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## Major Accomplishments of the U.S. Senate During the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, to Date

This document lists major accomplishments of the Senate during the 109th Congress, to date. (This listing will be updated and re-issued at the end of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.) Items are listed under the following ten categories:

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*Note: For organizational purposes, each category lists the accomplishments in numerical order, by public law number (if enacted), from most recent to oldest, and by bill number if not enacted.*

## **PROMOTING JOBS AND A STRONG ECONOMY**

### **Financial Services Regulatory Relief Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-351**

*This law reduces unnecessary regulatory burdens imposed on our nation's banking industry, allows the Federal Reserve System to pay interest on certain reserve balances, gives the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve greater flexibility in setting reserve requirements, and gives financial regulatory agencies more flexibility in sharing data, retaining records, and scheduling examinations.*

### **Credit Rating Agency Reform Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-291**

*This law improves quality of the credit rating agency industry by fostering accountability, transparency, and competition. The law abolishes barriers to entry into the industry and allows a credit-rating company with three years of experience that meets certain standards to enter into this market. This law fulfills a commitment made by Congress during the Enron and Worldcom scandal to improve the quality of the credit rating industry.*

### **United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act – P.L. 109-283**

*This law implements the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement, negotiated in 2004 and 2005, and signed on January 19, 2006. It strengthens the economic and diplomatic ties between the United States and the State of Oman. This law affirms the United States' commitment to supporting allies overseas and encouraging reform by promoting open markets.*

### **Pension Security and Transparency Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-280**

*This law increases the retirement security for American workers by helping to ensure the solvency of American pension plans. The law also adjusts Pension Benefits Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) insurance premiums and establishes minimum funding standards to strengthen private pension plans, including multiemployer pension plans.*

### **Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-236**

*This law makes new improvements and encourages innovations in mine safety to protect American miners. The law requires each covered mine to develop and continually update an emergency response plan and to use the latest equipment and technology that is commercially available to protect workers; requires that every mine make available two well-trained rescue teams located in close proximity to the mine; provides tort protection for employers and rescue team members while increasing penalties for safety violations; and creates a permanent office of Mine Safety and Health within the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.*

### **Stop Counterfeiting in Manufactured Goods Act – P.L. 109-181**

*This law prohibits trafficking of counterfeit labels, patches, and medallions. According to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency, counterfeiting of goods through overseas sales and re-importation of electronics, DVDs and other products costs American businesses hundreds of billions of dollars a year. This law helps American*

*businesses to recover and protects against future losses through requiring the destruction and forfeiture of equipment used to make counterfeit goods and forcing counterfeiters to pay restitution.*

**United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act – P.L. 109-169**

*This law strengthens the economic and diplomatic ties between the United States and the State of Bahrain. Bahrain is one of America’s closest allies in the Middle East. This law affirms the United States’ commitment to supporting allies overseas and encouraging reform by promoting open markets.*

**Terrorism Risk Insurance Revision Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-144**

*This law extends the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA) through FY 2007, providing a reinsurance “backstop” for insurers in exchange for a requirement that they provide terrorism risk insurance to commercial firms at reasonable rates. This law helps shift the burden from the taxpayer to the private sector by increasing the property and casualty insurance loss threshold that would trigger federal assistance, increasing the amounts of terrorism losses retained by the insurance industry, and reducing the federal share of insured loss compensation in 2007. The law also instructs the Presidential Working Group on Financial Markets to recommend to Congress legislation to address the long-term availability and affordability of terrorism risk insurance.*

**Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – P.L. 109-59**

*This law authorizes \$286.5 billion in funding for federal-aid highways, federal transit programs, and motor carriers safety programs for five years. It provides financing for vital highway construction and repair projects, and provides states with the financing certainty necessary for longer-term infrastructure investment. Based on employment estimates produced by the Department of Transportation, this funding level will support more than 13 million American jobs. The Act also makes a number of changes in federal law to provide states with more flexibility in both revenue and expenditures by ensuring a minimum guarantee for the Highway Account of 90.5 percent for 2005-2006, increasing to 92 percent for years 2008 and 2009, thus ensuring that all states receive a more equitable percentage of the funding they contribute.*

**Dominican Republic – Central America – United States Free Trade Implementation Act (DR-CAFTA) – P.L. 109-53**

*This law implements the United States-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade agreement. This is the first free trade agreement between the United States and the Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, as well as the Dominican Republic. This agreement benefits U.S. businesses by leveling the playing field with America’s 12<sup>th</sup> largest market for exported goods; 80 percent of U.S. exports to this region are immediately duty-free with the remaining 20 percent becoming duty-free by 2010. This “win-win” agreement also benefits Central American countries by helping to provide economic stability in these democracies, an issue vital to our national security interests.*

**Junk Fax Prevention Act – P.L. 109-21**

*This law protects Americans from receiving unsolicited advertisements through fax machines. It amends the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit faxed advertisements unless the sender has an established relationship with the recipient or the advertisement contains a notice that the recipient may request that such transmissions desist.*

**Family Entertainment and Copyright Act – P.L. 109-9**

*This law makes it a crime to use a video recorder in a movie theater or to distribute a copyrighted work before its release or commercial distribution. It also legalizes movie-filtering technology that blocks sexually graphic and violent content, and it encourages the preservation and restoration of scholarly works. The movie industry believes that in-theater video recording of movies is a significant factor in approximately \$3.5 billion in piracy losses.*

**Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act – P.L. 109-8**

*This law, the first major revision to the U.S. Bankruptcy Code since 1978, makes improvements to the bankruptcy code in consumer, small business, and corporate contexts. In particular, the law ensures that only those individuals who earn less than their state's median income or those who are otherwise unable to pay their debts are able to wholly discharge them. At the same time, it ensures that those who have the ability to pay back some of their debt actually do so, rather than abuse the system. This law saves approximately \$3 billion annually for consumers through lower interest rates and better products and services.*

**Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2006 (S. 3938) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would expand the scope of the bank and focus attention on small-business issues. A small business division created by the bank earlier this year would be made permanent and have responsibility for expanding assistance to small businesses, including technology improvements and financing exports by U.S. firms.*

**Workforce Investment Act Amendments of 2005 (Provision of the Job Training Improvement Act of 2005) (H.R. 27) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would give states and local areas the flexibility to provide training for jobs in high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations needed to ensure America's competitiveness in the global economy. Specifically, the bill would do the following: improve the existing One-Stop Career Center delivery system; remove barriers that have discouraged business involvement in workforce training, while finding new mechanisms to increase and improve local business and industry participation in job training decisions across the nation; improve access to services; and improve youth job training activities by directing more resources to out-of-school youth who are most in need of assistance.*

