President George W. Bush
Oral History Project

BRIEFING MATERIALS

Dennis Hastert
May 16, 2014

Prepared by Bryan Craig, Senior Researcher
January 2014

Presidential Oral History Program
MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR CIRCULATED
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Dennis Hastert graduates from Wheaton College. (<a href="http://bioguide.congress.gov">http://bioguide.congress.gov</a>)</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>Hastert earns an M.S. from Northern Illinois University. (<a href="http://bioguide.congress.gov">http://bioguide.congress.gov</a>)</td>
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<td>1980-1986</td>
<td>Hastert is a member of the Illinois House of Representatives.</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Hastert (R-IL) begins to serve as a U.S. Representative to Congress for the 14th District. (<a href="http://bioguide.congress.gov">http://bioguide.congress.gov</a>)</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>March</td>
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<td>June</td>
<td>Bush proposes changing the federal budget cycle to a biennial process like Texas, an idea Hastert supports. Bush also supports line-item veto power. (<em>The New York Times</em>, 06/09/2000)</td>
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<td>October</td>
<td>The Bush campaign invites Hastert to the Bush-Gore debate in St. Louis on the 17th. (Hastert, p. 207)</td>
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<td>November</td>
<td>On the 2nd, the Republicans retain control of the House (221-212). Florida’s presidential vote is too close to call, and a recount begins. Hastert’s staff raises the possibility that he could be acting president if the recount does not end by January 20th. The CIA begins briefing Hastert. (Hastert, p. 213; Peter Baker, <em>Days of Fire</em>, New York: Doubleday, 2013, p. 76)</td>
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<tr>
<td>On the 16th, House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R-TX) sends a memorandum to congressional Republicans asserting that Congress can reject a state’s electoral votes if it believes the votes are tainted. Hastert and Minority Leader Richard</td>
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Gephardt (D-MO) ask CRS for research on the Electoral College and Congress. *(The Washington Post, 11/22/2000)*

**December**


On the 2nd, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) and Hastert visit Bush and Cheney in Texas to review Bush’s legislative agenda. It includes education reform, tax cuts, senior prescription drug coverage, reforming Social Security and Medicare, and strengthening the military. *(Hastert, pp. 212-213; John P. Burke, Becoming President: The Bush Transition, 2000-2003, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2004, p. 57)*

On the 5th, Cheney visits Capitol Hill, and Hastert says Cheney will “play a very, very major role” in bringing together the White House and Congress. *(The New York Times, 12/06/2000)*

On the 15th, Hastert publically supports Bush’s across-the-board tax cut, but wants to do it more piece-meal with two bills to cut taxes for married couples and repeal the federal estate tax. *(The New York Times, 12/16/2000)*


**2001**

**January**

During its first week in office, the Bush Administration announces its No Child Left Behind (NCLB) education initiative and a $1.6 trillion tax cut proposal. *(The Washington Post, 01/24/2001)*

**Late Jan./Feb.** Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives John DiIulio meets with staffers from Hastert’s office shortly after the inauguration. The staffers are reportedly looking to pass faith-based legislation quickly and are already circulating a draft bill. DiIulio meanwhile prefers to delay moving legislation until after his six-month review is completed. *(Jo Renee Formicola, Mary C. Segers, and Paul Weber, Faith-Based Initiatives and the Bush Administration, New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003, pp. 129-130)*

**February**

On the 7th, Bush outlines his position on patients’ rights legislation. He argues that patients should be able to sue insurance companies in federal court if the companies improperly deny medical care, as determined by an independent review. Bush also supports a cap on damages. The president raises objections to the managed care/patients’ rights legislation sponsored by Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA), John McCain (R-AZ), and John Edwards (D-NC), because it
has few limits on damages and patients could sue in state courts.  (*The New York Times*, 02/08/2001)

On the 8th, Bush sends his $1.6 trillion tax cuts to Congress and would like them applied retroactively for the entire current year.  His plan includes a four-bracket structure (thirty-three percent to ten percent) and a repeal of the estate tax, but it does not include capital gains or corporate tax cuts.  Some Democrats see it as a plan for the wealthy, but the Administration responds that the tax cuts are crucial to putting extra money in peoples’ pockets and that middle-class families will get the largest percentage cut in income taxes.  (*The Washington Post*, 02/06/2001; *USA Today*, 02/08/2001; *The Wall Street Journal*, 02/06/2001)

**Mar.-April**  
The House passes a series of tax cuts that include Bush’s general tax cut plan, a reduction of taxes for people who have children or are married, and a phase-out of the estate tax.  (*Congressional Quarterly, 2001 CQ Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 2002, p. 18-3)

**May**  
On the 9th, The House Education and Workplace Committee approves NCLB with a 41-7 vote.  To get Democratic support, Rep. John Boehner (R-OH) includes a significant increase in funding for education, including Title I for poor schools.  Boehner also modifies a Republican proposal (“Straight A’s”) that converts most federal aid to block grants by giving states the ability to shift one half of a program’s money to other similar programs.  The school voucher option is voted out.  (*2001 CQ Almanac*, p. 8-5; *The Washington Times*, 05/16/2001; *The New York Times*, 05/24/2001)

On the 23rd, the House passes its five-year, $22.8 billion NCLB bill.  (*2001 CQ Almanac*, p. 8-5)

Cheney brokers the final deal as Congress passes a ten-year $1.35 trillion tax cut plan on the 26th.  Bush signs it on June 7th.  (Baker, p. 105)

**Summer**  
Hastert and DeLay reportedly ask Bush to drop Kennedy from the NCLB alliance because congressional conservatives are not supporting the legislation.  However, Director of Legislative Affairs Nick Calio recommends that Bush keep working with Kennedy to preserve bipartisanship.  (Baker, p. 106)

**June**  
On the 6th, the Democrats regain control of the Senate when Jeffords leaves the Republican Party to caucus with the Democrats as an Independent.

