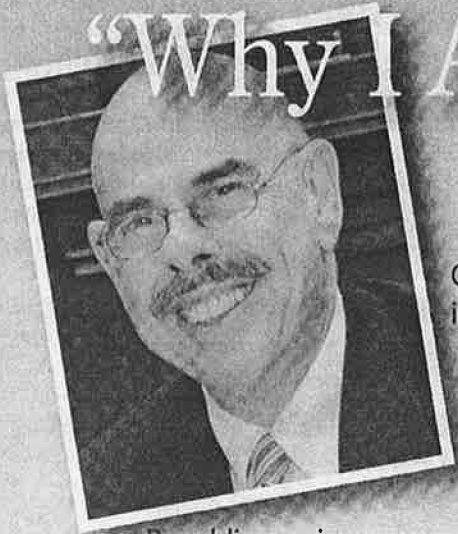


# "Why I Am A Democrat."



Over the last 60 years, landmark laws were passed to vastly improve our quality of life, which reflect Democratic Party ideals: Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, civil rights, environmental and consumer protections, food and drug safety, and educational efforts to give all children a chance for the American dream.

Republicans view government differently. They think of government as "the problem" and that it can't do anything right. Their view will lead to a society of haves and have nots, denial of justice and opportunities for the disadvantaged, and the lack of a safety net for seniors and the poor.

I have seen Republicans fight for the special interests while forgetting about people who need government help the most. I have seen Republicans protect big energy producers while neglecting our need to become energy independent both for our national security and to address global warming.

We want a government that lives up to our values of democracy, pluralism, and respect for human rights. These are the values by which the U.S. has stood by Israel. And these are the values Israel, as our only certain ally in the Middle East, embraces as well.

We don't want an America that tortures its prisoners, eliminates the rights of habeas corpus, snoops to learn what books we read, or gives into religious right extremists who want to stop embryonic stem cell research and to take away reproductive rights.

We don't need a government with good intentions for Israel's safety. A government that goes to war under false pretenses and does so incompetently will not make Israel more secure. What we need is a government that is skillful, competent, and lives up to our ideals.

*Henry A Waxman*

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Congressman Henry Waxman is Chair of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. He is also the most senior Jewish Member in the House of Representatives.