

## Rothman Fights to Bring School Modernization Bill to Floor Vote

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### Rothman Fights to Bring School Modernization Bill to Floor Vote Legislation Would Provide Property Tax Relief to New Jersey

Washington, DC -- Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) today joined fellow House Democrats in an effort to allow a vote on a bipartisan school modernization bill that would provide \$660 million in bonding authority for New Jersey's public schools. Rothman signed a discharge petition, which if signed by more than half the members of the House of Representatives, would allow a vote on the bill to provide \$24.8 billion in school modernization bonding authority nationwide.

"As parents and educators know, our school buildings are in dire need of repair, and the burden to fix them is now solely on the back of local property taxpayers," Rothman said. "That is why New Jersey needs help from the federal government to help pay for our school construction and modernization needs without having to raise local property taxes." During the last Congress, the same bill "America's Better Classrooms Act," was co-sponsored by 230 members, more than the 218 needed to sign the petition. Already in the 107th Congress, the bill has 193 co-sponsors. The discharge petition is needed because the House Republican leadership which opposes the bill will not allow a vote. Discharge petitions have successfully been used in the past to force the House Republican leadership to bring bipartisan legislation such as the Shays-Meehan Campaign Finance Reform bill to the House floor for a vote.

"We cannot allow a handful of members of the Republican leadership to stand in the way of the bipartisan majority who want school modernization. This will help millions of students and property taxpayers in New Jersey," Rothman said. A recent General Accounting Office study shows the need for school modernization. It reported that in New Jersey, 87 percent of schools need to upgrade or repair buildings to good overall condition. It also stated that 69 percent of New Jersey schools report at least one major unsatisfactory environmental factor, such as poor ventilation, heating, lighting, or physical security.

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