On the 14th, the Senate passes its $33 billion NCLB bill by a 91-8 vote.  It includes some elements of “Straight A’s” that give seven states and 25 school districts more latitude to spend federal funds, including for tutoring.  Senate conservatives fail to amend the bill to include school vouchers.  (*2001 CQ Almanac*, p. 8-7)
On the 21st, Bush threatens to veto the Kennedy-Edwards-Mc McCain patients’ bill of rights bill if it passes. *(The Washington Post, 06/22/2001)*

On the 29th, the Senate passes the Kennedy-McCain-Edwards managed care/patients’ rights legislation. Hastert prefers a bill more aligned with Bush’s, which has limits on suing in state courts and limits on non-economic and punitive damages. *(2001 CQ Almanac, p. 12-3)*

**July**

On the 12th, 19 House Republicans join Democrats to defeat a rule for floor debate on the campaign finance bill. Hastert also delays a House vote for patients’ rights as Bush visits Capitol Hill. *(The Washington Times, 07/27/2001)*

On the 19th, the House passes the Community Solutions Act by a 233-198 vote, but the charitable choice provisions are controversial. While charitable choice, as it exists in the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 law, holds that faith-based groups cannot discriminate against the recipients of social programs on the basis of faith, it also protects the religious integrity of the faith-based groups. The implication is that religious groups are allowed to discriminate on the basis of religion in hiring individuals to carry out the federally funded social services. The Senate is reportedly willing to pass the tax incentives part of the initiative, but opposition still remains regarding the constitutionality of the charitable choice component. The Senate delays action on the bill. *(2001 CQ Almanac, p. 17-5)*

**August**

On the 1st, the House passes an omnibus energy bill that follows the recommendations of Cheney’s energy task force. The bill supports an increase in production of gas and oil (drilling in ANWR), improves fuel economy standards, promotes renewable fuel research, cleaner coal, and tax incentives for alternative energy sources and conservation. However, Senate Democrats cancel a mark-up of their bill. *(2001 CQ Almanac, p. 9-3)*

After the Senate passes a version of the patients’ bill of rights opposed by Bush, Calio, Chief of Staff Andrew Card, and Deputy Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten broker an agreement with Rep. Charles Norwood (R-GA), who leads a bloc of moderate Republicans in the House, concerning patients’ legal options against their health care providers. Bush personally closes the deal that includes stricter limits on damages than the Senate version, and he holds a press conference with Norwood. The agreement on the House bill forces the legislation to conference committee and forestalls a veto of a popular measure. However, unexpected national security concerns stall the bill for the year. *(The Washington Post, 08/03/2001, 08/05/2001; New Republic, 08/20/2001)*

On the 9th, Bush outlines his plan that allows for government funding for research on already-extracted stem cells, but prohibits extraction of additional stem cells from human embryos. Hastert had previously declared his opposition to federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. *(The Washington Post, 07/30/2001)*
September

On the 5th, Bush announces a $75 billion stimulus plan focusing on a corporate tax cut and other tax changes, such as repealing the corporate alternative minimum tax (ATM) to get companies to invest in their businesses, hoping to spur growth. The plan does not resolve the division among Democrats and Republicans. Although Bush decides to offer tax rebates, Democrats still criticize the plan for not doing enough for low-income and unemployed people. (Karl Rove, *Courage and Consequence: My Life as a Conservative in the Fight*, New York: Threshold Editions, 2010, pp. 306-307; *The Washington Post*, 10/06/2001)

On the 10th, Hastert meets with Bush at the White House about the stimulus package. (Hastert, p. 230)

On the 11th, terrorists strike New York and the Pentagon and fall short on an unknown target as the plane crashes in Pennsylvania. Hastert is at his Capitol Hill office when his chief of staff asks him to look at the television. Hastert sees the second plane hit the World Trade tower. There is supposed to be a joint session of Congress to hear Australian Prime Minister John Howard, and Hastert works to cancel it. He tries to reach Cheney on the phone but cannot get through. After seeing smoke from the Pentagon, the Speaker decides to close the Capitol, and he goes to Andrews Air Force Base, then to an undisclosed location with other congressional leaders. By 5 p.m., Hastert meets other congressional leaders on the Capitol steps for a press conference. (Trent Lott, *Herding Cats: A Life in Politics*, New York: Regan Books, 2005, p. 222; http://www.realclearpolitics.com)

On the 12th, Bush and Cheney meet with Lott, Daschle, Hastert, Gephardt, and a dozen other congressional lawmakers for a briefing. Bush reportedly tells them that the U.S. is at war. Hastert asks Bush to speak to a joint session of Congress. (Cheney, p. 329; Hastert, p. 232; *The Washington Post*, 01/27/2002)

On the 15th, Congress passes $40 billion in aid and a joint resolution authorizing the use of force against those responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The House passes the force resolution by a 420-1 vote. (*2001 CQ Almanac*, p. 7-8)

On the 20th, Bush gives an address to a joint session of Congress.

