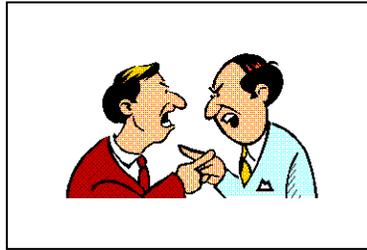




Rep. David Dreier



Rep. Bill Thomas



Rep. Tom Delay



Rep. Jim Nussle

Republicans Give New Meaning to “Do-Nothing” Congress

“After two days and one night of desultory activity [on April 28th] -- roughly their average workweek this year -- House members packed up and rushed home to their districts. Despite the burgeoning scandal over U.S. treatment of Iraqi prisoners and persistent concerns about the economy and the deficit, the House has been keeping bankers’ hours.” - Washington Post, 5/11//04

As Congress heads into the Memorial Day recess, Republicans’ infighting and refusal to abandon their right-wing agenda has stalled several bills important to the American people.

In a sluggish job market, Republicans have failed to complete two important jobs bills, a transportation reauthorization bill and a tax bill for domestic manufacturers; at a time of ballooning deficits, Republicans refuse to pay our bills, and would pass our debt on to our children in the 2005 budget; and at a time of record gas prices, Republicans have failed to pass an important energy bill.

Republicans can’t blame their failures on Democrats. Under Republican stewardship, this Congress has become a quicksand of right-wing ideology and intransigence that is swallowing up America’s priorities.

And, the GOP House is on track to be in Session the least number of days and pass the lowest number of bills for any one year in at least 25 years (see attached chart).

Democrats believe Congress should get back to work on America’s business, not bide its time until the election. And we will push Republicans to act on the bills listed below, which have been stalled for weeks and months and are important to the American economy and America’s future.

2005 Federal Budget

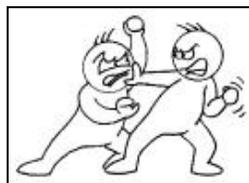
The House voted on a Fiscal Year 2005 budget resolution yesterday, seven weeks after conferees were appointed. The delay was due to serious divisions within the Republican Party over “pay-as-you-go” language, which was included in the Senate but not in the House budget, with moderate Republican Senators refusing to bow to their Party’s right-wing leadership’s demands for the green light to add billions to the national debt. “Pay-as-you-go” language, which many Republicans voted for in 1997 and which the President supported in his first three budgets, was the key in the 1990s to tackling the ballooning budget deficits and returning to fiscally responsible budgets.

The 2005 budget conference report is not a credible budget and marks a new low in the deterioration of the budget process by setting budget policy for only a single year, a practice last seen 25 years ago. It also makes a mockery of the "pay-as-you-go" provision by including it only for the Senate and only for one year, and exempting tax cuts protected under reconciliation. Moderate Senate Republicans appear to be sticking to their guns, while Republican leaders stick to their right-wing ideology of pursuing tax cuts rather than protecting Social Security and Medicare and pursuing investments in health care and education.

This budget is also an attempt to conceal the record deficits that Republican policies have created, and the fact that they have no plan to rein those deficits in. In fact, for the one year it does covers, it projects a deficit of \$367 billion. And it spares Republicans a politically embarrassing vote to increase the statutory debt limit by \$690 billion to more than \$8 trillion – the third increase in the debt limit in three years, bringing the total debt increase during that time to \$2 trillion. The Hastert rule, adopted at the beginning of this Congress, ensures there will be no debate and no vote on that action.

The fight over this budget and the product that has emerged from that fight are clear demonstrations of Republicans' inability to govern and refusal to address the problems that their own policies have created.

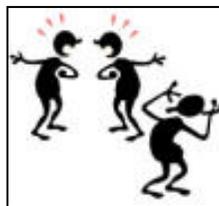
America is sure to be the biggest casualty of this budget battle.



FSC/ETI

Ways and Means Chairman Bill Thomas ignored a bipartisan bill (Crane-Rangel) that could have been passed quickly with broad support in the House and instead delayed progress for months as he tried to cobble together a "Christmas Tree" of miscellaneous tax breaks to win support for his measure (H.R. 2986) to end the foreign sales corporation / extraterritorial income (FSC/ETI) tax regime. This delay led to the imposition of what could add up to nearly \$4 billion in trade-related sanctions from the EU on struggling U.S. manufacturers. Meanwhile, in an effort to buy votes, billions of dollars in unrelated subsidies and tax breaks were added to the Senate bill, leading one lobbyist to tell the Washington Post that it has reached a "new level of sleaze."

