

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS MAKES

Despite opposition from President Bush and Congressional Republicans, Democrats are addressing the priorities of the American people and have succeeded in:

- ✓ **Making America Safer:** The 9/11 Commission recommendations are now law, requiring screening of all air and overseas port cargo and improving communications between first responders.
- ✓ **Giving Everyone a Fair Shot at the American Dream:** The first of three minimum wage increases took effect in July, making it the first such increase in 10 years. The minimum wage increases will result in millions of American workers receiving a long-overdue pay raise.
- ✓ **Changing the Way Business Is Done in Washington:** Congress will send landmark lobbying and ethics reform legislation to the President that will increase transparency in the legislative process, restore confidence in our government, and end the GOP culture of corruption.
- ✓ **Changing the Debate on Iraq:** Injecting -- for the first time -- real accountability on the President's policy on Iraq, requiring him to report on the Iraqi government's progress in meeting 18 key economic, political, and security benchmarks. Requiring neutral, outside validators including GAO and Retired Marine Corps General James Jones, Jr. to conduct similar assessments.
- ✓ **Equipping the American Economy for the 21st Century:** The Innovation Agenda will make sure we can compete in the global economy by investing in four key areas: math and science education, research and development, energy independence, and small businesses.
- ✓ **Restoring Fiscal Responsibility:** Democrats are the party of fiscal responsibility: Pay-As-You-Go budget rules were restored and PAYGO has been followed on every bill, with spending cuts paying for 80% of new costs.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Over the next few months, Democrats will complete work on several bills that will have a significant and positive impact on Americans' lives:

- ➔ **Making College More Affordable:** Democrats will strengthen America's middle class by making college more affordable for qualified students through the College Cost Reduction Act, which will make the largest investment in college aid since the GI Bill at no new cost to taxpayers.
- ➔ **Providing Health Care to Those Who Need It Most:** The CHAMP Act will help fulfill the bipartisan goal of ensuring that all eligible children have access to health care and protect Medicare for seniors by reducing vast overpayments to HMOs that drive up premiums for the vast majority of Medicare beneficiaries and ensure continued access to doctors.
- ➔ **Energy Independence:** Energy independence will strengthen national security, create new jobs, lower energy prices, and address global warming by: requiring that 15% of electricity come from renewable sources by 2020; improving energy efficiency to reduce energy costs to consumers—and in doing so reduce carbon dioxide emissions by nearly twice the annual emissions of all of the cars on the road; and making the federal government a leader in reducing energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions.
- ➔ **Investing Taxpayer Money Wisely:** Democrats will pass fiscally responsible appropriations bills that invest in America's priorities, such as education, homeland security, and health care.
- ➔ **Changing Direction in Iraq:** Democrats will continue to work toward a responsible redeployment of our troops.
- ➔ **Protecting America's Homeowners:** Democrats will revitalize the Federal Housing Administration to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to own their own home without turning to risky and predatory loans.
- ➔ **Farm Bill:** Makes real reforms by ending taxpayer payments to millionaires and instead directing assistance to those who need it most, while investing in conservation, renewable energy, nutrition, and rural development.
- ➔ **Patent Reform:** Will modernize our patent law to ensure that it spurs both job growth and innovation.

Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 9/5/07