On the 22nd, Bush signs a $15 billion airline bailout package. (http://cnn.com)


On October 24th, the House passes a $100 billion economic stimulus plan focusing on corporate tax cuts and a one-time individual tax rebate. The Senate Finance Committee passes its bill on November 4th, focusing on new spending and less on tax cuts. By December, both Republicans and Democrats fail to reach a consensus. (*2001 CQ Almanac*, pp. 18-7 to 18-18; *The Washington Post*, 12/20/2002)
October

Bush begins weekly breakfasts with Lott, Daschle, Gephardt, and Hastert. (Lott, p. 229)

Bush and Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta work with Congress on the aviation security bill. The biggest issue is whether to federalize the role of screening passengers and baggage. The Senate shows wider support for federalization, while conservative House Republicans do not support increasing the federal workforce by some 28,000 people. Mineta draws up a transition plan where the federal government would tighten security standards, train workers, and assess screener performance, but federal workers would not do the actual screening. However, to appease House Democrats a couple days later, Mineta tells House Republicans that Bush says he would not oppose federalizing screeners to get a bill passed by Congress, reportedly antagonizing the GOP leadership. After the Senate passes a bill making screeners federal employees, Bush reportedly begins to stiffen his opposition against federalization by sending a letter to Hastert in support of the House version of the bill, which focuses on hiring private contractors. (The Washington Post, 10/03/2001, 10/04/2001, 10/05/2001, 10/26/2001; The New York Times, 10/13/2001)


On the 11th, Hastert and Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) work with White House officials on the Patriot Act. Hastert and Sensenbrenner introduce a new bill that includes more “secret searches” with no notification or notification after the search and extends the expiration date for these provisions from 2003 to 2006. (2001 CQ Almanac, p. 14-6)

The Capitol shuts down on the 17th amidst an anthrax scare. Three days later, anthrax is discovered at the Ford House Office Building.

On the 17th, Bush asks Congress for $1.2 billion to stockpile emergency medicines, including $300 million for local and state hospitals, and legislation to better prepare for a bio-terrorist attack. Some local officials respond that the $300 million is inadequate, and it should be in the billions. The House passes its bill, and awaits a conference. (2001 CQ Almanac, p. 12-9; The Washington Post, 10/18/2001, 11/05/2001, 11/16/2001)

On the 24th, the House passes the Patriot Act and the Senate passes it the next day. The House successfully inserts a sunset clause on most of the surveillance provisions for 2006.

November

On the 19th, Bush signs the Aviation Transportation and Security Act. The bill creates the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and requires all

**December**

On the 11th, a final version of NCLB is announced. A major obstacle was state control over use of federal funds. The compromise provides that all states can shift small portions of federal money for any educational purpose, but money directed to the poorest children can’t be diverted. In a pilot program, seven states and 150 districts can shift more money than the rest. Congress passes the measure by substantial margins. (*2001 CQ Almanac*, p. 8-3 to 8-10)

On the 12th, the House passes its own bioterrorism bill. It differs from the Senate version by funding amounts, antitrust exemptions for drug companies, and food import restrictions. On the 20th, the Senate substitutes its bill with the House’s and passes the bill. Bush signs it in June 2002. (*2001 CQ Almanac*, pp. 12-9, S-77)

The defense bill passes Congress on the 13th. It has a five percent increase in weapons procurement, but Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld says he is disappointed that Congress will delay the closing of military bases until 2005. Rumsfeld has been pushing for another round of base closings that started under the Clinton Administration. (*The New York Times*, 12/13/2001)

On the 20th, the House passes a stimulus bill that includes business investment incentives, accelerated tax cuts, a $600 rebate for lower-income workers, and 13 more weeks of unemployment benefits. The Senate fails to pass one and Congress waits until the next year to deal with the matter. (Hastert, p. 237; *The Washington Times*, 12/24/2001)

**2002**

**January**

On the 8th, Bush signs the No Child Left Behind Act.

On the 29th, Bush calls again for a stimulus package. Hastert tells Bush he will try again. (Hastert, p. 238)

**February**

Senators Rick Santorum (R-PA) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) introduce the Charity Aid, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act, which they have been working on with DiIulio and the Bush Administration in an effort to revive Bush’s 2001 faith-based initiative. It contains tax incentives for charitable donations and clarifies the law that religious groups cannot be disqualified from receiving federal funds simply because of their religious nature. However, it drops the previous bill’s controversial charitable choice provisions. Despite the concession, the bill stalls again in Congress, and Bush decides to use executive orders to implement parts of his faith-based initiatives. (John DiIulio, Jr., *Godly Republic*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, p. 136; Michael Gerson, *Heroic Conservatism*, New York: HarperOne, 2008, p. 171)
March

On the 4th, Bush announces up to a 30 percent increase in tariffs on most imported steel to protect the U.S. steel industry. It is not an across-the-board tariff, and it is meant only to help the U.S. industry restructure and modernize. Hastert tells Bush he does not favor the tariff. (Hastert, p. 220; The Washington Post, 03/05/2002)

On the 9th, Bush signs an economic stimulus bill. It provides $43 billion worth of business tax breaks and extends unemployment insurance benefits. The tax breaks are significantly less than what the White House wanted. Hastert is at the signing ceremony. (Hastert, p. 239; The Wall Street Journal, 02/22/2002; CQ Weekly, 03/09/2002)

Bush signs the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 on the 27th, which eliminates all soft money donations to national party committees and curtails ads by non-party organizations.

