

Altmire Works to Restore Accountability in Washington

(Washington, DC) - Rep. Jason Altmire (PA-4) voted today to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent more wisely by reforming the government contracting process. H.R. 1362, the Accountability in Contracting Act, will reduce the use of no-bid contracts, mandate the disclosure of no-bid contracts and contract overcharges, and close the revolving door between government procurement officials and private contractors.

The House passed H.R.1362 this afternoon by a vote of 347 to 73.

"The Accountability in Contracting Act addresses some of the most egregious practices in federal government contracting," said Rep. Altmire. "Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars have been wasted in no-bid contracts for Halliburton and in contracts for rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Katrina. This legislation is part of the ongoing effort to fulfill our promises to the American people by returning to the basic principles of fiscal responsibility and government accountability."

The Accountability in Contracting Act includes the following provisions:

- Limits the duration of no-bid contracts awarded in emergencies to eight months;
- Requires large federal agencies to develop and implement a plan to minimize the use of noncompetitive contracts and cost-plus contracts, which give contractors little or no incentive to control costs;
- Requires agencies to prepare public letters explaining why no-bid contracts were awarded;
- Requires that contract overcharges of over \$1 million be disclosed to Congress;
- Mandates that agencies devote at least an additional 1% of their procurement budgets to contract oversight, planning and administration; and
- Closes the revolving door by requiring former federal procurement officers to wait one year before seeking employment at a lobbying or contracting firm.