



From the Office of Congresswoman Mazie K. Hirono

Accomplishments of the 111th Congress

Boosting Economy While Providing Affordable Health Care, Clean Energy, Educational Excellence Headline First Year of Work

The 111th Congress is making great progress at the halfway mark of the 111th Congress, working with President Barack Obama to turn our economy around and create good jobs, by implementing common sense reforms and targeted investments in: **affordable health care, clean energy jobs, educational excellence, fiscal responsibility, and tax fairness.**

The following is the list of accomplishments achieved during the 111th Congress of the United States:

SIGNED INTO LAW

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS, to provide tough new protections for consumers by banning unfair rate increases, abusive fees, and penalties—such as retroactive rate hikes on existing balances and double-cycle billing, giving consumers clear information with no fine print, and strengthening enforcement.

“Last year, credit card companies imposed \$19 billion in penalty fees and will break all records this year for late fees, over-limit charges, and other penalties, amounting to more than \$20.5 billion for the industry,” said Congresswoman Hirono. **“The Credit Cardholders’ Bill of Rights will level the playing field between card issuers and consumers.”**

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT, enacted in the first month of President Obama’s term, to jumpstart our economy, create and save 3.5 million jobs, give 95% of American workers a tax cut, and begin to rebuild America’s road, rail, and water infrastructure, with unprecedented accountability measures -- no earmarks, new state whistleblower protections, and an historic degree of transparency at www.recovery.gov.

“We’re talking about a bill that will save or create about 15,000 jobs in Hawai‘i, provide \$200 million for needed infrastructure and ready-to-go projects in our state, and \$194 million to the state fiscal stabilization fund to prevent deep cuts in education,” said Congresswoman Hirono. **“In addition, Hawai‘i’s Department of Education will receive nearly \$75 million for Title I and IDEA funds to serve our most disadvantaged students. Extending unemployment benefits, food stamp assistance, tax cuts for middle class families, energy tax credits and grants, and much, much more are in this bill. Hawai‘i could use it all.”**

HEALTH CARE FOR 11 MILLION CHILDREN, to finally provide cost-effective health coverage

for 4 million more children whose parents earn too little to provide their own insurance, but too much to qualify for Medicaid, and preserve coverage for 7 million children already enrolled.

“Close to 24,000 children in Hawai‘i rely on this program to address their basic health care needs. This bill will not only help thousands of American families obtain affordable, high quality health care, but it also reduces the use of hospital emergency rooms for primary care, which is far more costly,” said Hirono.

LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT, to restore the rights of women and other workers to challenge unfair pay—to help close the wage gap where women earn 78 cents for every \$1 a man earns in America.

“Equal pay is not a women’s issue. It’s a family issue,” said Hirono. **“As is stands, women in Hawaii earn 69 cents for every dollar a man makes for the same work. Closing this vast discrepancy in earnings will help all our families, particularly during these difficult economic times,”** said Hirono.

OMNIBUS PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2009, the most significant conservation bill in 15 years, to boost economic development and tourism at 160 mostly rural American sites; creating 2 million new acres of wilderness across 9 states; establishing 3 new national park units; designating 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers; and designating a National Monument and 3 National Conservation Areas. Included in this sweeping legislation is **Congresswoman Hirono’s Kalaupapa Memorial Act** which authorizes a memorial within the Kalaupapa National Historical Park on the island of Moloka‘i. Of the approximately 8,000 former patients buried in Kalaupapa, only some 1,300 have marked graves.

“The passage of this law should be a proud moment for all Americans. We will now be able to recognize the Hansen’s disease patients of Kalaupapa for the way they led dignified, inspirational lives under extremely challenging circumstances,” said Hirono. **“This memorial will provide family members a place to visit and reflect since the majority of patients at Kalaupapa have been buried without grave markers.”**

EDWARD M. KENNEDY SERVE AMERICA ACT, tripling volunteerism opportunities for national service to enroll 250,000 students to retirees; creating new service corps for education, health care, energy and veterans; establishing a Summer of Service for middle and high school students; and increasing college financial awards.

PASSED BY HOUSE

AMERICAN JOBS CREATION ACT, to redirect \$75 billion in Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) funds to make targeted investments for highways and transit, school renovation, and the hiring of teachers, police, and firefighters.

“The Jobs for Main Street Act builds on the Recovery Act and will create and help retain jobs for Hawaii’s people,” said Congresswoman Hirono. **“This legislation will boost our economy while improving our transportation and wastewater infrastructure, as well as investing in our bus systems, including the rapidly growing bus systems on the neighbor islands. This was a very close**

vote. I know that the people of Hawaii are concerned about jobs and the economy. As a member of the jobs task force, I pushed hard to make sure we passed this bill as soon as possible”

PUTTING 50,000 COPS ON THE BEAT, to authorize \$1.8 billion a year for COPS grants over the next five years, which will fund putting an additional 50,000 police officers on the street across the country.

WAR SUPPLEMENTAL BILL, to provide funds for the remainder of FY 2009 to provide our troops in harm’s way with what they need, implement the President’s plans for winding down the war in Iraq and refocusing our fight against terrorism in Afghanistan, require a report on progress, and fund pandemic flu response.

GREEN SCHOOL MODERNIZATION, to provide critical investments to modernize, renovate, and repair school facilities across the country, while encouraging energy efficiency and creating nearly 140,000 new jobs.

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT, to give law enforcement the resources they need to prevent and prosecute hate crimes against Americans because of their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, as well as because of their race, color, religion, or national origin.

WATER QUALITY INVESTMENT ACT, to launch clean water projects for families and communities across America, creating an estimated 680,000 jobs over the next five years.

REDUCING MILITARY FAMILIES TAX, which currently unfairly penalizes the 55,000 surviving spouses of military personnel who died as a result of their service-connected injuries.

FDA REGULATION OF TOBACCO, granting the Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate the advertising, marketing, and manufacturing of tobacco products, currently the number-one cause of preventable death in America, with 1,000 children each day becoming new, regular smokers.

MORTGAGE REFORM AND ANTI-PREDATORY LENDING ACT, to stop the predatory and irresponsible mortgage loan practices that played a major role in the current financial meltdown and to help ensure that the mortgage industry follows basic principles of sound lending and consumer protection.

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE ACT, to prohibit unreasonable or excessive compensation and non-performance-based bonuses for executives at companies receiving TARP funds, to stabilize our financial system.

PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE

BUDGET BLUEPRINT, reflecting the President’s plan to get the economy moving again, by cutting taxes for middle-income families by \$1.5 trillion and creating jobs with targeted investments in health care, clean energy and education – while cutting the Bush deficit by nearly two-thirds by 2013.

BILLS NEAR AGREEMENT IN BOTH CHAMBERS

After moving quickly to boost our economy, we are reforming our financial system, protecting consumers, and bringing accountability to how taxpayer dollars are spent.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT, building on the President's housing initiative, to provide significant incentives to lenders, servicers, and homeowners to work together to modify loans and to avoid foreclosures, which cost families their homes every 13 seconds in America.

MILITARY PROCUREMENT REFORM, to crack down on Pentagon waste and cost overruns, which GAO says amount to \$296 billion just for the 96 largest weapons systems, by dramatically beefing up oversight of weapons acquisition, promoting greater use of competition, and curbing conflicts of interest.