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Hoyer predicts Democrats will hold Senate, criticizes what he calls GOP obstruction

September 30, 2014 | By Bob Weiner | weinerpublic@comcast.net

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House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, D-Md., called for bipartisanship in both chambers to end "gridlock" and advance legislation on the minimum wage, equal pay for women, jobs creation and immigration at a Sept. 29 National Press Club Newsmaker.

He outlined what he called "a vision of a Congress on your side" and asserted that in the upcoming congressional elections, Democrats will keep control of the Senate.

"Today we see a Republican majority that automatically opposes anything President Obama supports – even though our country needs action," he said.

He emphasized that "bipartisan compromise worked" in the past on Capitol Hill.

The American people "do not want their Congress to focus on partisan games. Not an obsession with repealing the Affordable Care act. Not politically driven lawsuits against the president or threats of shutdown or default. Not massive tax breaks that would explode our deficits and debt by hundreds of billions of dollars."

He pointed out that the House Republican leadership refused to allow a vote on the American Jobs Act that Hoyer said would have created 1.9 million jobs and would have reduced the unemployment rate to 5 percent. Instead, they promised and enacted more tax breaks that "don't grow jobs, took the market down and brought the worst recession in our lifetimes."

He noted that Republicans blocked House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp, R-Mich., from bringing up a tax-reform plan that Obama and Hill Democrats agreed had serious potential and would have drawn support.

Republicans are pushing voter suppression across the country that has resulted in "discriminatory efforts to keep minorities, women, seniors and students from exercising their equal right to vote," Hoyer said.

Democrats will take the opposite tack, he asserted.

"We will work to restore the Voting Rights Act and protect and facilitate the ability of every American to vote," Hoyer said. He said that the measure enjoyed bipartisan support until the current Congress and Supreme Court came to power.

On national security issues, Hoyer expressed concern about U.S. efforts to curtail the Islamic State.

"We have to look at that, because Iraq was supposed to cost less than \$100 billion and wound up over \$1 trillion," Hoyer said. "We have to honestly assess the security threat of ISIL."

Hoyer doubted that even if Republicans pick up seats in liberal states such as Illinois and New York that the party will become more moderate.

In the party's caucus, extreme members are in the minority, Hoyer asserted. But, he added, the influence of "the Club for Growth, the Heritage Foundation and the Koch Brothers" ensures that "the hard line will still control if Republicans gain seats" from more moderate states.



House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, D-Md., criticized what he called Republican obstructionism at a Sept. 29 National Press Club Newsmaker.

Photo/Image: Al Teich



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