

# **COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**

**CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN**



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **Davis Reappointed Chairman of House Government Reform Committee**

**Washington, DC** – The House Republican Conference voted today to reappoint Rep. Tom Davis chairman of the House Government Reform Committee for the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Davis said he intended to build on the strong legislative and oversight record he built during the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress – a cycle which saw major legislation like the National Security Personnel System, the D.C. School Choice Act, the Services Acquisition Reform Act, Postal Pension Reform, and significant portions of the 9-11 Implementation Act originate in the Government Reform Committee.

And Davis plans to continue to focus the committee's vast oversight agenda on waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in the federal government.

### **Davis issued the following statement on his chairmanship:**

“Over the past two years, we've accomplished much for the American people. We've passed serious legislation and conducted serious oversight. We held 176 hearings and mark-ups in 2003, and 165 in 2004 – dozens more each year than any other committee. But we've been more about quality than quantity.

“National security and national competitiveness. That's what my agenda boils down to; that's the thread that ties everything we do – both with legislation and oversight – together. We are striving for a 21<sup>st</sup> century government to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and fight 21<sup>st</sup> century enemies. And information is the oil of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

“The reality is, we are incapable of storing, moving and accessing information. No government does these things well, especially big governments. We spend \$150

billion a year on information technology. You'd think we could share information by now. But we are still an analog government in a digital economy and culture.

“The war on terror that threatens our country, and every civilized country, has the historic combat component, and our troops show every day just how effective the United States is in conventional combat. We have no peers in this arena.

“But America's enemies today do not confine themselves to conventional combat alone. They target communities, schools, and civilians. They fly planes into buildings and take great pride in the murder and maiming of scores and scores of innocent men, women and children. Combat soldiers, no matter how brave or well equipped, are not the optimal weapon in this environment.

“The optimal weapon is information. Information moved to the right people at the right place at the right time. Information moved within agencies and across departments. And information moved across jurisdictions of government as well. Seamlessly. Securely. Efficiently.

“It's not only the war on terrorism that demands a 21<sup>st</sup> century government – the economic health of our nation does as well.

“The efficient movement of information is critical to education, to the provision of social services, to environmental protection, to law enforcement. I believe those governments most competent in the management and movement of information will be those governments who can best defend their citizens and advance their economies.

“We were elected as reformers. We pledged to work to streamline the federal government; to root out waste, fraud and abuse in government programs; and to protect the rights and interests of the American taxpayer. I'm working to make the Government Reform Committee home plate when it comes to accomplishing these goals.

“If our aim is to locate the biggest sources of waste in government, we need look no further than the hundreds of billions of dollars we spend each year on acquiring needed goods and services, or on ineffective, duplicative government programs. But too often we look for fat as though it came wrapped in neat, tidy packages; too often we cut off fingers and toes.

“The reality is that waste is marbled throughout the bureaucracy. It rests within regulations that never should have been written, in filling out forms that should not have been printed, in procurements so complex that our under-trained contracting officers cannot properly manage them.

“We've accomplished much these past two years... but there's so much more to do.

“We’ve taken significant steps toward creating a performance-oriented civil service structure so that talented, committed Americans are drawn to public service and remain here. But we can go further.

“We’ve closely monitored large dollar federal contracts to make sure we’re getting what we want, how we want it, and maximizing the taxpayers’ dollar. But we can root out more waste.

“We’ve begun tearing down the stovepipe structures that have characterized government technology systems, to improve cross-agency communication and lower costs. But too many stovepipes persist.

“We’ve made great strides in the District of Columbia, addressing the challenges that remain in the post-Control Board era. But mismanagement remains too common.

“We intend to use the momentum created by the Committee’s many legislative and oversight accomplishments during the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress to further its good government, reform-focused agenda in 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. We’ll keep reminding ourselves: ‘It’s Reform, Stupid.’”

Postal Service Reform; drivers’ license security; reauthorization of Executive Reorganization Authority; Presidential appointments process streamlining; federal law enforcement pay and classification reform; reorganization of the General Services Administration; and further acquisition reform will be a significant part of the committee’s legislative agenda in 2005.

On the oversight side, the Committee will focus on the GAO’s high-risk list; management of the Department of Homeland Security; the battle against narco-terrorism; the FDA’s ability to ensure adequate flu vaccine availability and protect the public from dangerous prescription drugs; the evolving role of the National Guard; and the misuse of federal grant money in the District of Columbia, among other issues.

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