

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

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**Davis Praises House Approval of
D.C. Appropriations Conference Report**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) is pleased to announce that the House of Representatives today approved the Conference Report for H.R. 4850, “The District of Columbia FY05 Appropriations Act,” by a vote of 377 to 36. Once agreed to by the Senate, the D.C. appropriations bill will head to the President’s desk for signature.

The appropriations bill provides a total of \$560 million in direct federal funding to the District of Columbia – including, for the second straight year, \$40 million for educational initiatives and an increase to \$25.6 million for the D.C. College Access Program, which provides tuition assistance grants for D.C. high school graduates.

“The cooperation and speed in which the Conferees worked on the D.C. Appropriations bill is unprecedented. This will be the first spending item of the year to clear both houses of Congress that is not related to defense. I want to extend my thanks to Chairmen Frelinghuysen and DeWine, along with the rest of the Conferees, for their effort to not use this bill as a platform for pet social issues. Too many times in the past, Congress has invalidated the wishes of local officials and D.C. citizens through controversial policy riders,” said Chairman Davis.

The bill recognizes the fact that D.C. has come a long way in putting its financial house in order by allowing the District to reduce its emergency fund from 7 percent to 2 percent and its contingency fund from 6 percent to 4 percent. The District has balanced its budget for seven consecutive years, without tricks or gimmicks, and it has a cash reserve that is the envy of almost every municipality in the nation.

“I am particularly pleased the Conferees agreed to the House’s spending proposal for the D.C. College Access Program. The impact of the Tuition Assistance Grant program is undeniable,” commented Davis. “The Tuition Assistance Grant represents a

shot at a better education and, in turn, a better life for countless D.C. children. This spending increase levels the playing field for D.C. residents, who do not have an in-state college system, like the rest of the country.”

Out of the \$40 million in the D.C. Appropriations bill for education, \$13 million is designated for D.C. public schools for teacher training, recruitment and improving student achievement; this money comes on top of the current increases in federal education programs for D.C. public schools. Another \$13 million for D.C. charter schools will help support and expand their capacity. In addition, there is \$13 million for the D.C. School Choice scholarship program, along with an additional \$1 million for administrative expenses.

“The condition of D.C. Public Schools has concerned me since the first day I came to Congress as Chair of the D.C. Subcommittee. While we’ve made strides since then, the quality of educational opportunities in the Nation’s Capital should continue to worry us all. One thing is clear: too many children in our Nation’s capital are not getting the education they need and deserve.

“Lower-income families concerned about the quality and safety of their children in District of Columbia public schools should not have to resign themselves to sending their children to under-performing schools where students are not adequately motivated to perform. School choice will make a huge difference in the lives of thousands of low-income children,” added Davis.

Among other projects for which Davis helped secured funding in D.C. Appropriations Bill:

- * \$400,000 for World Vision’s Kids In Need Community Storehouse
- * \$300,000 for the Capital Area Food Bank
- * \$5 million for Children’s Hospital Capital Development
- * \$200,000 for the D.C. Digital Community Inclusion Initiative
- * \$100,000 for Youth Technology Hub at the Thurgood Marshall Center

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