## **REDUCING SPENDING AND KEEPING TAXES LOW**

### **Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-282**

*This law expands oversight of federal spending, including earmarks, and provides the public with access to an online database containing information about entities that are awarded federal grants, loans, and contracts. This law creates a Google-like database of federal contracts and grants that allows users to type in key words that bring up exactly how much money any particular recipient had received. It provides information for taxpayers about how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent.*

### **Tax Provisions in the Pension Protection Act – P.L. 109-280**

*The law makes permanent the 2001 change to allow tax-free withdrawals from so-called 529 accounts provided they are used for education. The law also provides authority for the Treasury to promulgate regulations with respect to 529 plans and prevent abuses. In addition, the law makes permanent the pension improvements enacted in the Economic Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, including increased contribution limits for individual retirement accounts (IRAs) and 401(k) plans. The law also makes permanent the “Savers’ Credit” of up to \$2,000, which is set to expire at the end of 2006.*

### **Tax Relief Act of 2005 (Tax Reconciliation) – P.L. 109-222**

*This law prevents a number of scheduled tax increases from going into effect and ensures that more middle-class, working Americans do not become subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax. The law helps to ensure a pro-growth environment.*

### **Deficit Reduction Act (Spending Reconciliation) – P.L. 109-171**

*This law reduces federal outlays by \$39.675 billion for FY 2006-2010 (and \$101.6 billion over the 2006-2015 period). The law includes provisions that provide net savings in Medicaid of \$4.76 billion over five years and Medicare savings of \$6.41 billion over five years. This law is the first deficit reduction reconciliation bill since 1997; it affirms Republicans’ commitment to controlling spending even while rebuilding the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina.*

## **DEFENDING AMERICA AND SECURING THE HOMELAND**

### **Secure Fence Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-367**

*This law establishes operational control over the international land and maritime borders of the United States by requiring the Department of Homeland Security to build 700 miles of barriers (including double and triple-layer fencing, sensors, lighting, and vehicle barriers) in specified areas along the U.S.-Mexico border. The law helps prevent unlawful U.S. entries of terrorists, other unlawful aliens, instruments of terrorism, narcotics, and other contraband. It provides more effective use of personnel and technology (unmanned aerial vehicles, ground-based sensors, satellites, radar, cameras and the like) for systematic border surveillance. Approximately \$1.2 billion was allocated in the Homeland Security Appropriations Act for barrier construction.*

**Military Commissions Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-366**

*This law creates military commissions that comport with domestic and international law so that prosecutions of war criminals may continue. The law also ensures that the terrorists' interrogations, that have been so helpful in preventing future attacks, will be continued. This law affirms the commitment of our country to prevent future terrorist attacks and ensures the safety of our homeland.*

**National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 – P.L. 109-364**

*This law provides \$532.8 billion in budget authority for fiscal year 2007 for national security programs at the Defense and Energy departments, which is \$4.7 billion more than the President's request. The law provides \$70 billion in supplemental funds for operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the war against radical Islamists. It included a 2.2-percent across-the-board pay raise for service members, and targeted pay raises for mid-career and senior enlisted personnel and warrant officers.*

**Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act – P.L. 109-361**

*This law increases, effective as of December 1, 2006, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans.*

**North Korea Nonproliferation Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-353**

*This law makes North Korea subject to the requirements of the Iran and Syria Nonproliferation Act, which directs the President to impose additional sanctions against governments and individuals responsible for transferring missile, weapons of mass destruction, and advanced conventional weapons technologies to North Korea.*

**Security and Accountability for Every (SAFE) Port Act – P.L. 109-347**

*This law authorizes \$5.5 billion over six years to overhaul port security measures. It requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to create a timeline for deployment of nuclear and radiological detection systems at all seaports and to establish standard operating procedures for examining containers. It establishes the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, a standards identification card for port workers, and various other programs to ensure prudent inspection of cargo in-bound to the United States. It also requires 100 percent radiation scanning by December of 2008, and scanning with other non-intrusive devices as soon as possible (after certain technology thresholds are met).*

**Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act – (Provision included in the Conference Report to Accompany SAFE Port Act) – P.L. 109-347**

*The Federal Communications Commission will establish, within 60 days of enactment, an advisory committee to recommend standards to enable a commercial mobile service to make emergency alerts of disasters. The Undersecretary of Homeland Security for Science and Technology will coordinate on developing relevant technology research. Grants could be issued to remote locations to be part of the alert system (with a 5-year sunset on grants).*

**Darfur Peace and Accountability Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-344**

*This law imposes sanctions against individuals responsible for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, supports measures for the protection of civilians and humanitarian operations, and supports peace efforts in the Darfur region of Sudan. The law sets six benchmarks that the government of Sudan must reach before the restrictions are lifted including: resolving the crisis in Darfur; disarming the Janjaweed militia; adhering to U.N. Security Council resolutions; resolving the crisis in eastern Sudan; denying safe haven to the Lord's Resistance Army; and implementing the peace agreement between northern and southern Sudan.*

**Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, FY 2007 – P.L. 109-295  
Conference Report passed**

*This law provides \$32.79 billion in new budget authority for the Department of Homeland Security. Significant initiatives include the following: funding for an additional 1,000 Border Patrol Agents to help prevent illegal border crossings and the addition of 5,000 detention beds so law enforcement officials no longer have to abide by a policy of “catch and release”; \$745 million for high-threat, high-density urban area grants; \$500 million for the State and local basic grant program to keep our communities safer; and \$399.5 million for the US Visitor and Immigration Status Indicator Technology (US VISIT), which enhances the security of the U.S. by verifying the fingerprint and identity of visitors with visas at ports of entry. The law also mandates the establishment of standards for security at chemical facilities, criminalizes construction of tunnels under the land border, legalizes the importation of FDA-approved prescription drugs from Canada for personal use, and formalizes the accreditation process for law enforcement training programs.*

**Gun Confiscation (Provision in the Department of Homeland Security  
Appropriations Act, 2007) – P.L. 109-295**

*This provision prohibits the confiscation of legal firearms from law-abiding citizens during major disasters and states of emergency. The provision responds to reports that guns were confiscated from law-abiding New Orleans residents in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Its passage helps ensure that law abiding citizens will maintain the ability to defend themselves and their property at all times, especially when law enforcement may be overwhelmed.*

