

Public Affairs Section

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Press Release

Members of the United States House of Representatives to Visit Botswana

The U.S. Embassy is pleased to announce that a delegation of Members of the United States House of Representatives will visit Botswana October 11 – 13. The visiting Congressmen and Congresswomen include:

- Rep. David Dreier of California, Chairman of the House Rules Committee
- Rep. Karen Bass of California
- Rep. Robert L. Turner of New York
- Rep. Russ Carnahan of Missouri

The purpose of the trip is to meet with Government of Botswana officials, as well as leaders in business and civil society, to discuss opportunities for expanding trade and investment ties between the United States and Botswana. In Gaborone, the group will meet with members of the newly formed American Chamber of Commerce in Botswana and other private sector leaders in the energy, technology, and financial sectors. The delegation will also meet with Members of Parliament from the Gaborone area.

In Kasane, local government officials will brief the delegation, followed by a meeting with officials of the Kavango – Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area. The group will also meet with private sector representatives of the conservation and tourism sectors, including members of the Chobe Community-based Conservation Management team. The delegation will also visit a U.S.-supported Teen Club.

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Biographical Information

Rep. David Dreier

David Dreier was first elected to Congress in 1980 on a platform of free markets, limited government, strong national defense, and personal freedom. Throughout his service in the House of Representatives, Dreier has remained true to these principles as he has worked to secure the border, keep taxes low, and promote democracy abroad. He has also been a stalwart supporter for a more cost-effective and accountable government.

Dreier was born on July 5, 1952, in Kansas City, Missouri. Dreier moved to California for college and never left. He graduated cum laude from Claremont McKenna College in 1975 and

earned a Master's degree in American Government from Claremont Graduate University the following year. From 1976 to 1978, Dreier served as Director of Corporate Relations for Claremont McKenna College. He also worked in marketing for a San Dimas industrial firm until his first election to Congress.

Dreier holds numerous positions of influence in the House. He became a member of the House Leadership when he took the helm of the powerful House Committee on Rules in January 1999. As the youngest Rules Chairman and the first from California, Dreier plays a pivotal role in fashioning all legislation for debate in the House. He continues to serve as the Chairman of the Rules Committee and in the Republican Leadership as a voice for reform and oversight in Congress. In May 2001, Dreier was unanimously selected by his California colleagues to chair the state's Republican Congressional Delegation, a position he continues to hold. As Chairman, he leads California's House Republicans on critical statewide issues.

As a leader for reform in Congress, Dreier has been at the center of efforts to promote good governance. He authored the 1995 congressional reform package that streamlined committee staff, promoted fiscal responsibility, created term-limits for committee chairman, and opened committee meetings to the public and press. In 2006, Dreier authored bold and comprehensive legislation to reform lobbying and ethics laws. The reform package included stronger penalties for breaking the rules, online public access to lobbyist disclosures, and more rigorous ethics training in Congress.

Dreier consistently wins 100 percent approval ratings from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, and the National Retail Federation for his support of small businesses. He has repeatedly been honored with the Hero of the Taxpayer Award by the Americans for Tax Reform. The Sierra Club has honored him with the Clean Air Award and he was honored by the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority for his outstanding leadership and contributions to groundwater cleanup. For his work to bring about a change in Mexico's extradition policy, Dreier was awarded the Outstanding Service Award by Justice for Homicide Victims. He has also received the Spirit of Life Award from the City of Hope for his efforts in support of cancer research, and was the inaugural recipient of the City of Hope's President's Award recognizing his commitment to the advancement of science and care for patients with cancer.

He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and serves on the board of the International Republican Institute. Dreier is the founding chairman of the House Democracy Partnership (HDP), which works directly with the legislatures in 12 countries around the globe, helping to build democratic institutions in new and re-emerging democracies.

Since 1980, Congressman Dreier has served his constituents with integrity and hard work. For the benefit of California and the nation, he remains steadfast in his commitment to promoting economic opportunity, secure borders, and effective government.

