For GOP Staffers, Finding New Jobs Isn’t So Easy

JOBS, from page 3

“we’re doing this because we have to, not because we want to,” she said. “Many of us would’ve stayed past the election, and we still hope that we can.”

While some staffers are thrown into a job search after Election Day, others had an advanced warning.

Andrew Holland, a legislative assistant for outgoing Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.), has been sending out his résumé and making contacts since Hagel announced his retirement in September 2007.

But even with the head start, Holland found that potential employers were cautious about making new hires before an election. “It seems like no matter how far ahead I wanted to get out there, no one in Washington wanted to make any decisions without knowing the election outcome,” said Holland, who is originally from Nebraska.

Some incoming Members, inducted with résumés, operate the same way. “I have interviewed several people, but I’m going to [think about it],” Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.) said. “I know it creates high anxiety among those looking for a job, even if the bill is not going to pass.”

Casey Hynes contributed to this report.

Bills, Bills, Bills. They Make a Statement

BILLS, from page 3

$700 billion financial market stabilization bill in October, which might have a dramatic impact on financial institutions for decades but is only one bill. This Congress also raised the minimum wage, passed a new GI bill and passed a farm bill over a presidential veto, all significant legislative accomplishments.

The overall number of bills passed by Congress has also declined over time with the rise of omnibus legislation, which can roll dozens of individual measures into a single bill.

As the number of bills passed by Congress has declined, Members appear to have taken to introducing bills as a way of establishing a public position on an issue or making a symbolic gesture.

For instance, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) introduced 67 bills during the 110th Congress that called for “an improper predecessor from encroaching upon the Congressional prerogative to make laws” by eliminating signing statements that allow the White House to effectively veto legislation. Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas) introduced 70 bills, including a bill “to end membership of the United States in the United Nations.” Neither bill became law or even received a vote in committee.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) introduced 88 bills, more than any other Member of the House in the 110th Congress. Although some bills were introduced several times as different versions.

On Jan. 29, Maloney introduced seven bills to limit tariffs on individual chemicals, none of which became law. Two bills that Maloney sponsored have become laws since January 2007, but several others were incorporated into other legislation that became law.

“Each Member goes about the job differently, but I always thought legislators should be pushing and passing solutions, and introducing legislation is one of the best tools we are given,” Maloney said.

In the Senate, each Member tends to sponsor more bills,befitting their larger constituencies. In the 110th Congress, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) introduced more legislation than anyone else — 163 bills — despite spending much of the session campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Clinton spokesman Dan Schwerin told Roll Call in an e-mail, “Thanks for recognizing what a productive term this has been for Senator Clinton. ... [A]s you well know, legislation can have an impact from the moment it is introduced, by shining a spotlight on a neglected issue or by introducing ideas that give birth to the debate and eventually find their way into our legislation.”

Senior Clinton is proud to have been such a champion for New York this term.”

Sarah Binder, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said that even the most active Congresses in the past 50 years or so have passed no more than two dozen pieces of major legislation. “There is only so much that Congress can do,” Binder said. The 110th Congress can claim five or six major bills, putting it “on par with recent low-productivity Congresses.”

Binder said this record is reflective of the past decade or so of divided government that has made it difficult to pass major legislation.

Binder also pointed out that beyond making laws, Members also have a responsibility to represent the concerns and interests of their constituents. In that sense, introducing a bill that is doomed might still be an important part of representing the district, where even the most important member of Congress.

Casey Hynes contributed to this report.

Celebrate the Holiday Season With a Signature Loan!

Your season will sparkle with this amazingly low rate!

202-224-2967
www.usfifu.com

Apply Today!

6.99% APR for a Classic or Gold Collection as well as a potential .25% rate discount for Auto Payment (AutoPay) in combination with a Classic or Gold Collection + Minimum loan amount of $5,000 + Minimum balance may apply + Subject to credit approval + This loan cannot be used to refinance an existing USFCU loan + Equal Opportunity Lender