

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#).

You're receiving this email because of your relationship with The National Organization of Portuguese-Americans. Please [confirm](#) your continued interest in receiving email from us.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



January 13, 2011

Legislative Alert ©

As a part of NOPA's mission to empower Portuguese-Americans, this Legislative Alert is sent out every two weeks 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.

If you have any questions about federal policy and proposed legislation, please contact NOPA's Government Affairs Team at info@nopa-us.org or 703-389-3512.

The 112th Congress Convenes

Last week, the 112th Congress was sworn in. Much of the first week consisted of administrative business such as changing rules in the House and selecting leadership positions.

You can find out who your Representative in the U.S. House is here:

<http://www.house.gov/>

And find out who your Senators are here:

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Rosters for House and Senate Committees should be firmed up in the next couple weeks. We'll send out an update once the rosters are updated.

While the Senate is not to begin its work until Jan. 24th, the House had originally planned to hold this week a vote on a bill that would repeal the overhaul of the nation's health care system. However, the shooting of Arizona Democrat Gabrielle Giffords and 19 others has prompted House leaders to cancel all pending action on legislation this week, as lawmakers grapple with the fallout from the attack. "In consultation with the Speaker and the Democratic Leadership, I have postponed all previously-scheduled

legislation for the coming week to accommodate any action needed in light of [Saturday's] tragic events in Arizona," House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., said in a statement.

A date next week has not yet been set for the vote on repealing the health reform law, but we fully expect it to easily pass the House. The vote will largely be symbolic, since the Senate (still controlled by Democrats) will not bring the repeal legislation up for action in the Senate. Even if the Senate did act on the bill to repeal health reform, it would be extremely unlikely that it would garner the 60 votes needed to pass, and surely would be vetoed if somehow it did pass the Senate. However, many of the new House Republicans ran on a campaign platform that included repealing the health reform law, so the House Speaker is making sure those Members have the ability to vote for repeal.

Upcoming Agenda in Congress

As mentioned above, the House plans to vote on H.R. 2, legislation that would repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and make recommendations for replacing certain provision in the law. The House will also try to chip away at the law by trying to eliminate funding for specific provisions and also limiting funding for federal agencies to implement the law.

We also expect action on several areas pertaining to the federal budget such as:

- **Completing the Appropriations for FY2011.** The government is currently being funded by a CR (Continuing Resolution), which expires March 4. The Congress must complete appropriations bill to fund the government from March 4 to the end of FY2011, September 30. We expect major battles in Congress over the funding levels for the rest of FY2011 as well as the FY2012 budget that begins Oct. 1.

- **Deficit Reduction.** We expect a great deal of attention and many efforts made to reduce long-term deficits and expect battles over how much deficit reduction should be done from cuts in spending and how much from increasing revenue.

- **Debt Ceiling.** Congress will need to vote to extend the debt ceiling to ensure that the government does not default on its loans. This could be a major battle since many new members have expressed their opposition to raising the debt ceiling until major cuts are made in federal programs.

- **Constitutional Balanced Budget Amendment.** Sens. Orrin Hatch, R-UT, and John Cornyn, R-TX, plan to unveil legislation that would create a balanced budget when the Senate convenes. In the House, several Constitutional Balanced Budget Amendment bills were introduced last week and we anticipate action on this in the coming month(s) in both chambers.

Immigration Legislation Introduced

Below are pieces of legislation introduced last week that could potentially affect our community. Please note that Serrano's bill, H.R. 250 would give discretion authority back to immigration judges to determine removal, deportation, or exclusion of individuals - something that leaders in our community have been pushing for since immigration legislation was passed in 1996.

Introduced Jan 7, 2011

By Mr. **BACA**:

H.R. 218. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for naturalization for certain high school graduates; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. **SERRANO**:

H.R. 250. A bill to provide discretionary authority to an immigration judge to determine that an alien parent of a United States citizen child should not be ordered removed, deported, or excluded from the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Introduced Jan 4, 2011

By Mr. **ISSA**:

H.R. 43. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the diversity immigrant program and to re-allocate those visas to certain employment-based immigrants who obtain an advanced degree in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. **ISSA**:

H.R. 45. A bill to amend section 276 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to impose mandatory sentencing ranges with respect to aliens who reenter the United States after having been removed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. **ISSA**:

H.R. 46. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for nonimmigrant status for an alien who is the parent or legal guardian of a United States citizen child if the child was born abroad and is the child of a deceased member of the Armed Forces of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

About Us

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.

You can find a PDF file of this and other alerts at NOPA's [website](#). If you have any questions about this or other legislation, please contact NOPA's Government Affairs Team at info@nopa-us.org or 703-389-3512.

The National Organization of Portuguese-Americans is a national non-profit, tax exempt organization that supports and works with communities and organizations to advocate for and empower Portuguese-Americans. If you feel inspired to join our mission, please send your tax deductible contribution to:

NOPA, Inc.

**PO Box 2652
Falls Church, VA 22042**

Join Our Mailing List!

Forward email



This email was sent to info@nopa-us.org by info@nopa-us.org |
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).
The National Organization of Portuguese-Americans | P.O. Box 2652 | Falls Church | VA | 22042