Now that the Senate has passed a FSC/ETI bill, America's manufacturers are waiting to see if Republicans are capable of getting the job done – finally. But Chairman Thomas's refusal to work in a bipartisan manner and revolts within his own party continue to leave this important bill in limbo for the near future.



TEA-21: Transportation Bill

Nearly eight months and three temporary extensions have passed since the authorizing legislation for our nation's transportation system expired. On April 2nd, the House finally passed a reauthorization of the bill,

allotting \$284 billion for highway, bridge and transit programs over the next six years, significantly lower than the \$375 billion that Transportation Committee Chair Don Young (R-AK) believed would meet the country's needs. The Senate version totaled \$318 billion.

But bickering between the White House and House and Senate Republicans has put the breaks on this "jobs" bill. It is estimated that for every \$1 billion in federal highway and transit spending, 47,500 jobs are created. It is inexcusable that Republicans have let intra-party bickering get in the way of the creation of millions of jobs in a sluggish job market, not to mention needed safety and other improvements to the nation's roadways.



Energy Bill

Congress is anything but energized on the energy bill. The Conference Report, crafted by Republicans in a House-Senate conference committee with no input from Democrats, is a windfall for companies who are Bush campaign Pioneers and Rangers but shortchanges taxpayers and the environment. A bipartisan majority of Senators balked at the short-sighted, regionally imbalanced conference report, and Republicans cannot seem to figure out how to work towards a solution. Even last summer's power blackout, which disrupted the lives of 50 million people and cost the economy an estimated \$6 billion, and the record gasoline prices haven't spurred Republican leaders into re-crafting a smarter, bipartisan energy package.

"I think people are tired of all the gridlock they see in Congress,"

- House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Illinois. 11/06/02

Recent Congresses by Session	Years	Measures Passed*	Days In Session
96th (1st session)	1979	666	173
96th (2nd session)	1980	812	153
97th (1st session)	1981	433	163
97th (2nd session)	1982	625	140
98th (1st session)	1983	611	146
98th (2nd session)	1984	737	120
99th (1st session)	1985	596	152
99th (2nd session)	1986	772	129
100th (1st session)	1987	644	169
100th (2nd session)	1988	858	129
101st (1st session)	1989	598	147
101st (2nd session)	1990	772	134
102nd (1st session)	1991	592	154
102nd (2nd session)	1992	746	123
103rd (1st session)	1993	547	142
103rd (2nd session)	1994	579	123
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104th (1st session)	1995	483	168
104th (2nd session)	1996	529	122
105th (1st session)	1997	544	132
105th (2nd session)	1998	642	119
106th (1st session)	1999	657	137
106th (2nd session)	2000	877	135
107th (1st session)	2001	592	142
107th (2nd session)	2002	623	123
108 (1st session)	2003	674	133
108th (2nd session- as of May 3)	2004	152	43
108th (2nd session, projected based upon the Majority Leader's schedule**)	2004	396	99

* Includes House bills, joint, concurrent and simple resolutions

** Based on 56 days scheduled for session May 3 through Oct. 3, passing approximately 3.5 bills a day (bill passage rate as of May 3)



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
May 20, 2004

Contact: Stacey Farnen
202-225-3130

**REPUBLICANS GIVE NEW MEANING TO
“DO-NOTHING” CONGRESS**

*Leave for Memorial Day Recess with Legislation Important to
Jobs, Economy and Future Unfinished*

WASHINGTON – House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Ranking Democrats from three key House Committees assailed Republicans’ failure to complete legislation important to job creation, the economy and the country’s future. Heading into the Memorial Day recess, House Republicans failed to complete two important job-creation bills, a critical transportation reauthorization bill and a tax bill to aid domestic manufacturers, and a Fiscal Year 2005 Budget Conference Report that is necessary to rein in out-of-control deficits. The following is Congressman Hoyer’s statement as prepared for delivery:

“With the nation at war on terror, with the nation at war in Iraq, with record deficits and record job loss, the American people expect many things from Congress. Working ‘bankers’ hours’ is not one of them. This Republican-controlled Congress is on track to work the least amount of days of any session of any Congress in at least 25 years.

“Going by the House Republican Majority Leader’s calendar, America can expect Congress to be in session less than 100 days this year. Adding together the days we have been in session and those that GOP leaders expect we will be in session through October, the House will work just 99 days this year. The next fewest days in session would be 119 days in the second session of the 105th Congress.

