

Capitol Hill Report



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The 111th Congress: Yes We Can (Oppose the Liberal Agenda)

“Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice.” Those words, uttered by Barry Goldwater, must be the call of the conservative movement, especially in the coming months and years. Of course, we should remember that Goldwater also said, “to disagree, one doesn’t have to be disagreeable.” The election of November 4, 2008 brought fresh, predominantly liberal faces to Washington. In light of this fact, our movement must: unite to keep the freedoms we enjoy from further erosion, ignore the cries of extremism rising from the liberal media, and remember that in fighting the good fight, we must maintain civility. This *Capitol Hill Report* provides brief summaries of a number of issues I suspect the 111th Congress to address. I hope this brief will help you prepare for the battles ahead.

CENSORSHIP DOCTRINE

Commonly known as the “Fairness Doctrine”, the Censorship Doctrine attacks conservative talk radio by forcing stations to provide equal time to opposing viewpoints.¹ While the possibility of this issue arising in Congress may alarm moderate democrats (which may deter it for awhile), the new administration could easily avoid this costly political battle through regulatory action by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the guise of “localism” proceedings.² The push for localism proceedings will open the door for greater regulation of the airwaves and is a backdoor, bureaucratic maneuver to reinstate the Censorship Doctrine. Whether liberals push legislation through Congress or President-elect Obama’s FCC attempts to change the regulatory rules, all Americans must be ready to defend our freedom of speech.

¹ Fermier, Steve. WBAL Radio Baltimore. “FCC Commissioner: Don’t Look for Fairness Doctrine Revival.” 27 October 2008. Wbal.com/.

² <http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/CA6556060.html?display=Breaking+News&referral=SUPP&nid=2228>

HEALTHCARE REFORM

Leaders from both sides of the aisle support healthcare reform. Of course, we must be very careful when advocating government-reform and possible nationalization of any industry, especially one that comprises 16% of America's Gross Domestic Product.³ *The Washington Times* reported that healthcare reform "will command the attention and resources of both the new administration and key congressional committees".⁴ As I previously wrote in a *Capitol Hill Report* covering the presidential healthcare plans: "Conservatives understand that government-created and regulated 'solutions' rarely work. Therefore, we must take our knowledge of the free-market and channel it into care that emphasizes personal choice and responsibility, assistance for those who truly cannot afford or acquire insurance, and ultimately, reduced costs for everyone."

CARD CHECK LEGISLATION

The Employee "Free Choice" Act, more properly described as Card Check, is a major priority for Big Labor, congressional Democrats, and the Obama administration.⁵ The 4th Circuit Court of Appeals stated that "it would be difficult to imagine a more unreliable method of ascertaining the real wishes of employees than a 'card check', unless it were an employer's request for an open show of hands."⁶ Union bosses hope that by denying workers the right to vote in a private ballot election, thus opening the election to abuse and intimidation, they will see a reverse to their declining membership numbers. If this legislation is signed into law, expect union memberships⁷ and political contributions to liberal candidates⁸ to dramatically increase. Due to the undemocratic nature of card check, conservatives must oppose this legislation and defend the rights of American workers to privately vote in union elections.

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ATTACKS ON CAPITALISM

The 111th Congress will likely push a socialist economic agenda including more bailouts, stimulus packages, and tax schemes capable of causing Thomas Jefferson to turn in his grave.

³ "Health Insurance Costs". [The National Coalition on Healthcare](http://www.nchc.org/facts/cost.shtml). 22 December 2008. www.nchc.org/facts/cost.shtml.

⁴ Sands, David R. "Labor's 'priority' on back burner". *The Washington Times*. 29 December 2008.

⁵ Epstein, Richard A. "The Employee Free Choice Act Is Unconstitutional". *The Wall Street Journal*. 19 December 2008. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122964977342320545.html>.

⁶ "The Secret Ballot Protection Act: Reduce Coercion in Union Organizing; Protect Employee Privacy". [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](http://www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/enio7vmjn6soib43gcm7pm7mk2p2q3rfy3atv7l6hep24w3zzmb4dhzclsglpjz6frb5oc72mzqqb7m7lwwpoa26wyc/SecretBallotProtectionActPolicyPaperPDF.pdf). <http://www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/enio7vmjn6soib43gcm7pm7mk2p2q3rfy3atv7l6hep24w3zzmb4dhzclsglpjz6frb5oc72mzqqb7m7lwwpoa26wyc/SecretBallotProtectionActPolicyPaperPDF.pdf>.

