

## The Elements of success in Washington



<b>H</b> Health subcommittee																	<b>He</b>						
<b>Li</b>	<b>Be</b>																	<b>Ne</b>					
<b>Na</b>	<b>Mg</b>																	<b>Ru</b>	<b>Si</b> Committee on Science & Technology	<b>P</b>	<b>S</b> Space & Aeronautics subcommittee	<b>Cl</b>	<b>Ar</b>
<b>K</b>	<b>Ca</b>	<b>Sc</b>	<b>Ti</b> Technology & Innovation subcommittee	<b>V</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Mn</b>	<b>Fe</b>	<b>Co</b> Committee on Energy & Commerce	<b>Ni</b>	<b>Cu</b>	<b>Zn</b>	<b>Al</b>	<b>Ge</b>	<b>As</b>	<b>Se</b>	<b>Br</b>	<b>Kr</b>						
<b>Rb</b>	<b>Sr</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Zr</b>	<b>Nb</b>	<b>Mo</b>	<b>Tc</b>	<b>Ru</b>	<b>Rh</b>	<b>Pd</b>	<b>Ag</b>	<b>Cd</b>	<b>In</b>	<b>Sn</b>	<b>Sb</b>	<b>Te</b>	<b>I</b> Investigations & Oversight subcommittee	<b>Xe</b>						
<b>Cs</b>	<b>Ba</b>	*	<b>Lu</b>	<b>Hf</b>	<b>Ta</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Re</b> Research & Science Ed. subcommittee	<b>Os</b>	<b>Ir</b>	<b>Pt</b>	<b>Au</b>	<b>Hg</b>	<b>Tl</b>	<b>Pb</b>	<b>Bi</b>	<b>Po</b>	<b>At</b>	<b>Rn</b>					
<b>Fr</b>	<b>Ra</b>	*	<b>Lr</b>	<b>Rf</b>	<b>Db</b>	<b>Sg</b>	<b>Bh</b>	<b>Hs</b>	<b>Mt</b>	<b>Uun</b>	<b>Uuu</b>	<b>Uub</b>			<b>Uuq</b>								
		<b>La</b>	<b>Ce</b>	<b>Pr</b> Consumer Protection subcommittee	<b>Nd</b>	<b>Pm</b>	<b>Sm</b>	<b>Eu</b>	<b>Gd</b>	<b>Tb</b>	<b>Dy</b>	<b>Ho</b>	<b>Er</b> Energy & Environment subcommittee	<b>Tm</b>	<b>Yb</b>								
		<b>Ac</b>	<b>Th</b>	<b>Pa</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Np</b>	<b>Pu</b>	<b>Am</b>	<b>Cm</b> Comm., Tech. & Int'l. Affairs	<b>Bk</b>	<b>Cf</b>	<b>Es</b>	<b>Fm</b>	<b>Md</b>	<b>No</b>								

### ON GORDON'S TABLE

U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon has been seated for the 111th Congress. He chairs one committee, Science and Technology, and is a member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and eight subcommittees.

## Obama's agenda promises plenty of support for science guy Gordon

By Mike Morrow  
THE TENNESSEAN

Rep. Bart Gordon got a phone call a few weeks ago from President-elect Barack Obama.

"The first thing he said was, 'I'm a science guy,' and he said he recognizes the need for science and innovation to move us forward," Gordon said.

That's good for Gordon. He's a science guy, too. The Democrat from Murfreesboro is chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology.

"We have a very aggressive agenda for the science committee," Gordon said by phone last week. But as eager as Gordon is to delve into projects important to his committee, he emphasizes the need to move on the president-elect's economic stimulus plan first.

"Job one is getting the economy moving," Gordon said. "It takes precedence over everything else."

Gordon is fortunate that some of the initiatives in Obama's massive economic stimulus proposal, a mind-blowing blueprint that could cost as much as \$1 trillion, are projects Gordon has been working on already. They include efforts to help produce alternative



AARON THOMPSON / FILE / GANNETT TENNESSEE

"We need to be expanding broadband to all Americans. We need to expand our electric grid. We need to bring in new sources of power ... and we can do all this in the context of getting the economy moving." — U.S. REP. BART GORDON

energy sources, computerize medical records and expand broadband Internet access.