May

Congress passes the $4.2 billion bioterrorism bill with states getting $1.5 billion in federal grants to prepare for a biological attack. Bush signs it in June. (The New York Times, 05/22/2002; CQ Weekly, 12/07/2002)

June

On the 6th, Bush unveils his plan to create the Department of Homeland Security. Hastert assigns House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) to lead it through the House. (The Washington Times, 06/14/2001)


July

On the 9th, Bush gives a speech on corporate accountability on Wall Street. Bush proposes some limited penalties and SEC funding for oversight. However, Congress doesn’t see it as enough and pushes for more money and stringent penalties in its bill. Bush accepts some of the stronger remedies and signs a final bill on the 30th. (The Washington Post, 07/11/2002; The New York Times, 07/12/2002; CQ Weekly, 07/13/2002)


August

On the 2nd, Bush meets with Lott, Daschle, Hastert, and Gephardt about Iraq. The president tells them that Saddam Hussein has no intention of complying with weapons inspectors and hopes for an open dialogue with Congress about this threat. Bush also says that, at the right time, the Administration will go to Congress for approval for any necessary action. (Ari Fleischer, Taking Heat, New York: HarperCollins, 2005, pp. 277-279)
After Kennedy, McCain, Edwards, and the Bush Administration fail to reach agreement on a patients’ rights bill following months of informal negotiations, Daschle moves to appoint conferees to reconcile the Senate and House versions. Republicans object to the move and neither chamber ends up appointing conferees in 2002. (2002 CQ Almanac, pp. 10-7 to 10-8)

September

On the 19th, Bush holds a meeting with 11 House members rallying their support on Iraq. Later that day, the White House releases its proposed language for a resolution authorizing the president to use military force against Iraq. (Bob Woodward, Plan of Attack, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004, pp. 186-187)

On the 20th, Calio writes to Hastert that the White House will support the establishment of an independent commission to investigate the 9/11 attacks. The letter comes after the Administration, which had long opposed creating such a panel, came under increasing pressure from victims’ families and Congress. (The New York Times, 09/21/2002)

Sept.-Oct.

To secure votes for the resolution on Iraq, Calio organizes intelligence briefings for vacillating or influential congressmen, in both the Capitol and the White House – including the Situation Room. The meetings are run by CIA Director George Tenet and Deputy Director John McLaughlin and are overseen by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. By the time Congress votes on the resolution, Calio organizes such briefings for 71 senators and 161 representatives. (Woodward, Plan of Attack, pp. 185-186, 203)

October

On the 10th, the House passes a resolution to give Bush authority to use force against Iraq by a 296-133 vote. The Senate passes it the next day. (The New York Times, 10/22/2002)

November


On the 5th, Hastert, Senator Bill Frist (R-TN), and other congressional leaders watch election returns with Bush. The GOP expands its congressional majorities, marking just the second time a president has secured midterm gains for his party in both houses of Congress. (Baker, p. 228)

On the 26th, Bush signs into law a terrorism insurance bill that requires the federal government to cover most insurance losses from a terrorist attack. Although conservative Republican leaders had opposed the measure because of a provision permitting the right to seek punitive damages, Calio helps engineer a deal in an all-night negotiation before the election recess among Calio’s staffers, Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT), and Rep. Michael Oxley (R-OH). (The New York Times, 11/27/2002; CQ Weekly, 10/12/2002, 12/14/2002; The Washington Post, 10/15/2002)
January

Hastert says from the intelligence he has seen on Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD), “I would definitely say there’s evidence.” (The New York Times, 01/26/2003) He also says he worries about the effect a war might have on the economy and the airline industry. (The Washington Post, 01/30/2003)

On the 7th, the House reelects Hastert Speaker of the House in a 228-201 vote. The House also lifts a four-term limit for Speakers. (The New York Times, 01/08/2003)

Hastert says he wants to split Bush’s economic plan into separate bills to help the public understand the plan. (The New York Times, 01/26/2003)

February

On the 3rd, Bush announces his $2.23 trillion budget. It forecasts a $304 billion deficit. The top priority, Office of Management and Budget Director Mitch Daniels argues, is protecting the country from a terrorist attack, although some Republicans are worried about selling tax cuts in a time of deficit. Part of the Administration’s proposal is a $695 billion tax cut package to eliminate taxes on dividends, speed up rate cuts, and increase the child tax credit. (The New York Times, 02/04/2003; The Washington Post, 02/05/2003)