⁷ Iglitzin, Dmitri. "Beyond 'Card Check'". *The American Prospect*. 18 May 2007. http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=beyond_card_check.

⁸ Kibbe, Matt. "Big Labor's Card Check is Bad News for Workers". [FreedomWorks](http://www.freedomworks.org/processor/printer.php?issue_id=2777). 17 January 2007. www.freedomworks.org/processor/printer.php?issue_id=2777.

- Bailouts: Proverbs 22:7 states, “The borrower is slave to the lender”. With a recession in full-swing, you can expect greater government-intrusion into the marketplace this year by offering bailouts to other failing industries. To avoid this dangerous and growing trend towards socialism, we must oppose these bailouts.
- Stimulus: The next Congress and President plan to pass a stimulus package that could possibly be *larger than any single bill in the history of the country*.⁹ Ronald Utt of The Heritage Foundation notes that “the impact of government spending programs that are intended to encourage economic growth is very modest and unlikely to enhance recovery or deter recession.”¹⁰ Additional spending cannot save the country from a crisis caused by spending.
- Taxes: President-elect Obama wants Congress to provide refundable tax credits to people who pay no income taxes. Simply stated, his plan amounts to welfare.¹¹ Conservatives should oppose new kinds of welfare, regardless of whether the payments come monthly or every year on April 15. We support policies that reward hard work and increase the size of every American’s piece of the pie.

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ATTACKS ON NATIONAL DEFENSE

With liberals in control of the White House and both houses of Congress, America’s national defense may be seriously compromised. Two areas likely to see spending cuts are missile defense systems and the size of the armed forces.

- Missile Defense: President-elect Obama signaled during the campaign that he would oppose “unproven” missile defense systems.¹² As Ambassador John Bolton has observed: “nothing in the military field is ever conclusively proven for all time”, making clear that such a test can be a pretense for terminating needed defensive programs.¹³

⁹ Nicholas, Peter. “Stimulus plan could shape course of Barack Obama’s presidency”. *Los Angeles Times*. 18 December 2008. < <http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-na-obama-stimulus18-2008dec18,0,1385571.story>>

¹⁰ Utt, Ronald Ph.D. “Learning from Japan: Infrastructure Spending Won’t Boost the Economy”. *The Heritage Foundation*. 16 December 2008. < <http://www.heritage.org/research/economy/bg2222.cfm>>

¹¹ Ferrara, Peter. “Obama’s Tax Plan Is Really a Welfare Plan”. *The Wall Street Journal*. 19 August 2008. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121910303529751345.html?mod=most_emaild_day>

¹² Bolton, John. “Obama and Missile Defense”. *The Wall Street Journal*. 13 November 2008. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122654051563123143.html?mod=googlenews_wsj>

¹³ lbed.

- Military Reduction: Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, recently proposed a plan to cut defense spending by 25 percent. Although his radical plan is unlikely to pass,¹⁴ it makes clear that powerful liberals would like to make large cuts in the defense budget.

National defense is one of the few activities of the federal government expressly mandated by the Constitution and it should receive our full support.

ATTACKS ON NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

Americans enjoy bountiful freedoms because our nation still recognizes the Constitution as law. However, many liberals tend to prefer international law over American Constitutional law. Watch for liberals to push the U.S. into the following three areas: the Law of the Sea Treaty, the International Criminal Court, and greater interaction with the United Nations.

- Law of the Sea Treaty: This treaty, if ratified by the next Senate and signed by the next president, will undermine U.S. sovereignty by putting the management and regulation of world oceans, America's coastal waters, and even some of our interior waterways under the authority of international bureaucrats and jurists.¹⁵ Among other things, it will also hamper our ability to collect intelligence in the territorial waters of other countries such as North Korea and Iran.¹⁶ A strong case exists for conservative opposition to the incoming administration's expected efforts to ratify the treaty.
- International Criminal Court: The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an international tribunal designed to prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression when a signatory nation refuses to do so on its own.¹⁷ To protect American troops and citizens from the reach of this international court, Congress passed and President Bush signed the American Servicemembers' Protection Act of 2002 (ASPA) which prohibits U.S. participation in the ICC and authorizes the president to use any means necessary and appropriate to secure the release of any U.S. citizen from the ICC.¹⁸ Conservatives must defend ASPA against any possible plans to undo the law.
- United Nations: President-elect Obama stated that he plans to restore the post of Ambassador to the United Nations (U.N.) to a cabinet-level position¹⁹, indicating the importance he places on this international governing body. While using the U.N. as a forum to interact with other

¹⁴ Tiron, Toxana. "Frank's plan to cut defense faces resistance". *The Hill*. 29 October 2008.