**Department of Defense Appropriations Act, FY 2007 – P.L. 109-289**

*This law appropriates \$469.7 billion in new discretionary spending for the Department of Defense. It provides \$66.1 billion in emergency spending for continued funding of the war against terrorists. It also allocates \$1.8 billion for border security spending. This law affirms the Senate’s commitment to preventing terrorism and keeping America safe.*

**Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the war against  
terrorists, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006 – P.L. 109-234**

*This law provides \$74.6 billion to meet the needs of troops overseas fighting the war against terrorists, pandemic flu preparation, increased border security, levee repair and*

*flood control projects, without exceeding the President's requested funding level. [Note: the law also provided hurricane-relief funding, which is addressed separately.]*

**Respect for America's Fallen Heroes Act – P.L. 109-228**

*This law ensures that America's fallen heroes will receive the level of dignity and honor befitting their service to our country during their funeral services. It restricts protests at funeral services conducted on grounds controlled by the National Cemetery Administration or at Arlington National Cemetery and prohibits distracting protests within 500 feet of a cemetery at which a funeral or memorial service is to be held, for a period beginning 60 minutes before and ending 60 minutes after the service. The law also imposes penalties for violating this law.*

**USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act – P.L. 109-177**

*This law permanently renews 14 provisions of the USA Patriot Act and temporarily extends two provisions previously set to expire. This renewal is essential to prevent future terrorist attacks by providing law enforcement and intelligence agencies with the tools necessary to detect, apprehend, and prosecute terrorists and criminals.*

**Tsunami Preparedness Act (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This law provides for the improved operation of a tsunami warning detection system, under the Direction of the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), for America's coastal regions. The law also directs the Administrator to do the following: establish community-based "tsunami hazard mitigation" programs in high-risk areas; provide support to the international entities to work with other participating nations to provide funding for a global tsunami warning system; and establish a program to improve the resilience of coastal communities to natural disasters.*

**The Digital Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005 (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This law requires television broadcasters to vacate the analog portion of the public spectrum by February 17, 2009, and directs the FCC to conduct an advance auction of those licenses on January 28, 2008. This auction, which is expected to generate \$10 billion, will be used to reduce the deficit by \$7.3 billion, with the remaining proceeds going towards programs that would advance the DTV transition and strengthen public safety communications. Additionally, 24 megahertz of spectrum recovered from the digital transition will go to public safety personnel.*

**Department of Justice Reauthorization (Provision included in the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005) – P.L. 109-162**

*This provision authorizes appropriations for law enforcement programs in the Department of Justice, including the FBI, the DEA, the ATF, the Office on Violence Against Women, and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The law establishes the United States-Mexico Border Violence Task Force to combat drug and firearms trafficking, violence, and kidnapping along the border between the United States*



*and Mexico. The law also authorizes the establishment of a National Gang Intelligence Center and gang information database to increase state-federal cooperation.*

**DNA Fingerprint Act of 2005 (Provision included in the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005) – P.L. 109-162**

*This provision amends the DNA Identification Act of 1994 to expand states' ability to add DNA analyses to the National DNA Index. These profiles can be compared to evidence from crime scenes in order to solve rapes and other serious crimes. In addition, the law authorizes the Attorney General to prescribe regulations for the collection of DNA samples from individuals who are arrested or from foreign aliens who are detained under the authority of the United States.*

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-155**

*This law authorizes the funding for National Aeronautics and Space Administration to continue the agency's important work in aeronautics, science, and the exploration of space. The Act requires increased reporting and accountability by NASA and provides funding for a program to establish a permanently sustained presence on the Moon, the development of a space commercialization plan, and a competitive prize program to encourage private-sector development of space exploration and aeronautical technology.*

**Reducing the Number of Alien Absconders (Provision included in the Conference Report to Accompany the Science, State, Justice, Commerce and Related Agencies Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-108**

*This provision directs the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security to work together to study existing apprehension, detention, appeal, and removal policies of illegal aliens and report to Congress on effective means of reducing the absconder rate.*

**Automated Biometric Identification System/Fingerprint Identification System (Provision included in the Conference Report to Accompany the Science, State, Justice, Commerce and Related Agencies Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-108**

*This provision directs the Department of Justice to update Congress on its efforts to fully integrate the databases at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with regard to fingerprint scans at U.S. ports of entry. The use of biometric identifiers, such as fingerprints, is an important tool to ensure that terrorists or criminals monitored by the FBI or DHS are identified and stopped before they are able to enter the country.*

**Service Members Group Life Insurance Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-80**

*This law increases the maximum life insurance coverage for an insured veteran or service member from \$250,000 to \$400,000. It also directs the Secretary of Defense to make a good faith effort to inform the spouse of an active duty service member if the member chooses to reduce coverage or designate another person as beneficiary of benefit. This law affirms the Senate's commitment to ensuring that military survivors are cared for after their loved ones make the greatest sacrifice for our country and our freedom.*

**Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the war against terrorists, and Tsunami Relief, FY 2005 – P.L. 109-13**

*This law provides \$82.04 billion for ongoing military operations, postwar reconstruction and relief in Iraq and Afghanistan, aid for international partners in the war against terrorists, and homeland security needs. It includes \$907.3 million in relief for victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami, including \$656 million for the Recovery and Reconstruction Fund.*

**REAL ID Act (Provision included in the Conference Report to the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief) – P.L. 109-13**

*This law requires the Department of Homeland Security to issue regulations for driver's license security standards that States may employ to issue new licenses. It also requires the use of a card that meets REAL ID standards for any individual to obtain a federal benefit (a timeline to phase in these standards is specified in law).*

**Foreign Investment and National Security Act of 2006 (S. 3549) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would amend current law to increase Congressional oversight and to clarify the process for reviewing and investigating foreign acquisitions of U.S. companies that have potential national security implications.*

**Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006 (S. 2611) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would authorize a number of internal enforcement and border security programs to assist in controlling illegal immigration. Among the programs is the creation of an "instant-check" electronic employment verification system for all employers to check the work eligibility of new hires. The bill would also legalize in some form unauthorized aliens who have resided in the United States since January 7, 2004, and create 200,000 new foreign worker visas per annum. Certain specialized "H-1b" temporary work visa quotas would be increased. Permanent resident "green card" quotas would be increased by two to three times their present number to eliminate most of the waiting line for green cards; new quota rules would be created. The bill would also make it more difficult for children born abroad to American parents to acquire citizenship but easier for those adopted abroad. Finally, the bill would institute a number of changes to the immigration litigation regime.*

**Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006 (S. 2370) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would promote peace through condemning terrorist organizations and urging the international community to participate in isolating terrorist groups. The bill also amends current law to encourage reform within the Palestinian Authority by withholding international assistance unless Hamas publicly acknowledges Israel's right to exist and purges any persons with terrorist ties from Hamas' security forces.*

**Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (S. 362) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would establish within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and the United States Coast Guard a program to identify, reduce, and remove*

*ocean debris to mitigate the harmful effects of debris on marine and coastal environments, and to improve navigation.*

**Ocean and Coastal Observation System Act of 2005 (S. 361) – Passed Senate**

*Under the direction of the National Oceanic Research Leadership Council, this bill would establish an advanced warning system along the United States coastlines of the Atlantic or Pacific Oceans and the Great Lakes to improve early warning and detection systems for tsunamis and other maritime natural disasters.*

**State Criminal Alien Assistance Program Reauthorization (S. 188) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would reauthorize the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). SCAAP provides financial assistance to states and local governments with authority over correctional facilities that incarcerate or detain undocumented criminal aliens. This bill reflects Republicans' commitment to secure the borders and enforce immigration laws, particularly with regard to criminal aliens.*

**National Ocean Exploration Program Act (S. 39) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would provide for the establishment of a national ocean exploration program under the direction of the Secretary of Commerce and within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). This program would do the following: conduct archeological and scientific explorations of ocean environments including historic shipwrecks and little-known undersea regions; promote public education and discourse of ocean science; and improve the technical capability of U.S. oceanographic research.*

## **PROMOTING FREEDOM AND SECURING OUR VALUES**

**Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 – P.L. 109-365**

*This law reauthorizes and strengthens services offered under the Older Americans Act, the chief federal law governing the organization and delivery of a number of social services for older Americans. The Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 will: promote consumer choice, as well as home- and community-based supports to help older individuals avoid institutional care; strengthen health and nutrition programs while ensuring that no state loses funds to operate these programs; improve educational and volunteer services; encourage wealthier seniors to pay for many of their program benefits, maximizing the taxpayer investment for low-income seniors; increase federal, state, and local coordination; and reform employment-based training for older Americans.*

**Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006– Conference Report passed (Provision included in the Conference Report to Accompany SAFE Port Act) – P.L. 109-347**

*This provision prohibits the use of the Internet to transmit wagers and prohibits persons from accepting monies in connection with Internet gambling when those transactions would be illegal in the jurisdiction where the bet was initiated or received. It provides new mechanisms for enforcing current law, including criminal liability if a person engaged in the business of betting, wagering or accepting payment for unlawful gambling over the Internet. It also provides injunctive relief to prevent or restrain a violation of*

*this law, which may be requested by the Federal executive branch or a state attorney general. Finally, the provision provides for regulations that help financial institutions identify and block unlawful gambling over the Internet, including the provision of immunity from civil liability for blocking such transactions.*

**Children and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-288**

*This law extends for five years (through FY2011) the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program which provides states with \$345 million per year in mandatory spending to prevent and address child abuse and neglect. Additionally, it targets \$40 million annually in new funds for two purposes: to support monthly caseworker visits and to improve outcomes for children affected by methamphetamine or other substance abuse.*

**Federal Acquisition of Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial in San Diego, California – P.L. 109-272**

*This law directs the federal government to acquire the Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial, which is marked by a 29-foot cross and was built in 1954 in honor of the American casualties of World War I, World War II, and the Korean conflict. The federal government will maintain the site as a national war memorial honoring veterans. This law helps protect the Memorial from future court challenges by groups who wish to see it taken down.*

**Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act – P.L. 109-248**

*This law creates a National Sex Offender Registry that includes detailed information on sex offenders, requires uniform registration standards with a lifetime registration requirement for the most serious offenders, and allows officials in all 50 states to share information, and more effectively investigate and prevent child abuse cases. The law also imposes enhanced penalties for the most serious crimes against children, as well as mandatory minimum penalties for repeat offenders.*

**Schools Safely Acquiring Faculty Excellence (SAFE) Act (Provision of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety bill) – P.L. 109-248**

*This provision allows schools to access existing national databases of child predators when making hiring decisions. Allowing schools to access this information provides another tool to help ensure that our nation's classrooms are secure.*

**Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-246**

*This law provides for the 25-year extension of several provisions of the Voting Rights Act, which were previously set to expire on August 6, 2007. The expiring provisions include “pre-clearance” of voting changes and requires that voting material be printed in non-English languages to accommodate non-native speakers.*

**Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-242**

*This law prohibits any person or entity from soliciting or knowingly acquiring, receiving, or accepting a donation of human fetal tissue resulting from a human pregnancy that was deliberately initiated to provide such tissue. The law also prohibits knowingly acquiring,*

*receiving, or accepting tissue or cells obtained from a human embryo or fetus that was gestated in the uterus of a nonhuman animal.*

**Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-239**

*This law amends current law to require states to establish procedures that encourage cooperation between state and private agencies for the placement of foster children.*

**Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act – P.L. 109-235**

*This law increases the penalties for television and radio broadcasters who violate the prohibitions against transmission of obscene or indecent material and profane language. This law also encourages media outlets to provide additional family-tiered programming.*

**Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 (Provision of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act) – P.L. 109-177**

*This provision addresses the growing epidemic of the use and trafficking of methamphetamines by restricting over-the-counter sales of medicines that contain ingredients used to make methamphetamines, increasing penalties for the trafficking or production of methamphetamines, and providing additional resources for state and local law enforcement agencies to target methamphetamine “hot spots.” In 2005, the Office of National Drug Control Policy reported that there was a 17-percent reduction in youth drug use over the previous 3 years. This provision continues the federal and state efforts toward bolstering this positive trend.*

**Welfare Reauthorization (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This law reauthorizes several provisions that have been successful in reducing the welfare rolls and moving those individuals into gainful employment. These provisions include the following: authorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) through FY 2010 at its current funding level (\$16.9 billion annually) and an additional \$1 billion for child care over five years; readjustment of the work participation rate to conform with the intent of the landmark 1996 Welfare Reform Act (P.L. 104-193); and the providing of grants, including \$100 million annually for the promotion of healthy marriage initiatives, and \$50 million annually for responsible fatherhood programs to strengthen two-parent marriages, reduce poverty, and improve child well-being.*

**Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization of 2005 – P.L. 109-164**

*This law reflects America’s commitment to fighting human trafficking, a crime in which human beings, including children, are essentially bought and sold as slaves. It assists authorities in investigating and prosecuting traffickers and customers, provide grants to state and local law enforcement, and provide services to victims.*

**Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization (Provision included in the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005) – P.L. 109-162**

*This provision ensures that the protections of the Violence Against Women Act continue in force. It authorizes grant monies to combat domestic violence, stalking, and domestic violence against children through services to victims and increased public education.*

*The law also adds regulations of international marriage brokers and increases protections for American Indian women through grants and better coordination between Indian and federal law enforcement.*

**Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-129**

*This law provides for the collection of human umbilical cord blood to be used for treatment, transplant, and research, and creates the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program, an umbrella program containing activities related to the National Bone Marrow Donor Registry and the new Cord Blood program. An advisory council will be created to coordinate with the Secretary of Health and Human Services to oversee this program and ensure that donated cord blood not appropriate for transplant use will be made available for use in peer-reviewed research. The collection of umbilical-cord-blood stem cells after childbirth causes no harm to mother or child, and research has shown that cord-blood stem cells can be effectively used to treat several diseases, including leukemia, Fanconi anemia, and sickle cell disease.*

**Water for the Poor Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-121**

*This law reflects America's compassion for our neighbors around the world by addressing an issue that affects 1.2 billion people worldwide and is responsible for the death of one child every 15 seconds. It ensures that providing safe, clean, and renewable water for poor countries should be part of America's foreign policy. Specifically, it authorizes the President to provide increased assistance to developing countries, and directs the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to develop a strategy to increase people's access to safe water.*

**Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-95**

*This law provides increased assistance to vulnerable children in developing countries through both governmental and non-governmental organizations. The law also directs the President to establish a system for monitoring this effort, and directs the Secretary of State to appoint a Special Advisor for Assistance to Vulnerable Populations.*

**Renewal of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act – P.L. 109-39**

*As a means of promoting democratic rule and freedom of expression in Burma, this law places sanctions on the ruling Burmese military junta and supports and recognizes the National League of Democracy as the legitimate representative of the Burmese people.*

**Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act (S. 2754) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would direct the Secretary of HHS to conduct and support basic and applied research to develop alternative techniques for the isolation, derivation, production, or testing of pluripotent stem cells. However, research authorized under this bill could not use cells derived from a human embryo, but is intended to encourage the derivation of pluripotent cells from alternative sources or techniques.*

**The Legislative Transparency and Accountability Act (S. 2349) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would help to establish greater transparency and accountability in Congress by reforming the process through which the public may lobby members of Legislative Branch. The bill would specifically prohibit all gifts from lobbyists to Members of Congress, require the Ethics Committee to pre-approve privately funded travel, and increase transparency over the use of so-called earmarks. The bill would also strengthen reporting requirements of lobbyists and, for the first time, require disclosure by large-scale, paid grassroots lobbying organizations.*

**Child Custody Protection Act (S. 403) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would prohibit the transport of a minor across state lines for the purpose of receiving an abortion if doing so abridges a parental notification or consent statute in the minor's residing state, while providing an exception if the abortion is necessary to save the minor's life. This bill would help to protect the health and safety of pregnant minors, through ensuring the involvement of parents in the medical decisions of their minor daughters seeking to obtain an abortion. Efforts of the Senate to pass a House version of this legislation failed in September 2006 due to a Democrat filibuster.*

**PROVIDING AFFORDABLE AND DEPENDABLE ENERGY**

**The Low-Income Home and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – P.L. 109-204**

*This law advances \$1 billion in funding allocated for FY 2007 to be available for use in FY 2006 to provide energy assistance to low-income individuals. The law requires that 50 percent of the \$1 billion provided in the underlying bill for FY 2006 be distributed under the standard LIHEAP formula with the other 50 percent distributed to a contingency fund to be dispersed by the Administration.*

**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) (Provision in the Departments of Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-149**

*This provision would add \$2.18 billion for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). This additional funding will help to ensure that the elderly and those on low incomes will be able to pay their heating bills.*

**Energy and Water Development Appropriations, FY 2006 – P.L. 109-103**

*This law provides more than \$31 billion for fiscal year 2006. It supplies funds for water resources, development programs, and related activities of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Civil Works Program and for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation. It also supplies funds for the Department of Energy's energy research activities, including environmental restoration and waste management, and atomic energy defense activities of the National Nuclear Security.*

**Energy Policy Act – P.L. 109-58**

*This law provides a comprehensive national energy policy that will help meet America's long-term energy demands by encouraging greater domestic production, greater fuel*

*diversity, and improved energy infrastructure. It also provides funds for the research and development of new energy technologies and encourages energy efficiency.*

**Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (S. 3711) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would open selected portions of the Gulf of Mexico, including a portion of Lease Sale 181, for oil and gas leasing. Allowing for production in this area would make an additional 1.26 billion barrels of domestically produced oil and 5.83 trillion cubic feet of natural gas available to American consumers. Providing this additional energy supply will help to meet our country's needs, reduce our dependence on foreign energy supplies, and help to stabilize energy prices.*

**United States-India Energy Security Cooperation Act of 2006 (S. 1950) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would improve cooperation and collaboration between the United States and India to increase global access to more secure and cleaner sources of energy, while encouraging market-driven advancements in energy production to decrease global dependence on oil. The bill also authorizes the President to establish programs in support of greater energy cooperation between the United States and India.*

**Mercury Rule Allowed to Stand (Senate failed to pass S.J. Res. 20, resolution of disapproval)**

*This Senate resolution would have expressed disapproval with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposal to allow a cap-and-trade regulatory system for mercury-emitting, coal-fired power plants. If passed, this resolution would have effectively repealed the EPA's Clean Air Mercury Rule to reduce mercury emissions by 70 percent over 12 years. The Mercury Rule also provides incentives to the power sector to invest in the development of mercury-control technologies. The United States currently produces approximately 1-percent of the world's mercury, and the Mercury Rule represents the first-ever attempt by any country to restrict mercury emissions. In 2003, the EPA's analysis concluded that the public health threat caused by mercury could be adequately addressed with a 70-percent reduction over 12 years (rather than the 90 percent as had been required), a change which will save an estimated \$356 billion over 20 years.*

## **HELPING TO ENSURE QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR ALL AMERICANS**

**State High Risk Pool Funding Extension Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-172**

*This provision reauthorizes funding for grants to each state that has not created a qualified high risk pool for the state's cost of creation and initial operation of a high risk health insurance pool. The legislation also provides relief to certain states that experience losses in connection with the operation of existing high risk pools and establishes reporting requirements for the Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to high risk pool funding.*



