

Washington, D.C. - Yesterday afternoon, Representative David Price (D-NC) and other members of the House Democracy Partnership (HDP) met with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during her visit to Washington, DC. President Johnson Sirleaf updated HDP's members on Liberia's political and economic development and thanked the lawmakers for their continued work with the country's parliament.

The House Democracy Partnership is a bipartisan commission of the House of Representatives that works directly with the legislatures of Liberia and 12 other developing democracies to strengthen their institutions of governance. Rep. Price has served as the senior Democratic member of the commission since its creation in 2005, including as chairman from 2007-2010. The commission is currently chaired by California Republican Rep. David Dreier.

HDP's program in Liberia was initiated in 2006, shortly after the end of the country's devastating civil war, and has been a central focus of the commission's work in Africa. Over the last five years, HDP members have led three delegations from the U.S. House to Liberia, hosted three delegations of Liberian legislators for training programs in the United States, and conducted multiple training programs for Liberian staff in both countries. The commission has also played an instrumental role in the construction and development of the Liberian parliament's research library. (Read more about [HDP's program in Liberia on the commission's website](#) .)

President Johnson Sirleaf has been a strong supporter of HDP's work in Liberia, and Rep. Price welcomed the opportunity to host the president during her Washington visit:

"Liberia's democratic institutions are crucial to ensuring the country continues to make progress," Rep. Price said. "Doing what it takes to sustain and strengthen legitimate governance beyond a country's first democratic election, and between elections, has been a major focus of the House Democracy Partnership. We are pleased that President Johnson Sirleaf shares this important goal with us."

Last year Rep. Price led a delegation of members to Liberia over the Fourth of July holiday. Upon the delegation's return, Reps. Price and Dreier co-authored a column reflecting on the experience and the importance of U.S. support for emerging democracies:

"This July Fourth, as Americans congregated around their barbecue grills and fireworks displays to celebrate our nation's independence, we sat with six of our House colleagues in the Liberian village of Kakata, listening to a particularly vocal crowd of citizens air its grievances. More money was needed for a local school; a nearby bridge was on the verge of collapse; the government had not done enough for persons with disabilities.

"This may sound like a familiar story, but there's a twist: their comments weren't directed at us, but rather at the Liberian legislators who had organized this town hall meeting. Our delegation had been invited to attend not as participants but as observers — as witnesses to Liberia's fragile but maturing democracy, five years after free and fair elections brought an end to one of the bloodiest civil wars in modern history. And like voters the world over, these constituents weren't about to let their elected representatives escape the podium easily." (Read the entire column [here](#)).

In addition to Liberia, HDP's current partner legislatures include Afghanistan, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, and Timor-Leste. HDP members and staff offer targeted assistance in areas critical to building parliamentary capacity such as legislative oversight, budget analysis, committee operations, constituent relations, and library and research services. The partnership's singular focus on the legislative branch of government and its unique ability to bring together American legislators and staff, and their peers from around the world have made the commission a valuable forum for strengthening democratic institutions and deepening bilateral relations.

