

The Pelosi Report

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Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi

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Dear Friends:

Happy New Year! Since its launch last year, the readership of **The Pelosi Report** has grown to include a wide array of people throughout the country concerned about issues affecting the African American community. This first edition for 2004 is dedicated to the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As House Democratic Leader, I have the pleasure of leading the House Democratic Caucus, where the essence of Dr. King's dream is reflected through our diversity and by embracing bold ideas for America's future. As we begin this second session of the 108th Congress, House Democrats will continue to work and fight for policies that reflect the priorities of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Nancy Pelosi

Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader

State of the Union: A Question of Priorities

Leader Pelosi and Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle offered a pre-buttal to the President's State of the Union address, and discussed the need to confront the urgent challenges facing our nation at home and abroad. Below is an excerpt from the her remarks:

"...On Tuesday, President Bush will deliver his State of the Union address. Today, Senator Daschle and I are here to remind President Bush about "the fierce urgency of now" — the need to confront the urgent challenges facing our nation at home and abroad.

The State of the Union address should offer a vision and goals that unify us as a people, as well as policies that reflect the priorities of all Americans. For inspiration as a country, we need look no further than our remarkable men and women in uniform - active, Guard and Reserve - especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

(continued on page 2)



A Salute to Dr. M.L. King, Jr.

In honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 75th birthday, Leader Pelosi stated:

"...Dr. King challenged the conscience of our country and affirmed our dearest values. He lived his life in the belief that 'liberty and justice for all' is not just a pledge, but a fundamental principle that must guide us as a people.

Because of Dr. King and the millions of ordinary Americans who fought for civil rights, our country has made significant progress. The National Urban League's 2003 report on the State of Black America reveals that more black families have joined the middle class and that the number of black businesses is increasing. Census Bureau figures indicate that African Americans are graduating from college in greater numbers.

While we celebrate those successes, we cannot rest. As Dr. King said more than 40 years ago at the 1963 March on Washington, we must 'remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off....Now is the time to make justice a reality for all God's children.'

Dr. King challenged us. Let us honor him by building a country of opportunity that values our beautiful diversity, where all people have the chance to realize their God-given potential. Dr. King lifted our hearts, he improved our lives, and he called on us to live up to our beliefs. Let us all commit to building an America that makes 'justice a reality for all of God's children...'

To view Leader Pelosi's entire statement, visit <http://democraticleader.house.gov>.

"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve."

— Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1968, "The Drum Major Instinct."



Students Speak !

Earlier this month, Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-MD) and Rep. Kendrick Meek, (D-FL) addressed and listened to the concerns of students at Florida A&M University (FAMU) in Tallahassee.

Empowerment, voting, the future of historically black colleges and universities, the economy, and issues of war and peace were just some of the topics discussed.

“You are the leaders. Don’t give up,” Rep. Cummings exclaimed as he encouraged the students to become more involved in civic issues. “You don’t have to be elected to lead,” said Rep. Meek. “The game is not inside the Capitol; it’s outside.”

The CBC townhalls and Leader Pelosi’s African American Workgroup forums are opportunities to talk with a new generation of Americans and listen to their concerns.



Larry Rivers, FAMU SGA President, Virgil Miller, FAMU SGA Vice President, Rep. Cummings (D-MD), Rep. Meek (D-FL), and FL State Legislative Black Caucus Chair, Rep. Ed Jennings.



Students Taking A Stand !

On Thursday, January 15, approximately 2,000 Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) students, elected officials and community members, marched six miles from their campus to the Waller County Courthouse to lay claim to their right to vote in local elections.

The march not only highlighted the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but also the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that favored PVAMU students in their right to vote in Waller County instead of their home states. The students and Waller County officials had battled for years over the residency requirements for voting until the Court’s decision settled the matter January 15, 1979.

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) told the crowd of young people, that the march is part of “the movement.”



“There is no final ‘movement’,” she said. “The ‘movement’ has to be in your soul.”

State of the Union continued...

Their noble service reminds us of our mission as a nation - to build a future worthy of their courage and their sacrifice.

All Americans should listen closely to the State of the Union address next week to see if the President’s reassuring rhetoric matches everyday realities. Sadly, if the past is prologue, the President’s speech will be another missed opportunity to offer the leadership worthy of a great nation and an agenda that addresses the urgent priorities of the American people.

Our union is indeed strong. Our strength as a union is due to the spirit of the American people - the creativity, ingenuity, hard work, and faith of everyday Americans and their abiding optimism that tomorrow can be even better than today. But in homes across America, families are uncertain about their future. Americans want good jobs, better access to health care, the best education for their children, a clean environment, and a safe and secure America.

Democrats will fight to expand prosperity and opportunity for all Americans, and will work to ensure the safety and security of the American people...”

To view the the speech in its entirety, visit <http://HouseDemocrats.gov>.



“Make a career of humanity - and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)