



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –January 13, 2009

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Hoekstra Criticizes Democrats’ “Committee-Packing” Plan, Decision to Ignore 9/11 Commission

WASHINGTON, D.C. *U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Mich., the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, today criticized House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s plan to increase the number of Intelligence Committee Democrats while slashing the number of Republicans. The Speaker’s decision is the exact opposite of what the 9/11 Commission recommended and reverses Democrats’ pledge to enact all 9/11 recommendations.*

“This is a brazen move by Democrats to pack the Intelligence Committee and drive intelligence into a partisan realm,” Hoekstra said. “From cutting pork-barrel earmarks in the intelligence bill to continuing the Terrorist Surveillance Program, the committee made bipartisan, centrist decisions several times during the last Congress. Speaker Pelosi has clearly made a decision that the ‘D’ beside a Member’s name is more important than national security and conducting strong, bipartisan intelligence oversight.”

Hoekstra pointed to page 421 of the final report of the 9/11 Commission, which plainly states that the majority on the Intelligence Committee should never exceed the minority by more than one vote, to underscore the hypocrisy of the partisan power-grab by congressional Democrats.

He also noted that in a mid-December phone call, President-elect Obama emphasized his commitment to working cooperatively with Hoekstra and Republicans on intelligence matters. In a call that covered a number of topics, Hoekstra and Obama discussed the need for greater transparency between the White House and Congress and the importance of building consensus on national security issues.

“Apparently Speaker Pelosi has decided the change that is sweeping Washington stops at the Capitol door,” Hoekstra said. “Instead of following president-elect Obama’s lead and reaching out, the Speaker has chosen to erect new barriers to cooperation. On matters of national security we should be trying to come together, not pushing Congress farther apart.”