Before Secretary of State Colin Powell’s speech at the UN, on the 5th, Rice and Bush meet with 20 key members of Congress about the need to go to war against Iraq. Rice reportedly says that war is the only active option because diplomacy and sanctions have failed. How long troops remain in Iraq depends on the results. (Woodward, Plan of Attack, pp. 307-308)

On the 6th, Hastert and Rep. Rob Portman (R-OH) say that Bush’s new tax-free savings accounts—part of his tax cut plan—would be hard to pass. Bolten responds that the White House would not fight for it. (The Washington Post, 02/07/2003)

On the 9th, Bush visits a joint House-Senate retreat at The Greenbrier to build support for his domestic agenda. (The New York Times, 02/10/2003)

Hastert and other Republican House leaders meet with Cheney to get Congress to take the lead in developing a Medicare proposal that includes a drug benefit. Several Republicans have criticized Bush’s plan to offer prescription drug coverage to seniors who join doctors’ networks or other private plans. (The Washington Post, 02/14/2003)

On the 27th, Treasury Secretary John Snow announces the Administration’s tax cut package on Capitol Hill. Bush sends Cabinet members to key states to drum up support. (The Washington Post, 02/28/2003)
March


April

Bush endorses the House’s $550 billion tax cut figure, but the Senate wants to reduce it to $350 billion. Bush brings Hastert and Senate Majority Leader Frist to the White House to discuss the matter. (*The New York Times*, 04/29/2003)

May

On the 1st, Senate and House leaders agree to abandon Bush’s plan to eliminate all taxes on dividends. (*The New York Times*, 05/02/2003)

On the 19th, Bush and Cheney invite Frist, Hastert, Rep. Bill Thomas (R-CA), and Senate Finance Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA) to the White House to discuss the tax cut bill. Two days later, Cheney brokers a deal between House and Senate leaders to get the limit down to $350 billion, a number Grassley wants. (Cheney, pp. 311-313)


Bush signs the $15 billion President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) on the 27th.

June

Congress passes its own versions of the Medicare prescription bill. Bush talks with wavering House members by phone as the vote begins in the House, and it passes by a 216-215 vote. The House bill offers no government “fallback” plan if private plans show no interest in a particular region, but it provides incentives to private insurers to provide coverage in underserved markets. The bill also would require Medicare to compete with private plans starting in 2010. Hastert’s spokesman says, “This is going to be a very tough negotiation.” (*The Washington Times*, 07/07/2003; Bush, p. 283; Baker, pp. 293-294; Congressional Quarterly, 2003 *CQ Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 2004, pp. 1-8 to 1-9, 11-3 to 11-8)

November

Congress passes the prescription bill conference report. The final bill offers seniors a prescription drug benefit through participating managed care plans. Among other things, it creates a pilot program beginning in 2010 in which Medicare and private insurers compete on price in six metropolitan areas for six years; it provides $86 billion in tax breaks and subsidies to encourage employers not to drop existing drug coverage for their retirees and creates health savings accounts to allow Americans to save for medical costs. The bill also includes $14 billion that private insurers can tap to provide health insurance for Medicare
recipients in unprofitable markets and provides $25 billion for rural hospitals and providers. Bush signs it in December. (2003 CQ Almanac, pp. 11-7 to 11-13)

2004

January  Bush proposes immigration reform. He favors a guest-worker status for undocumented aliens. Some Republican constituents see this measure as a sign of amnesty. (The Washington Times, 01/28/2004)


On the 22nd, ten ex-CIA officials send a letter to Hastert asking for an investigation into the Valerie Plame affair. (UPI, 01/22/2004)

March

On the 10th, Cheney and NSA Director Mike Hayden meet with a group of congressional leaders, including Hastert, about the reauthorization of the Terrorist Surveillance Program (TSP). According to Cheney, they are able to secure congressional support for reauthorization of the TSP without first seeking new legislation. Faced with threats of resignation from Deputy Attorney General James Comey and FBI Director Robert Mueller, Bush decides to compromise by modifying the unacceptable parts of the TSP. (Eric Lichtblau, Bush's Law: The Remaking of American Justice, New York: Anchor Books, 2008, pp. 181-183; Cheney, p. 351)

April

The House passes a $275 billion highway and transit bill, but Bush threatens to veto it because it is too costly. The Senate passes a $318 billion bill. (The New York Times, 04/03/2004)

May

On the 20th, Bush makes a rare visit to Capitol Hill to discuss Iraq, the budget, and the 2004 election. Hastert has been vocal against some Republican Senators on the Senate Armed Services Committee perceived as undermining support for the war as it holds hearings on prisoner abuse. (The New York Times, 05/21/2004)

June

The House passes a $31 billion energy bill, but the Senate does not have enough votes to pass similar legislation. (The New York Times, 06/16/2004)

July

The final report of the 9/11 Commission is released. It states the need for strengthening intelligence committees to set policy and allocate funds and for creating a permanent committee on homeland security. Hastert responds, “We’re not going to rush through anything.” (The Washington Post, 07/23/2004) He has House committees examine the findings and hold hearings in August. (The Washington Post, 07/25/2004)
August


On the 30th, Hastert gives a speech at the Republican National Convention.

