

Matsui Supports Lobbyist and Congressional Reform Proposal Calls for measures to restore public trust

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Calls for measures to restore public trust in government.

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Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-05) joined House and Senate Democrats to unveil their Honest Leadership, Open Government Act, an aggressive reform package to reverse Republican excesses and protect the public trust.

“Sadly, the actions of a few over the past decade have led to a disappointing chapter in the history of Congress and have allowed the priorities of the American people to go unaddressed,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “Sacramentans are concerned about the high cost of health care, about creating good jobs that support their families, and about the quality of their children’s education. We need reform immediately if we are to restore the public’s trust.”

The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act will focus reforms on four key areas.

• It will close the revolving door between government and K Street lobbying firms by strengthening the ban on lobbying by former Members of Congress and senior government officials after they leave to work in the private sector, and require lawmakers to disclose when they are negotiating private-sector jobs to shine the light on conflicts of interest.

• It will fix the gift and travel rules that allowed the Jack Abramoffs of the world to buy Republican influence in Congress, ensuring that legislation will never again be written in smoky back rooms by industry lobbyists.

• It will put an end to the K Street project, in which Republicans have greater political access to corporations and lobbying firms who hire Republicans and contribute heavily to Republican campaigns.

• It will increase accountability in government, and allow the public to see exactly what their elected representatives are doing in Washington.

Additionally, Congresswoman Matsui is an original cosponsor of the Special Interest Lobbying and Ethics Accountability Act, which was introduced in May 2005. This legislation would, among other things, increase lobbyist disclosure, curb excesses in Congressional Travel, and toughen enforcement and oversight. House Democrats returned to Washington for an issues conference this week.

“Congress needs to change the way it does business. This isn’t just about reforming how lobbyists work, we also need to reform the Congressional practices that produce legislation counter to the best interest of the American people.”

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