**Medicaid and SCHIP Improvements (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*Medicaid and SCHIP (the state children's health improvement program) are the safety nets of the American health care system and the DRA made several improvements including:*

*Section 6101-6103, which ensures low-income children continuity of health coverage by providing assistance to states that face shortfalls in SCHIP funds;*

*Section 6062-6065, which expands Medicaid benefits through the Family Opportunity Act so that parents of severely disabled children can go to work and earn above-poverty wages while maintaining vital services for their children;*

*Section 6021, which expands the availability of private insurance for long term care services, so that Americans have options other than Medicaid for such coverage and ensuring that Medicaid will continue to provide such coverage for the neediest among us;*

*Various provisions to help disabled Americans, which help fulfill President Bush's New Freedom Initiative. They are aimed at helping give disabled Americans the opportunity to receive health services in their homes or in community-living facilities rather than in confining institutions. The provisions give disabled Americans the chance to live and work in their communities and to take control of their health care and their lives.*

**Pandemic Flu Preparedness (Provision in the Department of Defense Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-148**

*This provision provides \$3.8 billion for pandemic flu preparedness. It helps the United States prepare for a potential outbreak of pandemic flu by authorizing funding for stockpiling antivirals and medical supplies, promoting vaccine development and research, monitoring global avian influenza, providing grants for local public health centers, and providing additional funds for risk communication and outreach.*

**Medicare Cost Sharing, TMA, and Abstinence Programs Extension – P.L. 109-91**

*This law extends the qualified individual Medicare program through September 2007. This program provides medical assistance for Medicare cost-sharing for individuals who would qualify for Medicaid beneficiaries if their income did not exceed the state-established income level, and is between 120% and 135% of the official poverty line. The law also provided a three-month extension of Transitional Medical Assistance and the abstinence education program through December 31, 2005.*

**Veterans Medical Services Supplemental, FY 2005 (Section 601 of the Interior Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-54**

*This provision provides an additional \$1.5 billion in funding to the Department of Veterans Affairs to cover budget shortfalls in veterans' healthcare. This funding reflects our commitment to supporting the troops both overseas and at home, and ensures that our returning service members receive the quality care that they deserve.*

**Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act – P.L. 109-41**

*This law creates and implements a voluntary system of medical error reporting, so that preventable medical errors can be identified and actions can be taken to ensure that they do not continue to occur. The confidentiality protections provided in this law give more incentives for providers to voluntarily report errors. Such reporting is critical to efforts to ensure patient safety and improve the quality of patient care.*

**Wired for Health Care Quality Act (S. 1418) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would formally establish the Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology (ONCHIT), previously organized by Executive Order. The National Coordinator, through ONCHIT, serves as the principle advisor to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the President for federal health information technology programs. ONCHIT is responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing national health information programs that protect the privacy of health information, facilitating patient access to information while protecting it against unauthorized access. The bill also requires the Secretary to develop or adopt a system to measure the quality of care that patients receive.*

**Combating Autism Act (S. 843) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would increase investment in the National Institutes of Health for autism-related research to promote early detection, early evidence-based interventions, and services for individuals affected by autism spectrum disorder, which affects approximately 1 out of every 166 children born in this country. The bill would also reauthorize the epidemiologic surveillance programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and establish regional centers of excellence for collection, analysis and reporting of epidemiological data on autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities.*

**Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (S. 306) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would prohibit discrimination on the basis of genetic information with respect to health insurance and employment. It would prohibit a group health plan or other health insurance provider from adjusting premiums on the basis of genetic information and requesting or requiring an individual or a family member of such individual to undergo a genetic test. In the employment context, it prohibits the use of genetic information for employment decisions, such as hiring, firing, job assignments, and promotions.*

**Foundation for the National Institutes of Health Improvement Act (S. 302) – Passed Senate**

*This bill promotes public-private partnerships in biomedical research by authorizing increased funding – between \$500 million and \$1.25 billion annually.*

**ENSURING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**

**Third Higher Education Extension Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-292**

*This law extends authorizations for existing programs; the extension cancels the student loan debt of the spouses of public servants, such as police and firefighters, who died in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. It also cancels student loans made to other victims of the*

*2001 attacks that are being repaid by the victims' spouses or parents. Further provisions under the law include: a change in the rules for grants that the government makes to colleges with large populations of Hispanic students; and limiting the ability of colleges to enter into arrangements known as "school as lender," in which the school acts like a bank and makes government-backed loans to its students.*

**YouthBuild Transfer Act – P.L. 109-281**

*This law amends the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to establish a revised YouthBuild program under the authority of the Secretary of Labor. The law assists young adults not currently enrolled in school to gain needed education, skills, and knowledge while serving their communities. It will continue to give young people the opportunity to gain occupational and technical skills while building their knowledge to help them become and remain productive members of the workplace.*

**Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act – P.L. 109-270**

*This law reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins vocational education program with a number of reforms. These reforms improve the academic focus and performance of all students, create a more effective and accountable system, build stronger partnerships between technical education and related businesses, and require states to develop an integrated curriculum of high school, college, and technical coursework to create an industry-recognized degree.*

**Increasing Grant Aid for Students Studying Math and Science (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This provision authorizes \$4.53 billion in spending over five years to create a new program that awards Academic Competitiveness Grants (for first or second academic year) and SMART grants (for third and fourth academic years) to Pell-eligible students in an undergraduate program of study. Students in their first and second years may receive awards of \$700 and \$1,300 respectively, provided that they have completed a rigorous program of study at the secondary level. Undergraduate students in their third and fourth years may receive up to \$4,000 in grant aid if they major in a math or science subject or foreign language determined to be critical for national security and make progress toward a degree.*

**Closing the Student Loan Loophole (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This provision closes loopholes in existing law that made the student loan program too expensive for taxpayers. Provisions include the elimination of the guaranteed 9.5 percent floor rate for student loans, which was instituted in 1980 when interest rates were much higher. The law will fix the borrower interest rate at 6.8 percent, and will fix the parent interest rate at 8.5 percent. The law also increases loan limits for first and second year students to \$3,500 and \$4,500 respectively, and increases graduate borrowing limits to \$12,000.*

**Teacher Incentive Fund (Provision in the Departments of Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-149**

*This law provides \$100 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund, a pilot program for states and school districts to provide additional compensation to teachers who make a*

*measurable impact on raising student achievement, and to provide an incentive to attract effective teachers to what the Department of Education calls “high-need” schools – which are schools with high poverty rates and poor performance on state assessments. The Teacher Incentive Fund was first proposed in the President’s FY 2006 Budget, and offers an appropriate incentive to states and local education agencies to advance the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act.*