"We're in a rather unique situation,

because we're looking for two-fers," Gordon said, referring to efforts that would not only create jobs but increase productivity, giving the United States a

competitive edge.

Gordon participated Wednesday in a Democratic Steering and Policy Committee forum in Washington that included economists with ties to figures as varied as former Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton and Sen. John McCain.

"What we heard was striking in the sense that it was so consistent," Gordon said. "It was a very diverse group, but there was a consensus opinion that we're in a very serious situation, the worst since the Depression. We have to take action, and we have to do it right. We need to do it in an effort to get two-fers to create jobs today that are jobs that will lead us forward, so we don't come back to it every two years."

Gordon's support of the Obama stimulus plan comes even though he's a member of the Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, known for its fiscal conservatism. The group is made up of deficit hawks, including Tennessee Reps. Jim Cooper, John Tanner and Lincoln Davis. That group is being watched closely as the proposal to spend heavily in the form of a stimulus plan unfolds.

Gordon emphasizes the United

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## Gordon sees smart spending as key to stimulus plan

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States needs to lead the world in technological breakthroughs, although he notes the need for caution in how it's done.

"As we look at the economic recovery package, it's multi-pronged," Gordon said. "There are tax cuts. There is more spending. There will be infrastructure investments that involve private sector jobs. We want to build bridges, but we don't want to build bridges to nowhere. We need to build bridges to the future. We need to be expanding broadband to all Americans. We need to expand our electric grid. We need to bring in new sources of power, including wind and solar, and we can do all this in the context of getting the economy moving."

"By moving the economy, we are creating jobs. If people are out of work, they're not paying taxes. Investment has to be made. It then produces revenue. We have to be smart about this. We have to do things right."

When he was told at one point it sounds like he's full-bore for the stimulus plan, he replied, "I'm full-bore if it's done right."

With an Obama stimulus on the horizon, one consistent critic of such a plan has been Richard Grant, professor of finance and economics at Lipscomb University.

"I think they totally misunderstand what's involved," Grant said last week of the stimulus supporters. "They seem to believe that

"If people are out of work, they're not paying taxes. Investment has to be made. It then produces revenue."

REP. BART GORDON  
On moving the economy

without intervention, the economy will go down, down, down. It will correct itself, if they will leave it alone. Their intervention will delay what we would call a recovery, and they will point to what they're doing as proof that what they were doing was necessary. They will completely misinterpret the history they created.

"The fact is we're going through all the price changes right now, which I think says we are beginning to recover."

Gordon is the only member of Tennessee's congressional delegation to currently hold a committee chairmanship. He is also a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Gordon was first elected in 1984, when Al Gore Jr. left his seat to run for the Senate. Gordon has staked out a solid position in Washington on science and technology issues.

Sometimes it seems you have to be a rocket scientist to understand the issues Gordon tackles. In fact,



President George W. Bush signs the New and Emerging Technologies 911 Improvement Act of 2008. Standing behind Bush are Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., Rep. John Shimkus, R-Ill., and Rep. Bart Gordon, D-Tenn. EVAN VUCCI / ASSOCIATED PRESS

you do have to be a rocket scientist on some of it, since Gordon's work includes NASA. But he has laid groundwork already on a lot

of the advances he seeks, and Gordon frequently credits Tennessee Sen. Lamar Alexander, a Republican, for working with him on

some of those issues.

Gordon's agenda, for example, includes health information technology, a field that is getting an enormous amount of attention right now.

"Health-care costs are taking money away from education and from households. It's cutting into everybody. With IT in health care, we can save money and save lives," he said.

Gordon promotes the STEM education initiative, where the focus is put on science, technology, engineering and math. He touts a concept known as ARPA-E, for Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy, modeled on DARPA, the defense system that developed the Internet, stealth technology and GPS devices. The idea of ARPA-E is to take risks on ideas that offer high rewards in energy technology.

Gordon sees a need to hook up with the private sector and with universities in ways where breakthroughs can be taken to market. His work includes finding ways to use water more efficiently, citing recent Midstate droughts as examples of why that's important. He wants to reduce electronic waste. It's a long list.

As for job creation, Gordon said, "What we don't want to do is pay a person to dig a hole and then pay another person to fill the hole. We want to create jobs today for more jobs ahead."

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