

Castle Votes to Deny Pensions to Members of Congress, Others Convicted of Bribery, Conspiracy, Perjury -- January 23, 2007

Washington D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today voted for the "Congressional Pension Accountability Act" which prevents individuals convicted of certain felonies relating to their official duties from receiving their congressional pensions, including any former Member of Congress. Currently, if a former Member is convicted of a crime, he or she continues to receive their retirement benefits through the federal government.

"The American people should not have to pay for the pensions of those former Members and other Federal employees who have committed certain crimes and today's passage hopefully returns some of the faith that our fellow Americans have lost in Congress over the past few years.

"However, once again, I believe the Democratic majority missed a golden opportunity for true reform, by refusing a vote on a more comprehensive bill that originally passed the House in 1996, and of which I am a cosponsor (H.R. 14), that increases the number of offenses under which a former Member would be denied their retirement benefits. Some of these additional offenses include compensation to Members of Congress, officers and others in matters affecting the Government; false, fictitious or fraudulent claims; expenditures to influence voting; and intimidation to secure political contributions.

"This legislation will build on ethics reform legislation already passed by the House, but I still believe we need to go further, by creating an outside investigations commission with respect to any alleged illegal and unethical behavior by Members of Congress," Castle said.

The "Congressional Pension Accountability Act" denies federal retirement benefits to any individual convicted of:

- Bribery of public officials and witnesses
- Conspiracy to commit offense or to defraud the United States
- Perjury

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