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TO: Chairman Pryce  
FROM: Press Office  
RE: Communications – The Week Ahead  
DATE: June 5, 2006

Theme of the Week: Securing America's Future

House Republicans will continue to move our agenda to secure America's future by passing legislation to promote energy independence, fiscal responsibility, and economic competitiveness.

Overall Message:

Energy

Gas prices remain to be front burner issues as Americans take to the road for summer trips. We have continued to advance energy initiatives to increase our supply and after a suspension defeat weeks ago, this Wednesday the House will take up the Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act. A clear source of high prices at the pump can be attributed to the lack of refineries.

Spending

This week three appropriations bills will come to the floor and we will have a vote on the supplemental. The Democrats have proposed additional spending in each case and made clear that if they were in control they would raise taxes and increase spending, passing on the tab to the American public.

By the end of this week we will have passed seven appropriations bills, and are on track to finishing all the appropriation bills by July and under budget for the second year in a row. Also on the floor this week will be Telecomm which will increase competitiveness and give consumers lower costs.

OTHER ISSUES

The special election in California has been headlining the news as the Democrats claim a defeat could signal a tidal wave this fall. I will defer to Chairman Reynolds, but clearly, win or lose it will have an effect on our message. Other prominent issues this week are the gay marriage debate in the Senate and the status of immigration (POTUS will be giving speeches regarding the issue this week).

Conference Update & Announcements

Member Messaging Session: George Will will be the guest for the Member Messaging Session on Wednesday at noon in 202a. Lunch will be served.

Stakeout: Following conference, the leaders will attend stakeout in HC-6 directly after conference to discuss this week's theme, refinery bill and potentially the California special election.

Refinery bill: We are currently putting together a post passage Refinery presser.

Medicare Messaging

Extensive memo on everything Conference has done on the issue will follow.

## CONFERENCE PRODUCTS

Samples: Sample statements on appropriations bills, the refinery bill and telecom.

One Pagers: Theme of the Week, Members on Message, and Working for America Emails.

## GROUPS IN TOWN

Associated Builders and Contractors

## SPECIAL ORDERS

Tuesday: Rep. Price, Truth Squad

Wednesday: Rep. Ros Lehtinen, IR Committee Tribute to Chairman Hyde

Thursday: Rep. Carter, Border Security

Friday: Rep. Terry, Drug Law Enforcement

## Polling Update

Iraq ranks as top priority, with fuel/oil prices and immigration also drawing attention.

Gallup (May 22-24) finds increased attention on Iraq and fuel/oil prices, with immigration a particularly high concern among Republicans. Gallup asks respondents to name the top priority for the President and Congress: 42% mention Iraq (up from 29% in April), 29% mention fuel/oil prices (up from 13% in April), 23% mention immigration (20% in April), 14% mention the economy (unchanged from April), and 12% mention health care (9% in April). Among Republicans, Iraq still ranks first with 37%, but immigration follows closely at 33%, as does fuel/oil prices at 30% (economy and health care trail at 10% and 7%, respectively). Among Democrats, Iraq holds a clear lead at 47%, followed by fuel/oil prices at 26%; economy (17%), immigration (14%), and health care (12%) make up the second tier.

Diageo/Hotline (May 18-21) also finds Republicans far more likely than Democrats to mention immigration as the nation's most important problem. Immigration ranks second among Republicans at 15% (Iraq ranks first at 26%). Among Democrats, Iraq (38%) and the economy (14%) form the first tier, with immigration trailing at just 6%.

Gallup (May 8-11) also finds fuel/oil prices figures prominently in Americans' negative perception of the economy. When Gallup asks those who say the economy is bad to name the reason, 26% point to fuel/oil prices, followed by 21% naming unemployment/jobs, 14% inflation/rising costs, and 10% outsourcing. When Gallup asks Americans to name the most important financial problem for their families, 20% name fuel/oil prices, followed by 17% naming health care costs, and 14% lack of money/low wages.

Democracy Corps offers good news on Medicare drug benefit.

Democracy Corps (May 18-24) finds voters rate the program positively by a 42% to 37% margin, a reversal from April's 35% to 40% margin. Ratings have improved dramatically from March's 30% to 40% margin and January's 21% to 53% margin.

Diageo/Hotline shows approval of Congress steady for the year, although disapproval has inched upwards.

Congress holds a 29% to 64% approve to disapprove margin, compared to February's 30% to 61% and January's 31% to 59%.

Diageo/Hotline finds 35% rate Congressional Republicans favorably, with Congressional Democrats holding a stronger 43% favorable rating. However, Democracy Corps shows the parties share similar “warm” ratings (36% for Republicans and 37% for Democrats).

Diageo/Hotline survey shows Democrats with intensity advantage.

As mentioned in previous memos, 2006 surveys have revealed a troubling trend in intensity, with Democrats taking the advantage. Diageo/Hotline shows 59% of Republicans say they have “a lot” of interest in the upcoming election, compared to 65% of Democrats.

Furthermore, the survey reveals greater party satisfaction among Democrats than among Republicans. Republican voters favor the GOP on the Congressional ballot by an 81% to 4% margin, while Democrat voters favor Democrats by a wider 88% to 2% margin. Republicans by a 70% to 10% margin say the country is better off if Republicans control Congress; Democrats favor Democrat control by a wider 85% to 2% margin.

Diageo/Hotline shows some improvement in generic ballot, although Republicans lost ground on preference for control of Congress, and the percentage who would definitely reelect their Member has declined.

Republicans trail on the Diageo/Hotline generic ballot 36% to 42%, better than February’s 31% to 46% and similar to January’s 33% to 40%.

Yet at the same time, Democrats have expanded their lead on preference for control of Congress. Republicans trail by 13 points (30% to 43%), compared to 9 points in February (29% to 38%) and just 2 points in January (35% to 37%).

25% say they would definitely vote to reelect their Member, down from 29% in February and 31% in January.

Democracy Corps shows Republicans trailing on the generic ballot 43% to 51%, similar to results from earlier in 2006.

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Diageo/Hotline finds 35% rate Congressional Republicans favorably, with Congressional Democrats holding a stronger 43% favorable rating. However, Democracy Corps shows the parties share similar “warm” ratings (36% for Republicans and 37% for Democrats).

Diageo/Hotline: “And, thinking about next election for U.S. Congress, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate in your district where you live?”

Democracy Corps: “Now thinking about the election for Congress this November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for (Democratic candidate) or (Republican candidate)?”

Diageo/Hotline: “And, in your opinion, do you think the country would be better off if the Republicans controlled Congress or if the Democrats controlled Congress?”

Diageo/Hotline: “And do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?”