

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today continued his mission to bring transparency and accountability to Washington by voting to require additional disclosure on lobbyist activities and deny members of Congress who have been convicted of certain crimes their Congressional pensions.

These measures, and many others, were included in S.1, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, which passed the House today with a 411 to 8 vote.

“The American people deserve a Congress that is more transparent and more accountable than ever before,” said Mitchell. “Where the last Congress failed to act, the new Congress is making changes. It is unbelievable to me that, until now, members of Congress could be convicted of public corruption and still collect their taxpayer-subsidized pensions in prison. These reforms are an important step in the right direction.”

Mitchell has previously voted to require greater lobbying disclosure. On May 24, Mitchell voted in favor of H.R. 2317, which required the quarterly disclosure of campaign contributions. Also on May 24, he voted in favor of H.R. 2316, which required reports on lobbyist who “bundle” campaign checks. [Source: Roll Call Vote No. 420; Roll Call Vote No. 423]

The Honest Leadership, Open Government Act of 2007:

- Prohibits members of Congress from receiving taxpayer-funded pension benefits if convicted of corruption while serving in office,
- Requires, for the first time, reports on lobbyists who “bundle” campaign checks totaling \$15,000 or more for members of Congress,
- Prohibits members of Congress from attending national political convention parties held in their honor and paid for by lobbyists or their clients,
- Requires lobbyists to disclose their activities quarterly instead of twice annually,
- Establishes an online database of lobbyist disclosure information,
- Strengthens criminal and civil penalties for violating the Lobby Disclosure Act to \$200,000 and five years in prison,
- Requires current members Congress to disclose job negotiations for post-Congressional employment and to recuse themselves for purposes of a conflict of interest, and

- Establishes an online, searchable public database of Member travel and personal financial disclosure forms.