

# New Direction Congress Making Progress for the American People

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(Washington, DC)—Today, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) joined Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, dozens of Members of the House Democratic Caucus, and community leaders to highlight the remarkable progress the 110th Congress has made for the American people. While touting landmark investments in college education, an increase in the minimum wage, and passage of the 9/11 Commission recommendations, among other accomplishments, the members also acknowledged there is much work left to do on issues ranging from the war in Iraq to energy independence, and renewed their commitment to moving America in a new direction.

Following is an update on key accomplishments of the New Direction Congress, compiled by the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

### ACCOMPLISHED

- First minimum wage increase in 10 years
- 9/11 Commission recommendations to screen all air cargo and overseas port cargo, improving communications between first responders
- Largest expansion of college aid since GI Bill
- Tough rules to establish highest ethical standards in Congressional history
- Most sweeping lobby and ethics reform in a generation, hailed by reform groups as "landmark reform" and "a sea of change"
- Pay-as-you-go budget discipline restored to end six years of deficit spending
- Fiscal discipline that produces a balanced budget by 2012
- A comprehensive Innovation and Competitiveness agenda to double basic research & development and reinvest in math and science education
- Emergency funding to support and equip troops, including tripling Mine-Resistant Ambush
- Protected (MRAP) vehicles in Iraq
- Tighter rules against foreign investment that weaken national security, after the Dubai Ports scandal
- Reduction of backlog on passports after 9/11 requirement through hiring boost
- Benchmarks and progress report required on Iraq

- Emergency assistance to protect children's health coverage
- Overdue hurricane aid to rebuild Gulf Coast housing, hospitals, schools, and levees
- Emergency funding to fight wildfires
- U.S. Attorney appointments protected from political influence
- Vigorous Congressional oversight restored after six years, saving billions of taxpayer dollars, exposing corruption and incompetence
- Green the Capitol plan launched to cut carbon footprint 50%
- National Summit on America's Children to align policies with latest science

#### ON PRESIDENT'S DESK FOR APPROVAL

- Key Flood Control and Waterway Restoration Re-investment, including for Gulf Coast

#### PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE

- New quality care standards for wounded military personnel
- Energy Independence initiative to promote clean American renewable fuels and energy efficiency, and to reduce global warming
- 3.5% military pay raise, larger than President's proposal
- Head Start preschool improved and expanded
- Reform of unethical practices by student loan industry
- Authorizing prosecution of gas price gouging and OPEC price fixing
- Sweeping reform of prescription drug safety

#### PASSED HOUSE

- Largest increase for veterans' health care in history
- Major new investments in equipment and training for troops to meet the worst readiness crisis since the Vietnam War
- 3,000 new border patrol agents, tougher aviation and port security funded
- Farm Bill for 21st century shifts priorities to family farmers, crop diversity, nutrition, and bio-fuels
- Clean, renewable energy spurred with \$3 billion investment
- Incentives for small business innovation to compete globally
- Federal small business loans made more affordable

- Small businesses guaranteed fair access to federal contracts
- Voter deception made a federal crime, voter intimidation penalties increased
- Seniors' access to doctors protected
- Discrimination based on genetics banned in health care
- Safe drinking water efforts expanded
- 50,000 new police officers on the street
- Background checks for gun purchases improved nationwide
- Collective bargaining rights allowed for public safety officers nationwide
- Protection for employees who suffer pay discrimination based on sex, race, or age
- Government contracting reformed to stop waste, fraud, and abuse
- Whistleblower protections strengthened
- Public access to Presidential records restored
- Public access to government strengthened through Freedom of Information Act reforms
- Members of Congress barred from putting spouses on campaign payrolls
- Shareholders given a vote on excessive executive pay

#### VETOED BY PRESIDENT OVER WILL OF PEOPLE

- Health coverage for 6 million children protected and millions more eligible children to enroll
- Timetables to responsibly redeploy troops from Iraq
- Expansion of life-saving medical research on stem cells

#### BLOCKED BY SENATE REPUBLICANS

- Rotation out of war zone requirement for strained troops
- Free choice for workers to bargain for better wages and benefits
- Medicare required to negotiate cheaper prescription drugs
- D.C. voting rights in Congress

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