Rep. Karen Bass

Karen Bass was elected to Congress as the Representative from California's 33rd Congressional District in November 2010 with 86 percent of the vote. From her experience balancing California's budget in the State Assembly, she was asked to serve on the House Budget Committee. In addition, she serves on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and is a member

of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health and Human Rights. She was selected by Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi to serve on the prestigious Steering and Policy Committee, which sets the policy direction of the Democratic Caucus. She also serves as the national co-chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's Women LEAD organization, which recruits and raises money to support Democratic women running for Congress. Bass is also a member of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

She has focused on issues facing working Americans and continues a long term commitment to transform the foster care system. In her first term, Bass created the bipartisan Foster Youth Caucus along with co-chair U.S. Rep. Tom Marino (R-Pa.), and intends to examine national standards of care in the child welfare system. In 2012, Members of the Caucus will travel the nation examining best practices and the challenging conditions that foster youth face in our country. She is also a co-chair of the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Coalition on Adoption.

In an effort to be responsive to the people in her district, Representative Bass created the 33rd Congressional Council, which provides an opportunity for constituents to learn firsthand about the issues in Congress and how to become involved in the legislative process. The Council, composed of all volunteers, seeks to engage other 33rd District residents in public policy, both domestic and internationally.

Prior to serving as the Representative from District 33, Bass made history when the California Assembly elected her to be its 67th Speaker, catapulting her to become the first African American woman in U.S. history to serve in this powerful state legislative role. Bass served as speaker during California's greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression. In addition to helping to navigate the state through a very difficult time, she also championed efforts to improve foster care and quality healthcare for Californians. Also, under Bass' leadership the Assembly fast-tracked federal economic stimulus legislation that aided Californians who have been affected by the national economic crisis as well as jumpstarted billions of dollars of infrastructure projects.

Before serving as an elected official, Rep. Bass became interested in community activism as a child watching the Civil Rights movement with her father. It was at that time that Rep. Bass made a lifetime commitment to effecting social change in her community and abroad. She worked for nearly a decade as a Physician Assistant and served as a clinical instructor at the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program. In 1990, in response to the crisis that was gripping inner city America, which in Los Angeles was crack-cocaine and gang violence, Rep. Bass started and ran the Community Coalition, a community-based social justice organization in South Los Angeles that empowers residents to become involved in making a difference. Through her leadership at the Community Coalition, Rep. Bass worked to address the drug and violence epidemic and to engage community residents in addressing the root causes of injustice.

Bass had one daughter, Emilia Bass-Lechuga and son-in-law Michael Wright. Bass continues to be inspired by Emilia and Michael's passion for life. Emilia planned to follow in her mother's footsteps working for social change. Rep. Bass also has four step children.

She grew up with three brothers in the Venice/Fairfax area of Los Angeles. She is the only daughter of DeWitt and Wilhelmina Bass. She graduated from Hamilton High School, Cal State Dominguez Hills, and the University of Southern California's School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program.

Rep. Robert Turner

In September 2011, the people of New York's 9th Congressional District elected Bob Turner to represent them in Washington D.C. making him the first Republican since the 1920's to be elected to the seat.

Bob Turner is a lifelong resident of the 9th District of New York. He was raised in Woodhaven as the eldest of three sons, and raised his own family, with Peggy his wife of 48 years, in Richmond Hill. Three of his five children—and six of his 13 grandchildren—also live in the 9th District.

He attended St. Thomas the Apostle School in Woodhaven after which he attended Richmond Hill High School both in Queens. Upon graduation from high school, Bob attended St. John's University earning a B.A in history while putting himself through school working at the local A&P. After college, he served his country in the Army.

Bob spent his career starting and building companies of all sizes that created job opportunities around the world. He started his first media company, Orbis Communications, in 1984 and continued serving in leadership positions- including Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and President- for some of the largest media entertainment companies in the country until his retirement in 2003.