September

On the 24th, the House introduces a national security bill based on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. It follows the White House’s wishes to create a national intelligence director. House Democrats say they were closed out of the bill’s drafting process. (*The New York Times*, 09/25/2004)

October

The Senate and House pass their bills to restructure U.S. intelligence, but on the 22nd, negotiations break down. It remains unclear if the director of CIA (DCIA) will be independent from the new DNI or be placed under DNI control. (*The Washington Post*, 10/17/2004, 10/24/2004)

On the 22nd, Bush signs a corporate tax overhaul bill that cuts corporate taxes from 35 percent to 32 percent, worth about $76.5 billion, and cuts taxes on overseas profits. (*The Washington Post*, 10/12/2004)

December

On the 8th, Bush signs the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act to oversee and integrate the nation’s fifteen intelligence agencies. The difficult part in reconciling between the two houses was how much power to give the new national intelligence director. The Senate had supported near unilateral authority over the 15-agency community, while the House supported less budgetary power. Bush applied pressure on Frist and Hastert to get the bill voted on by end of the month. (*The Washington Post*, 12/01/2004, 12/18/2004)

2005

January

The Administration decides to lead off Bush’s second term with Social Security reform, calling for private accounts for individual workers. However, the Democrats are united in opposition and Hastert responds, “You can’t jam change down the American people’s throat.” (*The New York Times*, 02/12/2005; *The Washington Post*, 01/26/2005)

On the 20th, Hastert administers the oath of office to Cheney for a second term. (Baker, p. 374)

March


Congress passes and Bush signs legislation to grant federal court jurisdiction over the case of Terri Schiavo, a dying and brain-damaged woman. Conservatives reportedly hope that the federal court will compel reinsertion of her feeding tube. The bill states that Congress should consider a broader bill for incapacitated
individuals. A federal court rules against reinstating a feeding tube, and Schiavo dies near the end of March. (*CQ Weekly*, 03/28/2005)

**May**

The House passes an $82 billion emergency spending bill for Iraq and Afghanistan. (*The Washington Times*, 05/06/2005)

**Spring**

Bush launches his bid to restructure Social Security around private accounts. Snow, Card, Deputy Assistant to the President for Economic Policy Keith Hennessey, Karl Rove, and several other White House advisers serve on Bush’s legislative team working to build support for the plan in Congress. Though it is modeled on a similar proposal by Democrat financial expert Robert Pozen, the Administration’s plan receives very little support. Democrats charge that Bush is trying to privatize Social Security, and, by summer, Hastert tells Bush that the measure can’t pass Congress. (Baker, p. 415; Bush, pp. 298-301; *The New York Times*, 01/12/2005; *The Washington Post*, 04/06/2005)

**July**

Congress passes the Bush Administration’s energy bill, which promotes investments in energy conservation and efficiency and provides incentives to encourage renewable sources and production of more oil and natural gas. Bush signs the bill on August 8th. (Rove, pp. 413-414; *The Washington Post*, 08/09/2005)

Hastert announces that the House will work on an immigration bill this year. (*The Washington Times*, 07/29/2005)

**August**

The Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is signed into law. The bill represents a $286.4 billion extension of ISTEA and the Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21) surface transportation programs and will last through August 2009. The bill includes more stringent automobile safety measures and over 6,000 specially designated projects, including highway overpasses, bicycle trails, and museum renovations, and represents a compromise between Congress, which originally sought $400 billion, and Bush, who initially set the limit of the legislation at $284 billion. (*The New York Times*, 08/11/2005)

On the 25th, Hurricane Katrina hits the Florida coast, then the Gulf Coast on the 29th. On the 27th, Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco (D) declares a state of emergency, and Bush authorizes the DHS and FEMA to coordinate disaster relief. By September, Congress gives Bush $51.8 billion in aid and looks into the troubled federal response to the disaster. (*The Washington Post*, 09/08/2005)

**September**

November


After the Senate passes a military spending bill with a resolution of a proposed ban against cruel and degrading treatment of detainees, Hastert must appoint House conferees. Bush has threatened to veto the legislation unless it has exemptions for CIA operatives. (*The New York Times*, 11/04/2005)

On the 17th, Rep. John Murtha (D-PA) calls for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, which Hastert opposes. The next day, House Republicans present a resolution withdrawing all troops as a ploy to show how extreme Murtha’s position is, and it is defeated by a 403-3 vote. (*AP*, 11/18/2005)

December

The House passes nearly $100 billion in tax cuts, including ATM relief, but the Senate fails to pass legislation. (*CQ Weekly*, 12/12/2005)

Congress reauthorizes the Patriot Act.

Hastert meets with Cheney over the Detainee Treatment Act, but Cheney and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley ultimately fail to get a CIA exemption. The bill is signed by Bush on the 30th, and it makes the U.S. Army Field Manual the standard for Defense agencies and for all other agencies, disallowing cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. (*The New York Times*, 12/14/2005)

On the 16th, *The New York Times* reports on the TSP.

2006

February

A deal for a United Arab Emirates (UAE) maritime company to run six U.S. ports (later revealed to be 22) is announced. Bush responds that he would veto any congressional bill that stopped the deal going through. Hastert sends Bush a letter calling for a moratorium on the agreement. The following month Congress tries to block the deal, and the UAE firm sells the operation to an American company. (Baker, pp. 446-447; *The Washington Times*, 03/01/2006)

Boehner is elected new House majority leader.

