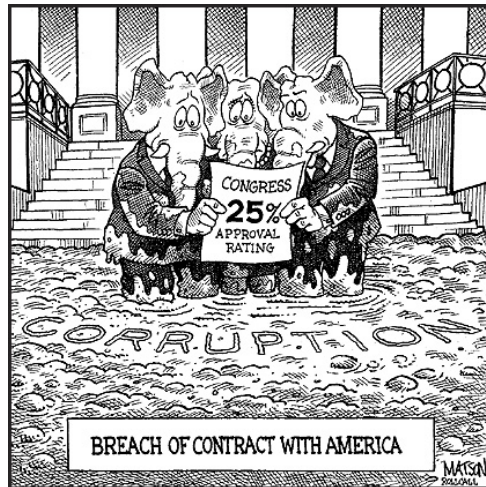


# **The Republican Congress:** **Complacent, Corrupt Culture, Cover-up, Complicit and Incompetent**



Source: Roll Call, 9/25/06

## **COMPLACENT**

**This is the Do-Less-Than-Do-Nothing Congress, setting records for fewest days in Session even while failing to address America's priorities:**

- **2006 Do-Less-Than-Do-Nothing Republican Congress:** Projected to be in Session for 93 Days
- **1948 Do-Nothing Congress:** Met in Session for 110 Days
- Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA): "It is disappointing where we are, and I think Republicans need to be upfront about this. We have not accomplished what we need to accomplish." [New York Times, 9/24/06]
- Former Republican House Majority Leader Dick Armey: "I'm sure that the Democrats will want to run on the 'do-nothing Congress' theme, and my own view is that they probably have some ground to stand on." [Bloomberg, 7/12/06]

## **CULTURE OF CORRUPTION**

**The Republican Culture of Corruption has pervaded the Capitol and undermined public confidence in the integrity of our legislative system:**

- "[Rep. Bob Ney] is the second member of Congress to face time in prison over the past year, following the guilty plea of California Republican Rep. Randy 'Duke' Cunningham in November over a defense-contractor bribery case." In addition, Former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay was forced to step aside to confront a state criminal charge of money laundering in Texas. [Wall Street Journal, 1/19/06]
- Republican super-lobbyist Jack Abramoff has pleaded guilty to "fraud, tax evasion and conspiracy to bribe public officials." David Safavian, former head of Procurement Policy

at the Office of Management and Budget and a senior official at the General Services Administration, was convicted of lying to federal investigators in the Abramoff investigation. Former Abramoff associate and DeLay aide Michael Scanlon pleaded guilty “to conspiring to bribe a congressman and other public officials.” Tony Rudy, DeLay’s former deputy chief of staff, pleaded guilty to charges of conspiring “with Abramoff to corrupt public officials and defraud clients.” Neal Volz, a former Ney aide and Abramoff associate, also pleaded guilty to conspiracy. [[Washington Post](#), 9/16/05]

- Former Republican Majority Leader Tom DeLay (TX) was admonished by the Ethics Committee for “offering Rep. Nick Smith, R-Mich., political favors in exchange for his vote on a Medicare prescription drug bill” in the form of promising Smith “political favors in exchange for his vote on [the] Medicare prescription drug bill.” [[Copley News Service](#), 9/18/06] In all, DeLay was admonished four times in five years by the House Ethics Committee for his misconduct. And after he stepped down from his leadership position, he was allowed by Republican leaders to move back to the Appropriations Committee.
- At the beginning of this year, Republican leaders claimed lobbying reform would “move quickly and in a bipartisan fashion” and would be “bold.” In reality, the Republican proposals have been called “a tiny mouse of change” and “pathetic.” And, House Republicans settled for passing an earmark reform bill was summarily derided by editorial writers. [News Conference, 1/17/06; AP, 1/11/06; [Washington Post](#), 1/19/06]

## **COVER-UP AND COMPLICITY**

**Congressional Republicans have abdicated their constitutional duty to conduct meaningful oversight of the Executive Branch, instead choosing to serve as an Administration lap-dog:**

- Few of the egregious, gross miscalculations that the Bush Administration has made in prosecuting the war in Iraq have received any real Congressional oversight and no senior Administration officials have been held accountable for their miscalculations. Those miscalculations include putting in too few troops to secure Iraq; firing police and security workers, which increased the instability; failing to shut off escape routes to the north; failing to prepare an effective post-war plan; failing to properly equip American troops; grossly underestimating war costs; hiring hack political appointees for the Coalition Provisional Authority; and failing to effectively investigate the mistreatment of detainees.
- “Donald Rumsfeld is not a competent wartime leader. He surrounds himself with like-minded and compliant subordinates who do not grasp the importance of the principles of war, the complexities of Iraq or the human dimension of warfare. Bottom line: His plan allowed the insurgency to take root and metastasize to where it is today. Our world is much less safe today than it was on September 11.” [Major Gen. (Ret.) John Batiste, former commander of the Army’s 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in Iraq, in the [Washington Post](#), 9/26/06]
- A recent classified National Intelligence Estimate assessing global terrorist trends “says that the Iraq war has made the overall terrorism problem worse,” according to an American intelligence official. [[New York Times](#), 9/24/06]
- According to a report from the Office of the Special Inspector general for Iraq Reconstruction, “nearly \$9 billion of money spent on Iraqi reconstruction is unaccounted for because of inefficiencies and bad management.” [[CNN](#), 1/31/05]