The day after winning the election, Bob came directly to Washington with goals to ensure jobs are created, our citizens are protected, and America's allies are represented. He believes that by adopting a pro business philosophy based on a reduction of government spending and the elimination of growth killing taxes our economy will get back on track leading to future growth and prosperity.

He is honored to be serving on the Veterans, Foreign Affairs, and Homeland Security committees.

Rep. Russ Carnahan

A lifelong Missourian, Russ Carnahan learned the value of hard work and public service from his family and the rural community where he was raised. Since taking office in 2005, Carnahan has worked to help families and businesses throughout the greater St. Louis region by supporting economic development, encouraging innovation and strengthening national security through increased international engagement.

Carnahan's number one priority is to encourage job creation and long-term economic growth. He has fought to eliminate tax breaks for companies that ship American jobs overseas so we can instead help small businesses here at home; Carnahan has taken a leadership role in targeting investments in transportation infrastructure that will support future economic development; and he has spearheaded efforts to position St. Louis as a global hub for advanced manufacturing, bio-science and energy innovation.

Carnahan sits on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, where he has emphasized the importance of building strong relationships around the globe in order to protect our economic and national security. He is the founding co-chair of the American Engagement Caucus, a

bipartisan panel dedicated to promoting international cooperation as a way to further our national interests; he is a leading advocate for women's rights, working to advance women's political, economic and social influence around the world; and as Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight, Carnahan has called for a strict accounting of the rebuilding efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan in order to protect taxpayer funds and make sure our troops have the resources they need.

As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Carnahan is a champion for cost-effective ways to improve transportation. He has authored bipartisan legislation that will bolster economic growth by helping communities keep bus and train lines running at no additional cost to taxpayers; and he has spearheaded efforts to fund improvement projects that are fixing dangerous roadways – including some rated among the deadliest in the country.

In 2011, Carnahan joined the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs in order to continue to fight for better health care for veterans. Carnahan has led the effort to improve services at St. Louis' John Cochran VA Medical Facility, where patients and staff have raised concerns about poor patient satisfaction ratings and sterilization problems. As one of only 20 Members of Congress to receive a perfect A+ rating from the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America Action Fund, Carnahan has fought to make sure our men and women in uniform have the resources they need to succeed – not only while serving in the field, but also when they return home.

Carnahan is a leading advocate for reducing energy consumption and growing the new clean energy economy by investing in technology that will reduce our reliance on foreign oil and save money for families, businesses and taxpayers. He is the founder and co-chair of the bi-partisan Congressional High-Performance Building Caucus, which promotes policies that increase energy efficiency in buildings; and his bipartisan Federal Buildings and Personnel Training Act – signed into law in 2010 – will save taxpayer money and reduce the amount of energy used by the federal government. Carnahan has worked to position the St. Louis region as a global leader in clean energy research, innovation and production, particularly in the area of biofuels. And his Energy Innovation Hub legislation would jumpstart the development of transformational energy technologies by helping move technological breakthroughs from the research and development phase to the market.

For his commitment to helping families and businesses, Carnahan has been named a "Friend of the Farmer" by the Missouri Farmer's Union, received an "A+" rating for his support of middle class families, and he has twice received the "Best of Congress" award from Working Mother magazine.

Russ Carnahan was born on July 10, 1958 and grew up in Rolla, Missouri. After graduating from Rolla High School, he attended the University of Missouri in Columbia and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration with an emphasis in public service. He went on to earn his Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law, where he served on the Board of Advocates – and where he met his wife Debra. After marrying in 1984, the Carnahans opened a small law firm together and began raising their two sons, Austin and Andrew.

Prior to his election to Congress in 2004, Carnahan served two terms in the Missouri House of Representatives where he was recognized as an outstanding state lawmaker by the St. Louis Regional Commerce and Growth Association (RCGA), the Missouri Bar Association and the St. Louis Business Journal.