Bush attends a retreat for House Republicans in Maryland.

March

On the 3rd, Hastert, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and 36 other members of Congress go to New Orleans to conduct a fact-finding tour on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. (*The New York Times*, 03/04/2006)
On the 6th, Bush asks Congress to pass the Legislative Line-Item Veto Act of 2006. Under the bill, the president would seek congressional approval to take out line-items by a simple majority vote within 10 days of the request. It passes the House in June, but stalls in the Senate. (http://thomas.loc.gov)

May

The Senate passes the Kennedy-McCain immigration bill. House conservatives oppose guest worker provisions and a path to citizenship even with Administration intervention to work on a solution. (The New York Times, 05/17/2006)

On the 17th, Bush signs the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005. It provides another year of relief from the AMT and makes cuts in dividend income and capital gains taxes through 2010. (CQ Weekly, 05/15/2006)

On the 20th, Department of Justice (DOJ) investigators execute a search warrant on the office of Rep. William J. Jefferson (D-LA). The raid sets off a crisis between the White House and Congress as Hastert meets with Bush to ask for Attorney General Alberto Gonzales’ resignation over DOJ’s authority to investigate members of Congress. Cheney reportedly sides with Hastert. Gonzales attempts to ameliorate the disagreement, but he reportedly tells Bush that he is prepared to resign if DOJ is called upon to turn over the materials acquired under the search warrant. Bush defuses the situation by ordering the evidence to remain sealed for 45 days while lawyers work out an appropriate solution. (Baker, pp. 461-462; The New York Times, 05/24/2006, 05/27/2006)

June

The House passes a resolution that does not set a date for the withdrawal or redeployment of U.S. troops in Iraq. (The Washington Post, 06/17/2006)

Hastert orders additional hearings on immigration, which threaten progress on a final bill for 2006. (The Washington Times, 06/21/2006)

July

The Senate passes a series of bills on funding for stem cell research. On the 18th, the Senate passes a House bill to allow federal funding for research on stem cells derived from surplus embryos at in-vitro clinics, to increase the number of existing stem cells for research. Bush vetoes this bill, and the House cannot override it. The Senate also unanimously passes S 2754 to encourage researchers to find ways to derive stem cell lines that don’t harm embryos, and S 3504 to ban funding for facilities that might create embryos strictly for research purposes only. Bush signs S 3504 into law, but the House cannot pass S 2754. (CQ Weekly, 07/18/2006, 12/18/2006)

For the second time in two years, the House fails to get a Bush-supported same-sex marriage amendment passed by two-thirds majority. (The Washington Times, 07/19/2006)
**September**

On the 6th, Bush acknowledges for the first time the CIA’s detention and interrogation programs, and he defends the CIA’s work as “having saved lives.” *(The Washington Post, 09/07/2006)*

The House passes a bill to build 700 miles of fencing along the U.S. border with Mexico. Immigration reform failed to get support, especially for the guest-worker program or a path to citizenship for illegal aliens, so Hastert told Bush that the White House and Congress needed to focus on border security first. *(The Washington Times, 08/24/2006, 09/15/2006)*

**Sept.-Oct.**

On the 28th, a scandal involving Rep. Mark Foley (R-FL) and a former page exchanging sexually explicit messages breaks. By October, Foley resigns his seat as more pages come forward about alleged misconduct. Hastert calls for an investigation into the matter, but criticism mounts that he did not act when he reportedly heard warnings about this scandal. Bush comes out in support for Hastert’s reelection campaign and he campaigns for him in Illinois. The president says, “This country is better off with Denny Hastert as the Speaker.” *(The New York Times, 10/04/2006, 10/13/2006)*

**October**

Bush signs the Military Commissions Act on the 17th, which allows the CIA to resume the interrogation of top al-Qaeda operatives, though reportedly more extreme enhanced interrogation techniques like waterboarding are no longer used. *(Bush, pp. 178-179)*

Bush signs the Secure Fence Act of 2006 on the 26th. It authorizes the construction of hundreds of miles of fence on the southern border, more checkpoints and barriers, and allows the Department of Homeland Security to use advance technology, like satellites and unmanned aerial vehicles. *(http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov)*

**November**

Hastert wins reelection, but the Republicans lose control of the House. Hastert does not run for the minority leader position.

**2007**

**January**


Bush announces his surge strategy for Iraq in a televised address.

**March**  The Bush Administration announces its plan for immigration reform. Illegal immigrants would pay a fine and return home, then re-enter the country to gain permanent U.S. residency. The plan also includes additional Border Patrol agents, more electronic sensors along the border, and money for more vehicle barriers. *(The Washington Post, 03/30/2007, 04/09/2007)*

**August**  Hastert announces he will resign from the House. *(Chicago Tribune, 08/18/2007)*

**Oct.-Nov.**  On two separate occasions, Bush vetoes a bill that expands the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) by $35 billion and $30 billion more than Bush wants. Bush calls it going “too far toward federalizing health care.” *(CQ Weekly, 10/01/2007)* Both chambers fail to override his vetoes. *(The Washington Post, 10/03/2007; http://www.cnn.com)*

**November**  Hastert gives his final speech on the 15th and resigns on the 26th.
TIMELINES

- Dennis Hastert News Timeline, prepared by Bryan Craig, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 01/22/2014.