<<http://thehill.com/business--lobby/franks-plan-to-cut-defense-faces-resistance-2008-10-28.html>>

¹⁵ Spring, Baker. "The Top Five Reasons Why Conservatives Should Oppose the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea". *The Heritage Foundation*. 25 September 2007.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/InternationalOrganizations/wm1638.cfm> .

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷ "American Servicemembers' Protection Act of 2002".

http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/jol/vol40_2/faulhaber.pdf

¹⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁹ Baker, Peter. "Obama pick for UN ambassador known for tough stance on genocide". *International Herald Tribune*. 1 December 2008. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/12/01/america/rice.php>

nations poses no threat to conservative principles, we need not compromise U.S. sovereignty by submitting to the agenda of the trans-nationalists who want America to succumb to the dictates of the United Nations and its sister organizations.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE ACT

The Freedom of Choice Act threatens to violate the sovereignty of the 50 states and increase the number of innocent victims of abortion by an estimated 125,000 per year by “nullifying every legal limit on abortion, state, federal or otherwise.”²⁰

“We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.”

Conservatives understand that the right to life forms the foundation of all other liberties. After all, no one enjoys the freedoms offered by our great nation without first being allowed to live in it. Therefore, it’s essential that we defend the right of babies in the womb to be born, the constitutionally-allocated authority of the 50 sovereign states to promote their general welfare, as well as the soul of this nation by opposing the misnamed Freedom of Choice Act.

HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION

In the United States, homosexuals receive the same protections as every other citizen, but that could change because hate crimes legislation seeks to make them a specially-protected class. Bob Knight of the Culture and Family Institute says it could be used to “muzzle public discussion of homosexuality and even someday silence pastors.”²¹ What homosexuals really want is for all public opposition to their agenda to cease, an impossibility for people of faith and others who support traditional marriage. Conservatives must fight for equal protections under the law for all citizens. No more, no less.

EMPLOYMENT AND NONDISCRIMINATION ACT

The Employment and Non-Discrimination Act seeks to end discrimination against homosexuals by requiring all businesses to hire people who openly engage in homosexual or cross-dressing behaviors, despite sincerely held religious and personal beliefs.²² Conservatives must oppose this one-sided agenda and defend religious liberty while continuing to demand equal protections for all Americans.

GETTING READY TO WORK

The congressional and presidential elections on November 4, 2008 assured that we, as conservatives, will play political defense through 2010. Therefore, unity within the movement is more

²⁰ Bowman, Matt. “Barack Obama’s ‘Freedom of Choice Act’ Would Mean 125 K More Abortions”. *LifeNews.com*. 24 September 2008. <http://www.lifenews.com/nat4359.html>

²¹ Worldnetdaily.com. “‘Hate-crimes’ bill to muzzle Christian?” 6 October 2004. www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=40774

²² Barber, Matt. “ENDA Would Dismantle First Amendment Liberties”. Concerned Women for America. 11 May 2006. www.cwfa.org/articles/12949/MEDIA/family/index.htm

important than ever as we defend this country against the issues discussed in this *Capitol Hill Report* and more. No matter what your focus, keep in mind that a win on one issue is a win for everyone.

I'll close with the wise words of Benjamin Franklin as he and our other Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence. "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

ACTION ITEMS

- 1) Reach out now to your elected officials to develop a working relationship before the legislative session begins. To find contact information for senators, go to: www.Senate.gov. To find contact information for representatives, go to: www.House.gov.
- 2) Educate yourself on any of the issues mentioned here with which you are unfamiliar.
- 3) Be prepared to act upon CNP Action, Inc. *Action Alerts* that will keep you informed of current issues before Congress and request your support in legislative battles.
- 4) Pass this report on to those in your network.

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