that will impact the operations in this Session. The most significant changes are in the Senate. A rule known as “Rule 28” provides that no new provisions may be included in a Conference Report that are not contained in either version of the bills being considered in the Conference. During the 106th Congress, Members of a Conference Committee could routinely bring forth measures that had not been passed in either version of a bill. In the 107th Congress, reportedly this will not be permitted. Another change is the addition of Committee Members and staff in the Senate to provide equal representation on all Committees for both parties.

107TH CONGRESS SCHEDULE – On Wednesday January 3, 2001 the 107th Congress convened. The following is a tentative schedule for the upcoming year.

Tentative 2001 Senate Schedule

January 3 – 107th Congress Convenes

January 6 – 1 p.m. joint session to count Electoral College ballots

January 20 – Presidential Inauguration

February 17-25 – Presidents' Day Recess

April 7-22 – Spring Recess

May 26 – June 3 – Memorial Day Recess

June 30 – July 8 – Independence Day Recess

August 4 – September 3 – August Recess

Tentative 2001 House of Representatives Schedule

January 3 – 107th Congress Convenes

January 6 – 1 p.m. joint session to count Electoral College ballots

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NATIONAL FOREST CONSERVATION – On January 5, 2001, the Administration issued a measure that bans new roads and most commercial logging on 58.5 million acres of national forest. The plan includes about 9 million acres in Alaska including some land in the Tongass National Forest. This action is seen as a victory by environmentalist but could receive resistance from Western land advocates.

CONGRESSMAN SCHUSTER ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT – Congressman Bud Schuster (R-PA) announced he will retire on January 31, 2001. Although Schuster has just started his 15th term in office and had been Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for the last 6 years he will leave because of health concerns. Schuster was elected to represent Pennsylvania’s ninth district in 1973. According to Pennsylvania law, Governor Tom Ridge will have 10 days after Schuster’s retirement to announce a date for a special election.

107TH HOUSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN – On Thursday, the Republican Conference announced Committee Chairmen for the 107th Congress. They are as follows:

Agriculture -- Larry Combest (TX)
Appropriations -- C.W. Bill Young (FL)
Armed Services -- Bob Stump (AZ)
Banking (Financial Services) -- Michael G. Oxley (OH)
Budget -- Jim Nussle (IA)
Commerce -- W.J. “Billy” Tauzin (LA)
Education and the Workforce -- John A. Boehner (OH)
Government Reform -- Dan Burton (IN)
International Relations -- Henry J. Hyde (IL)
Judiciary -- F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (WI)
Resources -- James V. Hansen (UT)
Science -- Sherwood L. Boehlert (NY)
Select Intelligence -- Porter J. Goss (FL)
Small Business -- Don Manzullo (IL)
Standards on Official Conduct -- Joel Hefley (CO)
Transportation -- Don Young (AK)
Veterans Affairs -- Christopher H. Smith (NJ)
Ways and Means -- William M. Thomas (CA)

NRCS Legislative Affairs will provide updates on additional Committee Announcements and Senate Committee Membership as it becomes available.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS CHANGES SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN- Nine of the 13 House Appropriations subcommittees will be under new leadership this year, due to the GOP's three-term limit. Most notably, Henry Bonilla, (R-TX), will head the Agriculture Subcommittee. Ralph Regula, (R-OH), who will take over the high-profile Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee, will turn the Interior Subcommittee over to Joe Skeen (R-NM). Rep. Sonny Callahan (R-AL) will become the new Energy and Water Subcommittee Chairman. Harold Rogers, (R-KY), switches to the Transportation Subcommittee from Commerce-Justice-State, which will now be the domain of Frank R. Wolf (R-VA). Although Democrats may not complete Committee assignments until later this month, Congressional staff report that Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) will continue to serve as the Ranking Member for the Agriculture Subcommittee.

New members on the Appropriations Committee will include John T. Doolittle (R-CA) and Ray LaHood (R-IL). NRCS Legislative Affairs will report additional appointments as they become public.

107th CONGRESS ROSTER AND CONTACT INFORMATION- Directories for the 107th Congress can be accessed by Internet at: <http://www.senate.gov> and <http://www.house.gov>

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