

Member of Parliament Seminar

September 2012



David Dreier, Chairman • David Price, Ranking Democratic Member

Strengthening Democracy in the Arab World

From September 19 to 21, 2012, the House Democracy Partnership (HDP), in conjunction with the Department of State and its Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) organized a seminar for 31 Members of Parliament, parliamentary staff, and civil society leaders from Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. This program was organized in cooperation with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Participants began the program with three days at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The participants then met with Members of Congress to discuss budgeting and oversight, legislative ethics, oversight of the energy and natural resource sectors, women in parliament, and communication with constituents and the media.

The program began with an overview of the U.S. legislative system by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). Participants also learned how budget analysis is provided by the Congressional Budget Office, and how CRS provides policy analysis to Members of Congress and their staffs. The visiting MPs and civil society leaders also toured the Capitol and visited the House gallery to view the House floor during a session.

This was the 17th seminar for Members of Parliament organized by HDP since the Commission was established in 2005. HDP has also organized eight parliamentary staff institutes in Washington for staff of HDP partner countries in areas such as committee operations, budget analysis, and legislative research. Additionally, the Commission has undertaken regional staff seminars in Kenya, Macedonia, and Poland; three joint MP/staff training seminars; and 30 outbound congressional delegations to HDP partner countries.