“And, as we are here to discuss today, there is much that needs to be done. Republicans’ infighting and refusal to abandon their right-wing agenda have stalled the 2005 budget, which is key to reining in out-of-control deficits; slowed down the transportation bill, which would produce millions of jobs in a sluggish job market; allowed the European Union to impose billions of dollars of penalties on struggling U.S. manufacturers; and put the brake on an energy bill at a time of record gas prices.

“Republicans have made it clear that ‘doing nothing’ is their campaign strategy. Republican leaders have publicly stated they don’t intend to do much this year, and plan to coast until the November election.

“Democrats don’t want to coast. Democrats want to roll up our sleeves and get things done on behalf of the American people.”

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News From House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi
H-204, The Capitol, Washington D.C. 20515

<http://democraticleader.house.gov>

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Contact: Brendan Daly/Jennifer Crider, 202-226-7616

Pelosi: 'Republicans Talk About Jobs, Education and Health Care, But Do Nothing to Improve Them'

Washington, D.C. -- House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi joined Whip Steny Hoyer of Maryland, Caucus Chairman Bob Menendez of New Jersey, Congressman Charles Rangel of New York, and Congressman James Oberstar of Minnesota at a news conference to decry Republican's failure to enact legislation that addresses the needs of everyday Americans. Below are Pelosi's remarks:

"Thank you very much to our distinguished Whip Steny Hoyer, for calling us together this morning. Thank you for all of the work you have done to unify House Democrats around core Democratic principles and putting together an excellent piece of work about the work that needs to be done, and has not been done in this Republican Congress.

"In 1948, President Harry S. Truman called a special session of the 80th Congress because the rhetoric the Republicans had adopted in their convention platform did not match the reality of their actions in the Congress. Sound familiar?

"But when the Republicans did not deliver legislation to match their words, Truman called them the 'do nothing' Congress. Today's Republicans are much like those of 56 years ago. They talk about jobs, education, and health care, but do nothing to improve them.

"Let's judge this 108th Congress on what it has done and what it has not.

"When Americans lost 3 million jobs, including many due to outsourcing, what did this Republican Congress do? Nothing.

"When 3.8 million people lost their health insurance, what did this Republican Congress do? Nothing.

"While gas prices soar and wages fail to keep pace with inflation, what does this Republican Congress do? Nothing.

"So just what did the 'do nothing' Congress do?

"In addition to diminishing opportunity in our country, they passed new tax cuts for people making more than \$1 million per year. They began to dismantle Medicare with a cruel hoax of a prescription drug bill. And they underfunded the No Child Left Behind law by about \$9 billion each year. Again, they are diminishing opportunity. In fact, they are making matters worse for most Americans.

"If this Republican Congress thinks that is a job well done, then they are in complete denial about the needs and aspirations of the American people."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 20, 2004

CONTACT: Andrew Kauders, 202-226-3210

MENENDEZ: WHILE REPUBLICAN DO-NOTHING CONGRESS WAS EAGER TO NAME POST OFFICES, IT FORGOT ABOUT AMERICA'S PRIORITIES

WASHINGTON, DC -- House Democratic Caucus Chairman Bob Menendez (D-NJ) today joined Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD), ranking Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee Charlie Rangel (D-NY), and ranking Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Jim Oberstar (D-MN) to criticize the Republican Majority's 'do-nothing' record of missed opportunities and wrong-headed priorities. Menendez made the following statement:

“While our young men and women are fighting and dying in Iraq, lacking the body armor and essential equipment to successfully and safely perform their tasks; while our special forces lack the resources and intelligence to successfully apprehend Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan; while America's children and elderly lack health care to the tune of 43 million Americans without health insurance; while our veterans lack the retirement security they have earned through service to our country; while America's workers are being denied overtime pay; and while America's families are struggling to make ends meet as jobs are moved and created abroad and lost here at home, this do-nothing U.S. House of Representatives, during the 108th Congress, has named 62 post offices, passed 34 resolutions congratulating sports teams, named 9 federal buildings, and awarded 5 Congressional medals.

“Are we to believe that this Republican-led Congress was unable to address issues more important than voting on renaming post office buildings throughout the United States?

“Was the Republican leadership unable to squeeze in a little time to confront the skyrocketing and historic budget deficits their wrong-headed policies fuel?

“Was the Republican leadership unable to find a moment to address the soaring gas prices that are putting a burden on our small businesses and families?

“Clearly, doing nothing is their modus operandi, and doing wrong by America is the result.

“America, are you better off today than you were four years ago?”

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