



E-NEWSLETTER

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Off and Running

As most of you know, the 111th Congress has been a particularly active one in its first two months. Unfortunately, just because Congress is doing *a lot* doesn't always mean it's doing *what's best*.

The Education and Labor Committee has been in the thick of this activist Congress, with major labor legislation brought to the House floor as the first substantive matter considered in the 111th Congress. You can read more about our concerns about the Ledbetter bill [here](#).

Our Committee's issues were also front and center in the debate over the government stimulus package crafted by congressional Democrats. Unfortunately, our Committee itself was completely excluded from the development of the legislation. It seems that in Democrats' haste to enact the \$787 spending bill, they didn't feel the need to involve the committees of jurisdiction.

While the stimulus package contains funding for a number of education programs that Republicans support, we have serious concerns about the manner in which these funds were allocated, and the financial controls that will be used to ensure taxpayers' interests are protected. You can read more about oversight of the stimulus package later on this page.

If the first two months are any indication, the 111th Congress is going to be one of the busiest ever – and not always with pro-student, pro-worker, or pro-taxpayer results. For our part, Committee Republicans will continue fighting for what we've always believed in: **fiscally responsible reforms for students, workers, and retirees.** We appreciate your continued interest, and look forward to keeping you informed and engaged.

The Battle Over the Secret Ballot Heats Up

The Education and Labor Committee will be home to one of the fiercest debates on this year's legislative agenda, and although the bill at issue has not even been formally introduced, we can tell you that the fight is already well underway.

Special interest groups including top labor bosses have mobilized in support of the misnamed *Employee Free Choice Act*, a bill that would actually *take away* an employee's right to freely choose by secret ballot whether to join a union.

Republicans aren't going to stand by while workers' democratic rights are taken away. That's why we're fighting back. Just this week, we [introduced](#) a bill of our own to ensure that workers are *guaranteed* the right to a secret ballot: it's the *Secret Ballot Protection Act*.

We're also putting out regular email updates highlighting strong opposition to the card check plan among newspaper editorial pages and the American public. And we're exposing little known facts about this dangerous legislation. If you would like to begin receiving these email updates, known as the *Secret Ballot Watch*, please email this [address](#) and let us know!

Education & the Stimulus: What About the Taxpayers?

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law a staggering \$787 billion "stimulus package" that includes roughly \$100 billion for various education programs. While Republicans are strong supporters of some of the programs funded in the stimulus—for example, Title I, IDEA, and Pell Grants—we have serious concerns about doubling the Education Department's budget without the

necessary safeguards in place to protect taxpayers.

How will the Department ensure states are in compliance with the rigorous requirements of the State Stabilization Fund? These requirements include teacher equity, data systems, and much more. And what impact will these requirements have on efforts in Congress to renew and reform the No Child Left Behind Act? Can we ensure that the full \$100 billion is spent wisely, on programs that work? And what will schools do in two years when these dollars run out? These are just a few of the many questions we want to see answered before \$100 billion in taxpayer dollars are pushed out the door.

We all recognize how difficult this economy is, and we know school systems are struggling with the rest of the country. But if we fail to provide oversight and accountability for this vast investment, it could go to waste. That's not good for students, schools, or taxpayers. Stay tuned for much more on this issue.

Staying Connected: Expanding New Media Resources

Every day, Committee Republicans search for new ways to reach the American people and spread the word about our work here in the nation's capital. Please visit us at our brand new Facebook page to learn more about the committee and keep up to date on our progress as we continue to use new media in a revolutionary way.



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