- According to a retiring commander of the Army Transportation Corps, Brig. Gen. Mark E. Scheid: “Planners continued to try ‘to write what was called Phase 4’ -- plans that covered post-invasion operations such as security, stability and reconstruction, said Scheid, who is retiring in about three weeks, but ‘I remember the secretary of defense saying that he would fire the next person that said that.’” [[Washington Post](#), 9/9/06]
- The Republican management of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has “produced one of the most extraordinary displays of scams, schemes and stupefying bureaucratic bungles in modern history, costing taxpayers up to \$2 billion.” [[New York Times](#), 6/27/06]
- Research from the Brookings Institutions shows that “roughly a third of the city's schools, hospitals and libraries remain closed, as do half the city's public transportation routes.” [[CNN](#), 8/29/06]

## **INCOMPETENCE AND INEFFECTIVENESS**

### **Republicans have completely ignored the priorities of the American people:**

- **NATIONAL SECURITY:** The bipartisan 9/11 Commission gave the Bush Administration and Republican Congress 5 Fs, 12 Ds, and 2 Incompletes on their progress in enacting Commission recommendations and Osama Bin Laden remains at large. Meanwhile, the nuclear threats from North Korea and Iran have increased greatly, and the Taliban is resurgent in Afghanistan. In addition, the Council on Global Terrorism gave the Administration and Congress a grade – among other grades – of D+ on combating Islamic Extremist Terrorism.
- **MINIMUM WAGE/STAGNANT WAGE/JOBS:** Despite the fact that the minimum wage is at its lowest level in 50 years, when adjusted for inflation, the Republican leadership refused to allow a straight up-or-down vote on raising the minimum wage. Instead, it has chosen to play political games with the issue. The minimum wage has not been increased since 1997, and 85% of the American public favors increasing it. In addition, real median household income has decreased nearly \$1,300 during the Bush Administration, and the Administration has the worst record of job creation – with nearly 3 million manufacturing jobs lost in the last six years – since the Great Depression.
- **ENERGY INDEPENDENCE/GAS PRICES:** Despite record gas prices, Republicans have failed to propose any comprehensive plan for energy independence, relying only on increased drilling and handouts in the form of tax breaks to oil companies.
- **REAL IMMIGRATION REFORM:** Republicans have failed to follow through on the commitment in the 9/11 Act of 2004 to protect our borders. We are still 800 Border Patrol Agents, 5,000 detention beds, and nearly 500 immigration agents short of what was promised. Republicans have repeatedly voted against funding the authorized number of agents. Comprehensive immigration reform has fallen victim to Republican infighting.
- **HEALTH CARE:** 3.4 million seniors are reaching the Republican prescription bill's “donut hole” and will face a gap in coverage that will leave them faced with the dilemma of how to afford vital medication. Under the Bush Administration, the cost of family health insurance has increased by 71% and the number of uninsured has risen to 46 million, including 8 million children.

- **TAX REFORM:** Under the Bush Administration, the tax code has increased 20,000 pages and Republicans have stated that tax reform will have to wait until 2009 after promising to address this issue.
- **BUDGET/FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:** While in control of the House, Senate and White House, “The 2006 deficit is on track to be the sixth largest deficit in history. The three largest deficits in history also occurred on the Bush Administration’s watch.” Under the Bush Administration, the debt limit will have nearly tripled to \$11.3 trillion by 2011. Republicans have increased the debt limit four times since 2000, totaling an increase of \$3 trillion. And, the amount of our public debt held by foreign investors has more than doubled during the Bush Administration, from \$1 trillion in 2001 to \$2.1 trillion in 2006, and the Bush Administration already has accrued more foreign debt than the previous 42 presidents combined. [House Budget Committee Democrats, 9/19/06]

### **CRONYISM IS A WAY OF LIFE WITH REPUBLICANS**

**Republicans have trusted unqualified cronies to handle some of the country’s most important organizations:**

- Michael Brown, the former head of FEMA, “Brown spent a decade as the stewards and judges commissioner of the International Arabian Horse Association” before becoming part of the Bush Administration. [CNN, 11/4/05]
- A new book shows that those hired by the Coalition Provisional Authority “didn't need to be experts in the Middle East or in post-conflict reconstruction. What seemed most important was loyalty to the Bush administration.” This included a “24-year-old who had never worked in finance -- but had applied for a White House job” being charged with reopening the Baghdad stock exchange, and “the daughter of a prominent neoconservative commentator and a recent graduate from an evangelical university for home-schooled children” being “tapped to manage Iraq's \$13 billion budget, even though they didn't have a background in accounting.” [Washington Post, 9/17/06]

**DEMOCRATS BELIEVE  
AMERICA IS READY FOR A  
NEW DIRECTION**