

Ethics 'bump in the road' for new lawmakers

By Amber English
Special to Sentinel-Voice
 WASHINGTON (NNPA) - U.S. Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Ga., from the 4th district and a successor to former Rep. Cynthia McKinney says that the biggest substantive issue for the newest members of Congress has been ethics and ethics reform.

"Many of the veteran members of Congress understand the climate we work within and they want to see

our ethics committee perform the way it's supposed to perform," said Johnson.

"So many of the freshman were elected promising a new day as far as ethics were concerned, and they expected to be able to do things like an independent ethics panel, that many of the veterans did not think would work very well."

Johnson took office in January of this year, claiming the seat of McKinney by

runoff in 2006. He joined more than 50 other newly elected congressional members, three of whom were Black.

McKinney served from 1993-2003, lost a race, was re-elected and served again from 2005-2007. Many of her constituents admired her for her outspokenness and passion for rights, but, controversy seemed to follow her. She threw herself into the national spotlight after a

physical confrontation with a U.S. Capitol Building police officer when he failed to recognize her at a security checkpoint.

Initially, McKinney said it was racism, but she later issued a public apology on the House floor. Johnson says he takes pride in already having established some personal credibility on Capitol Hill. Johnson says he believes he has accomplished this by

"acting in such a way that people can be proud of."

Johnson has focused on several issues, including his introduction of legislation that would reduce the shortfall of Georgia's PeachCare for Kids healthcare program. Johnson's legislation would take money from other states' healthcare programs that had surpluses and give it to states suffering from shortfalls.

He has also spoken before the House multiple times on the need for full funding of the federal program.

With equal passion, Johnson says the 110th Congress has faltered when it comes to ethics.

Even attempts to pass tougher ethics legislation have met tough criticism and resistance. In May, Democratic leaders saw what was

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DC

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lowed establishments to prosper in the Black community that cause death and destruction. We have convenience stores that sell beer and wine in the middle of neighborhoods with schools. That's not safe for our children."

According to the *Afro American*, in one subsection of the plan entitled, "Zoning Changes to Reduce Land Use Conflicts Zones," there will be a comprehensive rewriting of zoning regulations.

The amendment will "more effectively control the uses which are permitted as a matter-of-right in commercial zones; avoid the excessive concentration of particu-

lar uses with the potential for adverse effects such as convenience stores, fast food establishments, and licensed liquor establishments; and consider performance standards to reduce potential conflicts between incompatible uses."

Said Muhammad, "In more affluent neighborhoods liquor stores are hidden, not allowed to run negative ads and not everywhere you look. The children and community are respected. But for years it seemed the government had so little respect for the majority of its residents, which were Black."

He continues, "Now that things are changing, finally the mindset of the govern-

ment is changing along with it. We've protested for years to close liquor stores down and improve our community. This shows the power of people who vote, give money and use their influence to make their community what they want it to be."

The Council adopted the recent 2006 revised comprehensive plan in December 2006 and has forwarded it to the National Capital Planning Commission and to the District Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives for their review. The revised plan becomes effective upon completion of federal review.

Nisa Islam Muhammad writes for the *Final Call*.

Your Horoscope Says ...June 28-July 4

ARIES

Love is always a learning experience. This week, think back over past love affairs and be sensitive to the fact that there is a special truth you can discern. What you know about love can be used on someone rich and powerful this week. Matters of the heart and matters of the mind harmonize.

Soul Affirmation: I exercise to lower tension this week.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 46, 47

TAURUS

Thinking about what to do about your irritable lover? Make appointments that will create distance between you and those you are close to, especially your sweetheart. Let anyone who wishes to fret be by himself or herself. Spend time with yourself and find pleasant things to occupy your mind until this week passes.

Soul Affirmation: I love pressure as a test of how much I can master.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 26, 28

GEMINI

Take some time off for family matters. Work has occupied too much of your attention. Family matters are not most in need of your attention. Your attention is most in need of a focus on the emotional attachments that family relationships involve.

Soul Affirmation: The enjoyment of good food is high on my agenda this week.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 8, 9

CANCER

Use a more diplomatic approach when you when make constructive comments to others. Your candid attitude is appreciated, but diplomacy will be the key to ironing out the wrinkles in a delicate situation. Your financial woes that have been preoccupying your mind will soon be over. Feel good about the progress you've already made.

Soul Affirmation: True friendship is a mirror into which I look to see the beauty of my inner self.

Lucky Numbers: 25, 39, 46

LEO

Self-pity is not your style. It saps your energy and makes it hard for you to rise above whatever it is that has been bothering you. Do the usual: consider the unfortunate situation that arises this week as a learning opportunity. Learn well and move out into a brighter psychological space.

Soul Affirmation: With a positive spirit, I co-create my week.

Lucky Numbers: 18, 26, 31

VIRGO

It's time to let co-workers and bosses see your astounding ability to organize tasks and get a lot of things done with style and grace. You can dazzle colleagues this week because things will fall into place

easily for you. Use your ease to do something important.

Soul Affirmation: I become transparent. I let others see into my thoughts.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 23, 48

LIBRA

Voice your desires to the universe this week! Articulate your thoughts through a song, a poem, a sonnet! You will cause a stir of stimulation and hope for those around you. Find a place of solace where you can meditate and be in harmony with your true self.

Soul Affirmation: I remain adaptable so I can deal with changing circumstances.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 13, 30

SCORPIO

It's a great week to tell somebody you are close to that you love them. Saying it aloud gives you energy and, of course, your designated adoree will be delighted! Keep the big picture in mind this week and you'll feel completely buoyant.

Soul Affirmation: Charm is my middle name this week.

Lucky Numbers: 17, 24, 27

SAGITTARIUS

Hardly anyone alive learns new skills in an instant, so cut yourself some slack if you feel you've made a beginner's mistake somewhere. Mistakes are part of the learning process that is called Life. So self-correct, and proceed with happiness.

Soul Affirmation: This week family is the source of my joy.

Lucky Numbers: 32, 37, 55

CAPRICORN

A happy week is in store for sociable souls. Lots of friends and a party or two or three will keep your energy bright. Use caution while driving, and watch for a pleasant surprise or two this week.

Soul Affirmation: Each week is a gift of spirit.

Lucky Numbers: 34, 38, 41

AQUARIUS

Your sense of self is feeling unusually well defined. And it is causing you to look as confident as the lion that you are. People will notice your regal bearing and noble outlook this week.

Soul Affirmation: This week is a gift that I deserve.

Lucky Numbers: 23, 50, 53

PISCES

Busy week as the energy around you seems supercharged. With everyone rushing about, you will wonder how you'll get anything done, much less, the things you feel you must get done. Not to worry. Stay calm and flexible and a way will be found.

Soul Affirmation: The truth is in me. I bring it forth.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 19, 20

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