

CongressDailyAM

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

JAN. 10, 2003

Hunter Outlines Priorities As House Armed Services Chairman

■ By Richard H.P. Sia / Senior Editor

DEFENSE

NEW HOUSE ARMED SERVICES Chairman

Hunter said Thursday that his committee's mission this year and next will be to significantly increase military spending on weapons, technology and troop salaries, well beyond even the increases President Bush is expected to announce next month.

While that should be good news for defense contractors, Hunter told an afternoon news conference he would push Pentagon officials to set up a system that lets small vendors "challenge" current arms makers by offering technology that would be cheaper, better and delivered faster into the field than what might already be in the procurement pipeline.

This would bring competition to the existing system and "will put pressure on producers who have become too comfortable" selling "overpriced" and less innovative warfighting platforms and weapons to the Pentagon, the San Diego Republican explained.

Hunter also castigated the "procurement bureaucracy" for taking too long, sometimes "dozens of years," to bring new equipment to U.S. combat forces. "Some big success stories — like the Predator — occurred because the exigencies of war drew them into the theater," he said, referring to the pilotless surveillance and attack aircraft that has been deployed successfully in the overseas war on terror.

In addition, the new chairman said *continued on page 5*

GOP Sets Panel Rosters, Dems Fill Some Slots

■ By Mark Wegner

Staff Writer

HOUSE
LEADERSHIPA DAY AFTER HOUSE
Republicans

chose their new committee chairmen, the Republican Steering Committee Thursday finished making its recommendations for vacant committee slots.

The GOP Steering Committee's recommendations will not become final until ratified by the full Republican Conference later this month.

While vacancies on the so-called exclusive committees — Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, Rules and Ways and Means — were filled earlier, the Steering Committee plowed through other panels' vacancies Thursday.

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee filled 10 GOP vacancies, most of which were created

by members leaving to join exclusive committees.

The new GOP members are **Reps. Peter Hoekstra** of Michigan, **Gary Miller** of California, **Chris Chocola** of Indiana, **Bob Beauprez** of Colorado, **Michael Burgess** of Texas, **Max Burns** of Georgia, **Steve Pearce** of New Mexico, **Jim Gerlach** of Pennsylvania, **Mario Diaz-Balart** of Florida and **Jon Porter** of Nevada.

Legislators generally need a waiver to serve on more than one of the exclusive committees.

Reps. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, **Mark Kirk**, R-Ill., and **John Culberson**, R-Texas, left Transportation and Infrastructure to take seats on Appropriations. **Reps. Mike Rogers**, R-Mich., **Michael Ferguson**, R-N.J., and **C.L. (Butch) Otter**, R-Idaho, left for Energy and Commerce. *continued on page 4*

▼ TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

Floor Schedule

Senate

Convenes at 9:30 a.m., with votes possible if an agreement is reached on a new organization resolution.

House

Not in session.

(Committee schedules begin on page 15)

Note To Readers

In today's edition, *CongressDailyAM* is pleased to bring you the second in a continuing series of special sections — prepared by the staff of our sister publication, *National Journal's Technology Daily* — which will focus on subjects of interest to the technology sector. An in-depth look at the technology-related agenda of the newly convened 108th Congress begins on page 7.

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A new year's wish



By Wendy J. Hamilton
*National President, Mothers
Against Drunk Driving (MADD)*

Safety on the roads should be a top priority at all times, but especially at this time of the year. All too often, Americans fall needlessly through dangerous gaps in the drunk-driver control system.

For decades, this nation has lost thousands upon thousands of innocent lives due to the senseless decision to drink and drive. The frequency of these tragedies has declined since MADD was founded in 1980. However, the number of alcohol-related traffic deaths has begun to rise alarmingly over the most recent years.

Last year alone, 17,448 people were killed—the equivalent of one person every 30 minutes. More than half a million people are injured every year in crashes involving alcohol.

Many people have become complacent about drunk driving, perhaps believing the problem has been solved or that tragedy only strikes other people. My personal experience tells me this is far from the truth. I've lost four dear loved ones, including my sister Becky and nephew Timmy, in three separate drunk driving crashes.

With more licensed drivers on our roadways and a teen population boom on the horizon, the

facts tell us the future won't be any brighter on this issue unless we start to take notice and take action.

Unlike many things we cannot control in these turbulent times, drunk driving is 100 percent preventable. If every American begins the New Year with a personal resolution not to drink and drive, we can save lives.

It is also time to send law enforcement, judges and state and federal officials a strong mes-

sage that stopping drunk driving must be a priority. It means tougher laws and enforcement, more federal funding for these initiatives and innovative programs such as people who serve as independent monitors in DUI courts.

In the months ahead, we are urging America to "Get MADD All

Over Again."

We are asking that others help provide support for the victims and survivors of drunk driving. But more than that, we are asking that everyone think twice before getting behind the wheel after drinking. We are asking that people write their senators and representatives. We are asking that people donate their time, talents and resources because they are needed now more than ever.

Every American matters and every American can make a difference. Please seize this opportunity and join our efforts to make our roadways and communities safer. Your life, and those of your loved ones, may depend on what you can do.

**Drunk driving
is 100 percent
preventable**



MADD
Activism | Victim Services | Education™

126,000

The shortage of nurses in hospitals. In addition, there is a shortage of thousands of other health care professionals.

41 Million

Americans without health insurance. Hospitals provide the health care "safety net" for America's uninsured.

Billions of Dollars

Amount hospitals must spend on new medical technology — and still billions more for disaster readiness.

Billions of Dollars Cut

Congress and the Administration allowed billions of dollars in hospital funding cuts last year.

1 in 3

Hospitals already operating in the red.

0

Number of bills signed into law in 2002 to help solve the funding crisis in America's hospitals.



These numbers add up to a crisis for America's hospitals. It's time for Congress to act. Because America's families depend on strong hospitals.

Hospitals Need Congress' Help. Now.

www.ProtectHealthCare.org

Paid for by the Coalition to Protect America's Health Care.