

Washington, DC - Today, **Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20)** issued the following statement on the passage of the House and Senate Conference Committee's version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (HR 1), commonly known as the stimulus bill.

"We are facing greater economic challenges than we have seen in seventy years," Congressman Gonzalez said, "and we need the federal government to act. This is not a time for saying No, it is a time for saying Yes to tax cuts for working Americans and seniors. It is a time for saying Yes to helping our state governments to provide the critical services people need more than ever. And it is a time to say Yes to protecting or creating more than 3 million new jobs.

"Our schools are hurting, and I would have liked to retain all of the support the House package had offered for school construction, but the final bill will provide strong assistance and our efforts to contain the falling home values will help Texas's school system, whose funding is dependent on property taxes, as well as helping Texas homeowners, cities, and counties," Gonzalez continued. "Such compromises between the House and Senate are an integral part of our democratic system as we strive to represent the interests of every American.

"By cutting the taxes of 95% of working Americans, increasing unemployment and social security benefits, and helping to prevent lay-offs in state, county, and local services, we are putting money into the pockets of American consumers. Their spending will help the private sector create and protect jobs across Texas and across the country. States, counties, and municipalities will be assisted in paying the firefighters, police officers, and teachers who are now facing lay-offs and furloughs.

"Furthermore, we have ensured that the spending contained in HR 1 will set new standards of transparency and accountability. State funding will go to established and reliable programs, and the federal website www.Recovery.gov will track federal spending so that all Americans can add their oversight to that provided by the Recovery Act Accountability and Transparency Board, the Government Accountability Office, and the Congress."

"Americans are hurting and our economy is struggling. By passing HR 1, we are making an investment in our people, our businesses, and our children. That investment will strengthen the foundation on which we can build. This is a step on the long road back to economic stability and future prosperity."

###