

The NOPA Legislative Alert

As a part of NOPA's mission to empower Portuguese-Americans, this Legislative Alert is sent out as pertinent developments occur in order to keep the community informed of legislative action at the national level. This objective, non-partisan report aims to educate those interested about action on Capitol Hill that may affect the Portuguese-American community at large.

The source for all Congressional legislation information on this report was the THOMAS system from The Library of Congress (<http://thomas.loc.gov/>). Links for each of the bills listed above direct readers to the THOMAS web page specific to the bill.

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Week of June 22 to 26

Senate

S. 1359 - The 'Foreign Adopted Children Equality Act' was introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on June 25. This bill aims to provide US citizenship to children who are adopted outside of the United States by American parents. [Click here for this bill's text](#)

House of Representatives

H.R. 3090 - The 'Health Equity and Accountability Act' was introduced and referred to the House Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, Education and Labor, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, Armed Services, Veteran's Affairs and Agriculture on June 26. This bill aims to improve the access for health care of minorities. It also aims to support efforts by institutions committed to diversity in the workforce, among other issues. [Click here for this bill's text](#)

H.R. 3109 - The 'Health Access and Health Professions Supply Act of 2009' was introduced and referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, Veteran's Affairs, Education and Labor, Armed Services and Natural Resources on June 26. This bill aims to address the need for health professionals in rural areas of the United States in order to achieve better access to health care for said areas. [Click here for this bill's text](#)

H.R. 3110 - The 'Foreign Adopted Children Equality Act' was introduced and referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary and Foreign Affairs on June 26. This bill, like the Senate's S. 1359, aims to provide US citizenship to children who are adopted outside of the United States by American parents. [Click here for this bill's text](#)

Week of June 29 to July 3

No major action to report.

Week of July 6 to 10

House of Representatives

H.R. 3115 - The 'Small Business Health Care Affordability Act of 2009' was introduced and referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means on July 7. It aims to provide small businesses and respective employees with credits for health insurance coverage. [Click here for this bill's text](#)

H.R. 3149 - The 'Equal Employment for All Act' was introduced and referred to the House Committee on Financial Services on July 9. It aims to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act in order to prohibit the use of credit checks for employment purposes, unless required by law. [Click here for this bill's text](#)

President's Message on Independence Day

Remarks of President Barack Obama
Weekly Address
The White House
July 4, 2009

Hello and Happy Fourth of July, everybody. This weekend is a time to get together with family and friends, kick back, and enjoy a little time off. And I hope that's exactly what all of you do. But I also want to take a moment today to reflect on what I believe is the meaning of this distinctly American holiday.

Today, we are called to remember not only the day our country was born - we are also called to remember the indomitable spirit of the first American citizens who made that day possible.

We are called to remember how unlikely it was that our American experiment would succeed at all; that a small band of patriots would declare independence from a powerful empire; and that they would form, in the new world, what the old world had never known - a government of, by, and for the people.

That unyielding spirit is what defines us as Americans. It is what led generations of pioneers to blaze a westward trail.

It is what led my grandparents' generation to persevere in the face of a Depression and triumph in the face of tyranny.

It is what led generations of American workers to build an industrial economy unrivalled around the world.

It is what has always led us, as a people, not to wilt or cower at a difficult moment, but to face down any trial and rise to any challenge, understanding that each of us has a hand in writing America's destiny.

That is the spirit we are called to show once more. We are facing an array of challenges on a scale unseen in our time. We are waging two wars. We are battling a deep recession. And our economy - and our nation itself - are endangered by festering problems we have kicked down the road for far too long: spiraling health care costs; inadequate schools; and a dependence on foreign oil.

Meeting these extraordinary challenges will require an extraordinary effort on the part of every American. And that is an effort we cannot defer any longer.

Now is the time to lay a new foundation for growth and prosperity. Now is the time to revamp our education system, demand more from teachers, parents, and students alike, and build schools that prepare every child in America to outcompete any worker in the world.

Now is the time to reform an unsustainable health care system that is imposing crushing costs on families, businesses, large and small, and state and federal budgets. We need to protect what works, fix what's broken, and bring down costs for all Americans. No more talk. No more delay. Health care reform must happen this year.

And now is the time to meet our energy challenge - one of the greatest challenges we have ever

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confronted as a people or as a planet. For the sake of our economy and our children, we must build on the historic bill passed by the House of Representatives, and make clean energy the profitable kind of energy so that we can end our dependence on foreign oil and reclaim America's future.

These are some of the challenges that our generation has been called to meet. And yet, there are those who would have us try what has already failed; who would defend the status quo. They argue that our health care system is fine the way it is and that a clean energy economy can wait. They say we are trying to do too much, that we are moving too quickly, and that we all ought to just take a deep breath and scale back our goals.

These naysayers have short memories. They forget that we, as a people, did not get here by standing pat in a time of change. We did not get here by doing what was easy. That is not how a cluster of 13 colonies became the United States of America.

We are not a people who fear the future. We are a people who make it. And on this July 4th, we need to summon that spirit once more. We need to summon the same spirit that inhabited Independence Hall two hundred and thirty-three years ago today.

That is how this generation of Americans will make its mark on history. That is how we will make the most of this extraordinary moment. And that is how we will write the next chapter in the great American story. Thank you, and Happy Fourth of July.

Source: [White House Website](#)