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Oversight Committee to Examine “Potty Parity” in Federal Buildings
Hearing will focus on restroom inequality and the merits of H.R. 4869

WASHINGTON – On Wednesday, May 12, 2010, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will hold a legislative hearing to examine the merits of H.R. 4869, the “Restroom Gender Parity in Federal Buildings Act.” Chairman Towns introduced the bill, also known as the “Potty Parity Act,” to address the problem of insufficient restroom facilities for women in federal buildings.

The Restroom Gender Parity in Federal Buildings Act sets a strict standard in its revision of federal building codes with regard to the accessibility of restroom accommodations for men and women. The bipartisan measure, cosponsored by Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Reps. Pete Visclosky (D-IN) and Yvette Clarke (D-NY), would require any federal building constructed for public use to have a 1 to 1 ratio for toilets, including urinals, in women’s and men’s restrooms.

The issue is more than a matter of fairness. The potential health complications for women waiting in long restroom lines are now more widely understood. These include abdominal pain, and greater risk of cystitis and other urinary tract infections that, if left untreated, can cause renal damage.

The hearing will take place at 10:00 a.m. in room 2154 Rayburn House Office Building. Doors open to all credentialed members of the media at 9:00 a.m. and to the general public at 9:45 a.m. A webcast of the hearing will be available on the Committee’s website at <http://oversight.house.gov>

The witnesses scheduled to testify include:

Panel I

Hon. Rep. Yvette Clarke
Member
U.S. House of Representatives

Hon. Rep. Steve Cohen
Member
U.S. House of Representatives

Panel II

Commissioner Robert Peck
Public Building Service
U.S. General Services Administration

Dr. Kathryn H. Anthony
Professor, School of Architecture
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Hon. Sharon Pratt
Former Mayor
Washington, D.C.

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