



Congressional Democrats believe America should work for everyone – not just those at the top – by building opportunity and prosperity for all, and guaranteeing real security at home and around the world. We know that Americans can work together to meet the serious challenges facing our country, create a stronger nation, and build a safer world.

With a firm commitment to honest leadership and tough budget discipline to end record deficit spending, we propose a legislative agenda – A New Direction – that unites rather than divides our country. Beginning with our goal of an America that strives for the common good, these are our legislative priorities in the 109th Congress for a New Direction.

SIX FOR '06

★ **REAL SECURITY AT HOME AND OVERSEAS**

Reclaim American leadership with a tough, smart plan to transform failed Bush Administration policies in Iraq, the Middle East and around the world. Require the Iraqis to take responsibility for their country and begin the phased redeployment of US forces from Iraq in 2006. Double the size of Special Forces to destroy Osama Bin Laden and terrorist networks like al Qaeda. Rebuild a state-of-the-art military capable of projecting power wherever necessary. Implement the bipartisan 9/11 Commission proposal to secure America's borders and ports and screen 100% of containers. Fully man, train, and equip our National Guard and our police, firefighters and other first responders. Honor our commitments to our veterans.

★ **BETTER AMERICAN JOBS - BETTER PAY**

Prohibit the Congressional pay raise until the nation's minimum wage is raised. End tax giveaways that reward companies for moving American jobs overseas.

★ **COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL**

Make college tuition deductible from taxes, permanently. Cut student loan interest rates. Expand Pell Grants.

★ **ENERGY INDEPENDENCE - LOWER GAS PRICES**

Free America from dependence on foreign oil and create a cleaner environment with initiatives for energy-efficient technologies and domestic alternatives such as biofuels. End tax giveaways to Big Oil companies and enact tough laws to stop price gouging.

★ **AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE - LIFE-SAVING SCIENCE**

Fix the Medicare prescription drug program, putting seniors first by negotiating lower drug prices and ending wasteful giveaways to drug companies and HMOs. Promote stem cell research that offers real hope to millions of American families who suffer from devastating diseases.

★ **RETIREMENT SECURITY AND DIGNITY**

Stop any plan to privatize Social Security, in whole or in part. Enact real pension reform to protect employees' financial security from CEO corruption and mismanagement, including abuse of the bankruptcy laws. Expand personal savings incentives.

## **THE WRONG DIRECTION**

The policies of the Bush Administration and the Congressional majority have taken the country in the wrong direction, making us less secure and putting the privileged few ahead of the common good.

### **WEAKENED SECURITY**

Failed to capture Osama Bin Laden or destroy al Qaeda; rushed to war in Iraq on manipulated intelligence with no realistic plan to win the peace; failed to provide strategy to stabilize Iraq or begin the responsible redeployment of our troops; strained the U.S. military; wasted billions on no-bid Halliburton and KBR contracts; failed to protect our borders, ports, transportation systems, and chemical plants; received failing homeland security grades from the nonpartisan 9/11 Commission; cut veterans' health care.

### **RISING ECONOMIC INSECURITY**

No minimum wage increase for 6.6 million Americans since 1997; real family income down since 2001 as CEO compensation soared; support for subsidies for outsourcing American jobs; \$5.6 trillion budget surplus turned into \$3.2 trillion deficit; national debt doubled to \$12 trillion by 2011.

### **RISING COLLEGE COSTS**

\$12 billion cut from college student aid; cost of loans increased; college Pell Grants frozen as tuition soars - 57% at public universities and 32% at private schools since 2000.

### **RISING ENERGY PRICES**

Gas over \$3 per gallon; growing dependence on foreign oil; billions in new subsidies for oil and gas companies despite record profits; blocked efforts against price gouging; opposed energy efficient technology and alternative fuels.

### **RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS**

Family health insurance costs up 70% (\$4,500 per family) since 2000; 6 million more uninsured; confusing Rx drug benefit prohibits negotiating lower drug prices; stem cell research obstructed.

### **RISING RETIREMENT INSECURITY**

Promoting substantial privatization of Social Security and benefit cuts for millions of retirees; employee pensions collapse while CEOs get golden parachutes.