

**Washington, D.C.** - Congressman David Price (D-NC) today announced that he will lead a delegation of fellow House members to Colombia this week to work with Colombian legislators on strengthening institutional capacities for good governance.

Price, who is chairman of the [House Democracy Assistance Commission](#), will be accompanied by Reps. David Dreier (R-CA), Rush Holt, (D-NJ), Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD), Sam Farr (D-CA), Jeff Miller (R-FL), and Adam Schiff (D-CA). The Colombian Congress is one of 12 legislative bodies throughout the world with which the House commission has established a partnership.

The delegation of HDAC members will spend most of the week in the capital Bogotá, where they will meet with President Alvaro Uribe and several members of the Colombian Congress, as well as human rights and labor leaders, representatives of Afro-Colombian communities, and other key government officials. Price, the other U.S. congressmen and House staff will engage in a series of discussions and presentations with various committees of the Colombian Congress to share their knowledge of legislative procedure, including bill research and drafting, oversight of the executive branch, and independent budgetary analysis. The commission members will also discuss the status of a proposed US-Colombian free trade agreement with the Colombian Trade Minister and labor leaders. The commission also plans a meeting with the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights and representatives of the Colombian Military on internally displaced people and the U.N.'s work to monitor the human rights situation in the country.

"From demobilization of paramilitaries and the war on drugs to rural development and improving labor standards, Colombia is now wrestling with a wide array of critical challenges that will shape the future of that nation and all of Latin America," Price said. "The Colombian Congress will play an essential role in these debates, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to work with our colleagues in the Congress to help strengthen its tools for confronting these challenges."

The delegation will also travel with Colombian lawmakers to Medellín, the country's second largest city, to discuss constituent relations. There, they will take site visits to examine USAID programs to provide alternative livelihoods to coca growers and the Colombian government's efforts to demobilize paramilitary groups.

After an initial assessment visit by House staff, the House Democracy Assistance Commission voted to formally partner with the Colombian Congress last year. A delegation of Colombian lawmakers traveled to Washington, DC in April, where they observed first-hand the workings of the United States Congress. They also met with a number of U.S. House members, including Price, to discuss the American legislative process and the tools that U.S. lawmakers employ to promote their legislative agendas. Following the program in Washington, the Colombians visited the California district of Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) to observe a typical member's constituent services and local outreach efforts.

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