## **ENDING FRIVOLOUS LAWSUITS**

### **Pandemic Countermeasure Protections (Provision in the Department of Defense Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-148**

*The provision provides targeted liability protections under State and Federal law for manufacturers and distributors of pandemic and epidemic products (including vaccines) and security countermeasures, in the event that the Secretary of Health and Human Services makes a declaration of a public health emergency as a result of a disease or other health condition. The provision also provides a process for providing compensation for any cases in which the administration or use of a product covered by the emergency declaration caused injury or death.*

### **The Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act – P.L. 109-92**

*This law addresses the politicization of our court system by a small number of anti-gun activists who have attempted to hold the firearm industry legally responsible for the criminal conduct of others. These frivolous lawsuits have forced the firearms industry to spend nearly \$200 million defending the right to produce a legal product. In the event of a large verdict, this relatively small industry could be destroyed, and Americans’ ability to exercise their Second Amendment rights could be dramatically curtailed.*

### **Class Action Fairness Act – P.L. 109-2**

*This law curbs abuses in our courts that have driven up costs to consumers without benefiting the public. Over the past decade, class action lawsuits have grown over 1,000 percent nationwide, leading to increasingly unjust settlements that enrich a select few lawyers, while hurting plaintiffs and businesses in virtually every sector of America’s economy. This law addresses these abuses by moving certain large, interstate class actions from state courts into federal courts and creates a consumer bill of rights to ensure that the class-action legal process protects the rights of plaintiffs.*

## **CONFIRMING FAIR JUDGES THROUGH A FAIR PROCESS**

**During the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Senate has confirmed 52 judicial nominations, including 2 Supreme Court Justices, 15 court of appeals judges, 34 district court judges, and 1 Court of International Trade judge. The Supreme Court Justices are listed below:**

**Nomination of Samuel Alito, of New Jersey, to be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court – Confirmed 58-42**

**Nomination of John G. Roberts, of Maryland, to be Chief Justice of the United States – Confirmed 78-22**

**PROVIDING RELIEF TO AMERICANS IN GULF STATES  
AFFECTED BY HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA**

**Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 – P.L. 109-308**

*This law requires the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ensure that state and local emergency preparedness plans provide for the safe evacuation of individuals with households pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.*

**Hurricane Relief (Provision of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the war against terrorists, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006) – P.L. 109-234**

*This provision provides an additional \$19.8 billion to meet the needs of the individuals and families in regions devastated by gulf coast hurricanes.*

**Judicial Branch Employee Participation in Federal Leave Transfer Program for Disasters and Emergencies – P.L. 109-229**

*This law allows employees of the Federal Judiciary branch of government to participate in emergency-leave transfer programs for disasters and emergencies.*

**Hurricane Katrina Emergency Assistance Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-176**

*This law provides additional assistance for individuals affected by Hurricane Katrina by extending disaster unemployment benefits to 39 weeks from 26 weeks and extending the period during which unemployed workers may apply for assistance. The law also reimburses communities for expenses incurred while housing individuals displaced by the hurricane.*

**Temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for Katrina Areas (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This provision provides a temporary increase in FMAP percentages for states affected by Hurricane Katrina. States will receive 100-percent FMAP reimbursement for Medicaid and SCHIP assistance for individuals who, during the week prior to Hurricane Katrina, were living in one of the parishes of Louisiana or counties of Mississippi and Alabama specified in the bill. Costs directly attributable to related administrative activities would also be fully reimbursed.*

**Coastal Disaster Assistance (Provision in the Deficit Reduction Act) – P.L. 109-171**

*This provision provides an additional \$200 million to assist states and local Indian tribes affected by hurricanes and other coastal disasters.*

**Third Emergency Katrina Supplemental (Provision in the Department of Defense Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-148**

*This law provides \$29 billion in aid for victims of Hurricane Katrina, including \$3 billion in funding to strengthen Louisiana levees, \$6.2 billion in Community Development Block Grants to help Gulf Coast communities rebuild, and \$1.6 billion to school districts educating students displaced by hurricanes. Of this funding, \$23.40 billion is offset by reallocations from the Federal Emergency Management Disaster Relief Fund, and the remaining Katrina funding is offset by various rescissions and an across-the-board-cut of 1-percent that applies to most discretionary accounts.*

**Elementary and Secondary Education Recovery Act (Provision in the Department of Defense Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-148**

*This provision authorizes \$1.66 billion in funds to provide aid for states affected by Hurricane Katrina to restart school operations, provide temporary emergency aid for displaced students, and assist homeless youth. This law also permits the Secretary of Education to extend deadlines under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for those affected by Katrina or Rita.*

**Katrina Higher Education Relief (Provision in the Department of Defense Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-148**

*This provision provides waivers for certain student loans for students who were attending institutions of higher learning in the Gulf Coast region affected by Hurricane Katrina. It also provides assistance under the Higher Education Act to students and institutions affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Under the provisions of H.R. 6106, the ability of the Secretary of Education to waive the state/local matching requirement for federal funding for certain education programs with a match requirement was extended. The extension is intended to assist Gulf Coast communities impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to aid in their recovery. The waive authority was set to expire on September 30, 2006.*

**Coast Guard Hurricane Relief Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-141**

*This law authorizes the Coast Guard to extend the duration of a license or certificate for Merchant Seamen in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi, or those whose records were destroyed due to flooding in New Orleans. It also extends inspection compliance certificates for vessels last inspected in Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi, and it allows Coast Guard personnel who served on active duty for 30 days in areas affected by Katrina to retain accumulated leave, which otherwise would have been forfeited.*

**Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-135**

*This law creates a Gulf Opportunity Zone in the region affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma to encourage businesses to rebuild in the region and provide employment opportunities. In particular the law provides tax provisions such as a bonus depreciation and enhanced small business expensing, and it also provides for the issuance of tax exempt bonds to help finance reconstruction costs.*

**Study and Report on Catastrophic Hurricane Evacuation Plans (S.A. 2168, to H.R. 3058, the Transportation, Treasury, Judiciary, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-115**

*This law provides \$1 million in funding for the Departments of Transportation and Homeland Security to conduct a joint review to assess catastrophic hurricane evacuation plans and submit their findings to Congress by June 1, 2006.*

**Funds for Louisiana for Increased Traffic due to Hurricanes (Provision included in the Conference Report to Accompany the Transportation, Treasury, Judiciary, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-115**

