Promoting the development of democracy around the world is a principal foreign policy objective of our nation. The right of all people to have a say in the affairs of their country is not just a core American value; it also serves our strategic interests by fostering political stability and economic growth and minimizing the destructive impact of failed states.

I have long believed that the United States Congress, as the world's oldest existing democratic assembly, has a unique contribution to make in this effort. That is why I worked with my colleagues to establish the House Democracy Partnership (HDP), which I now help lead as Co-Chair. HDP is based partly on my work in the early 1990s with the House of Representatives Frost-Solomon Task Force, which was charged with providing assistance to Parliaments in the new states emerging from the former Soviet Union. Now, the commission is working to promote democratic development throughout the world with partner legislatures in Afghanistan, East Timor, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mongolia, Pakistan, and Peru. Many of these countries are of great strategic importance to the United States.

In working with the legislatures of developing democracies, our work is founded on the core belief that an effective legislative branch is critical to the strength and vitality of democratic government. HDP provides direct procedural, technical, and material assistance to members and staff in partner legislatures, working to build the capacity of democratic institutions and share our nation's experience with the fundamental building blocks of effective, independent legislative governance, such as budgetary analysis, legislative research, and committee oversight.

For more information about the House Democracy Partnership, you may wish to visit the Partnership's website .

Related links:

- For more information about U.S. foreign assistance programs, visit foreignassistance.gov
- National Journal: House Democracy Partnership Sees Opportunity in Changing Middle East

Rep. Price and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

Rep. Pilsbury Tsea Cherpenning of the Freedom Center for Media and Cultural Excellence in Amman, Jordan. The Center's mission is to conduct the development of independent media