

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) earned an "A" from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for his continued work on behalf of causes important to the Civil Rights community.

The NAACP's Civil Rights Federal Legislative Report Card measures how elected representatives vote on legislation of critical importance to the African-American community and other friends of civil rights.

"I am deeply honored to earn the highest grade from this respected civil rights group," Hoyer said. "For decades, the NAACP has been doing its part to help ensure that Americans of every race have the opportunity to live the American dream. As long as I have the privilege of serving in Congress, I will continue to join in that fight."

Hoyer was graded for his votes on key issues, including an increase in funding for the fair housing program, hate crimes prevention legislation, and funding for historically black colleges and universities.

While Hoyer was pleased to support these important causes, he is disappointed in the direction of current policies in Washington. "Our public policy should reflect a higher moral code," Hoyer said. "Yet, Republicans in Congress have embraced an economic plan that refuses to raise the minimum wage, cuts student loans and Medicaid funding, increases the debt, and gives tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans."

Hoyer called on President Bush and Congress to join in supporting full election reform and protecting voting rights. "One of the landmark achievements of the Civil Rights Movement, led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was the Voting Rights Act of 1965," Hoyer said. "The Voting Rights Act was a major step forward in America's quest to live up to our ideals of equality and justice that are admired worldwide." Hoyer noted that certain parts of the VRA are scheduled to expire in 2007 and stressed that "it is critical that those provisions be reauthorized this year, so that no American's franchise is denied or impeded."

Hoyer said as Americans celebrate Black History Month and honor the legacy of Coretta Scott King, it is important for Congress to take a new direction and help lift up all of our people. "I am hopeful that some of my Republican colleagues will earn better grades on civil rights in the year

ahead.”

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