

FRIDAY BRIEF

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National ID Card Omitted from Homeland Security

Last Tuesday the Senate ended its debate over the Homeland Security Bill when the bill passed with a vote of 90-9. H.R. 5710 is a legislation that will create the Department of Homeland Security.

The National ID System was a serious issue that the new bill has terminated. According to SEC. 1514. of the passed bill, "nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the development of a national identification system or card."

The national ID Card system was an unparalleled system of personal information sharing. If passed, this would have taken us even further toward a surveillance society that would significantly diminish the freedom and privacy of law-abiding people in the United States.

107th Congress departs: A look at Major Bills Passed and Defeated

As the 107th Congress leaves this week a number of bills will have to be dealt with when the 108th Congress starts next January. The 107th Congress managed to pass bills on tax relief, election reforms, campaign finance, corporate reform, trade, education, aviation security, farm, homeland security and the defense-spending bill.

However, the Congress failed to pass most of the appropriations bills, prescription-drug coverage under Medicare, the faith-based initiative, energy, the patient's bill of rights, cloning, bankruptcy, and disaster aid.

The republicans will gain control of the Senate when a new Senate is sworn in on January 7, 2003.

Treasury Secretary O'Neill Attends Ramadan Iftar

During his current visit to Pakistan, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill marked the holy month of Ramadan by attending an iftar in Islamabad hosted by Pakistan's Minister of Finance Shaukat Aziz. Secretary O'Neill was in Pakistan as part of his trip to Southeast Asia this week. The Secretary is traveling the region to view our foreign assistance programs for the people of Afghanistan as well as learn more about other countries' efforts to pursue economic growth.

Prior to his tour, Secretary O'Neill said, "I will be visiting during the holy month of Ramadan. Over one billion Muslims throughout the world, observe this month by renewing their dedication to caring for those in need, doing good deeds, and strengthening family and community ties. "While I am in Pakistan, I will share that honor, as I participate in an Iftar dinner with my counterpart, Finance Minister Aziz."