- Timeline of the Bush Presidency, prepared by Justin Peck and Bryan Craig, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/30/2010.
SELECTED WRITINGS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY DENNIS HASTERT


Speaker of the House


KEY ISSUES AND EVENTS AS SPEAKER

Bush and Congress


Early Agenda

Patients’ Bill of Rights


2001 Tax Cuts

Economic Stimulus


Corporate Accountability

2003 Tax Cut


**Medicare Prescription Plan**


**Intelligence Reform**


**Terri Schiavo**


**Government Spending**


**Social Security Reform**


• Mike Allen, “Hastert Doubtful on Social Security Bill; House Speaker Says That Passage of Legislation This Year May be Unlikely,” *The Washington Post*, 04/01/2005.


**Immigration Reform**


**FBI Raid on William Jefferson’s Office**


**Energy Policy**

**Origins of Relationship with Bush, and Political Campaigns**

- When did you first meet George W. Bush? What were your early impressions of him?
- What was your involvement in President Bush’s 2000 presidential campaign?
- Tell us about President Bush’s campaign work for the 2002 and 2006 mid-term elections.
- What was your role in the 2004 presidential campaign? Discuss your 2004 national convention speech. What kinds of interactions did you have with the president’s campaign operatives in drafting the speech?

**Speaker of the House**

- Discuss your communications with the president-elect during the transition period. How extensive was your planning for the early months after the inauguration?
- Tell us about President Bush’s relationship with members of Congress. Discuss your assessment of his expectations of Congress. How accessible was the president to you and other congressional leaders?
- Describe your working relationship with the White House. With whom did you interact on a regular basis? How were policy proposals presented to you and other Republican leaders? Did you find the Bush Legislative Affairs staff effective?
- Tell us about your relationship with Vice President Dick Cheney and his staff. What role did Cheney play in developing and promoting legislation?
- How open was the administration to congressional policy concerns and suggestions? To what extent were you, or the House leadership, involved in shaping the President’s legislative proposals in major policy areas?
- What differences, if any, did you observe in President Bush’s dealings with the House and the Senate?
- What were your observations about Senator Jeffords party switch and how did President Bush respond? Assess the role of the Democratic Party in Congress during the 43rd presidency.
- How did the Hastert Rule originate? How important is it in understanding the politics of Congress during your speakership? On which issues was your caucus most reluctant to follow President Bush’s lead?
- Assess the membership of your party’s leadership team during the 43rd presidency. When did it work especially well? Not so well?

**Domestic Issues**

- Describe your work on President Bush’s tax cuts and stimulus plans. Discuss how the budgetary dynamic in Congress changed over time as the nation moved from surplus to deficit.
- Tell us about action on the following issues: Social Security reform; No Child Left Behind; patients’ bill of rights; the White House’s faith-based initiatives; the Medicare prescription drug plan; immigration reform; Terry Schiavo; a constitutional amendment for same-sex marriage; the president’s energy bill.
• Describe the White House’s efforts to respond to Hurricane Katrina, as they appeared to you on Capitol Hill. Did this create a crisis of confidence in the Bush White House?
• What effect did the office search of William Jefferson have on relations with the White House?
• Give us your views on bipartisanship in Congress during your speakership.
• How much concern was there during your speakership about the growth of presidential power attendant to the War on Terror? Was this a significant issue of contention with the White House? Were Republicans more inclined to accept this growth because the incumbent was a Republican?

**War on Terror/National Security Issues**

• Tell us about your experience on September 11. Describe the events in the Capitol when anthrax was found at Senator Daschle’s office and the Ford Office Building.
• Describe your role in passing the AUMF and the Patriot Act. What difficulties did you experience in trying to reauthorize the latter?
• Discuss the difficulties in establishing the 9/11 Commission and then the response to its report. Tell us about your role in passing the homeland security bill and reforming the intelligence gathering agencies and congressional committees.
• Tell us about detainee issues: Geneva Conventions/POW status, interrogation techniques, Abu Ghraib, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, and the Military Commissions Act.
• Provide your account of passing the resolution for military action in Iraq; the search for weapons of mass destruction and pre-war intelligence; postwar planning and the surge; Iraqi governance and reconstruction; and stopping the Democrats from passing troop pull-outs and time-lines.
• How effective was congressional oversight of the Bush administration during your time as Speaker? Were the intelligence committees a constructive force for oversight during this period? What is the proper role of Congress in overseeing such activity during a protracted military conflict?

**Comparison with Previous Administration**

• Discuss parallels and differences observed between the Bush administration and the Clinton administration in their relations with Congress.
• Discuss your views on presidential signing statements.

**Bush Presidency in Retrospect**

• Evaluate President Bush as a public leader, a legislative leader, and a world leader.
• Discuss how President Bush made decisions, managed issues. Did you see Bush’s approach to policy or Congressional relations change over time?
• What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Bush administration?
• What features of the Bush administration were missed or misunderstood by the press?
• Are there important areas where President Bush followed the lead of Congress during the course of his presidency?
• How should the Bush presidency be viewed by history?