*The conference agreement provides \$1.5 million to the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to establish a grant program for implementation of plans to alleviate traffic congestion and address increased transportation demands for parish and municipal governments that experienced a significant spike in population due to an influx of hurricane evacuees.*

**Additional Forecasters for the National Hurricane Center (Provision included in the Conference Report to accompany the Science, State, Justice, Commerce Appropriations bill, FY 2006) – P.L. 109-108**

*This provision provides \$500,000 in funding to the National Hurricane Center for the purpose of hiring 4 new hurricane forecasters.*

**National Flood Insurance Program Further Enhanced Borrowing Authority Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-106**

*This law increases the borrowing authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from \$3.5 billion to \$18.5 billion through FY 2008 to pay the National Flood Insurance Program's flood damage claims through the next few months.*

**Hurricane Katrina Unemployment Relief (Provision in the QI, TMA & Abstinence Programs Extension and Hurricane Katrina Unemployment Relief Act) – P.L. 109-91**

*This law transfers money from the federal trust fund to the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama unemployment trust funds to help those states pay unemployment benefits.*

**Community Disaster Loan Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-88**

*This law allows for up to \$750 million of the funds appropriated under P.L. 109-62, the Second Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Hurricane Katrina, to be transferred to the Disaster Assistance Direct Loan Program to be used to assist local governments in providing essential services.*

**Emergency Airport Improvement Project Grants in Aid – P.L. 109-87**

*This law authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to provide airport development project grants to support infrastructure repair projects for public-use airports in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Texas that were damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.*

**Natural Disaster Student Aid Fairness Act – P.L. 109-86**

*This law authorizes the Secretary of Education during FY 2006 to reallocate campus-based student aid funds to institutions of higher learning in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas, or institutions that have accepted students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina or Rita. The law also waives requirements for matching funds that are normally imposed on institutions and students.*

**Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-82**

*This law empowers the Department of Education to waive the non-federal share for states affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that seek unused FY 2005 funds for vocational rehabilitation. Additional funds may be used for supplemental training to help individuals with disabilities gain the necessary skills to help with the reconstruction and redevelopment of impacted communities.*

**Student Aid Waiver – P.L. 109-78**

*This law extends the authority of the Secretary of the Department of Education to waive student loan rules during a war or national emergency until September 30, 2007.*

**Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-73**

*This law provides tax relief for victims of Hurricane Katrina and contains provisions to encourage charitable contributions toward the relief effort in the affected region. Specifically, the law allows affected individuals to access their retirement savings without incurring penalties for early withdrawals, to deduct 100 percent of casualty losses, and to exclude from tax certain relief assistance. The act also provides incentives for businesses in the region to hire displaced workers and additional tax incentives to support regional employment and reconstruction, with an emphasis on encouraging displaced residents to return to the affected areas.*

**Flexibility for Displaced Workers Act – P.L. 109-72**

*This law allows for greater flexibility in the use of National Emergency Grants to provide temporary disaster relief and training for individuals who have relocated to regions outside of the Katrina-affected areas and to those who assist in disaster recovery.*

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Response and Recovery Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-68**

*This law makes immediate payment of TANF funds for the first quarter of FY 2006 to all states, and makes additional TANF funds available to states devastated by Hurricane Katrina by converting an existing loan fund into a contingency fund for Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. It holds states harmless for costs incurred to immediately assist evacuees, provides states with flexibility to spend unused TANF funds for families impacted by the hurricane, waives program rules for hurricane victims receiving short-term TANF assistance, and waives penalties on states that resulted from efforts to support families impacted by the hurricane.*



**Student Grant Hurricane and Disaster Relief Act – P.L. 109-67**

*This law authorizes the Secretary of Education to waive certain repayment requirements for students receiving campus-based federal grant assistance efforts if they were residing in, employed in, or attending an institution of higher education located in a major disaster area, or their attendance was interrupted because of the disaster.*

**Pell Grant Hurricane and Disaster Relief Act – P.L. 109-66**

*This law authorizes the Secretary of Education to waive certain repayment requirements for hurricane-affected students receiving federal Pell Grants. This waiver is necessary because under current law, Pell Grant recipients who are forced to withdraw from classes due to a natural disaster are required to repay any Pell Grant funds used to pay for school expenses, or they will be barred from enrolling in future classes.*

**Income Exclusion of Flood Insurance Mitigation Payments – P.L. 109-64**

*This law allows for the exclusion of federal flood mitigation assistance from consideration as income or a resource for purposes of determining an applicant's eligibility for certain federal income-assistance or resourced-based programs.*

**Federal Judiciary Emergency Special Sessions Act of 2005 – P.L. 109-63**

*This law authorizes courts displaced by Hurricane Katrina to operate outside of the courts' regular circuit or district.*

**Second Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act to Meet Immediate Needs Arising From the Consequences of Hurricane Katrina, 2005 – P.L. 109-62**

*This law provides an additional \$51.8 billion in emergency funding to continue recovery and relief efforts in the areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina.*

**Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act to Meet Immediate Needs Arising From the Consequences of Hurricane Katrina, 2005 – P.L. 109-61**

*This law provides \$10.5 billion in emergency funding to provide immediate assistance to Gulf States affected by Hurricane Katrina. Specifically, this law provides \$10 billion to the Department of Homeland Security for disaster relief and \$500 million to the Department of Defense for operations and maintenance.*

**Katrina Education Reimbursement (S. 1764) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would allow the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to transfer funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to the Department of Education in order to provide assistance to schools that have accepted students displaced by Hurricane Katrina.*

**Gulf Coast Emergency Water Infrastructure Assistance Act (S. 1709) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would allow states to provide subsidies and loan forgiveness for water treatment and water quality projects related to Hurricane Katrina, for a 2-year period, from funds allocated to states from the revolving loans under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. The bill also allows states to provide funds to water treatment plants that are not*

*included under the Safe Drinking Water Act for up to 2 years, and authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency to test drinking water from private wells that may be contaminated as a result of Hurricane Katrina.*

**Disaster Recovery and Debris Removal Act of 2005 (S. 939) – Passed Senate**

*This bill would authorize the payment to disaster relief applicants of up to 50 percent of the Federal share for which that applicant is eligible. This assistance will expedite the process of clearing and removing hurricane-related debris from public access roads and private property.*

**A resolution to permit the solicitation of donations in Senate buildings for the relief of victims of Hurricane Katrina (S. Res. 235) – Passed Senate**

*This bill allows Senators or Senate employees to solicit another Senator or Senate employee for non-monetary donations for the relief of victims of Hurricane Katrina and to work with nonprofit organizations to deliver those donations.*