

Issues of importance to blacks may find receptive audience

Continued from page 7A
 the House Judiciary Committee, Charlie Rangel (D-N.Y.) of the Ways and Means Committee, Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) of the Homeland Security Committee, Alcee Hastings (D-Fla.) of the House Intelligence Committee and Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-Calif.) of the House Administration Committee. All are all poised for chairmanships. Under the new Democratic order, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) is set to become the first female Speaker of the House, replacing Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.). Former CBC chairman Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.) is slated to replace Rep. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) as minority whip.

At least 15 subcommittee chairmanships could also go to members of the CBC, but Chairman Mel Watt (D-N.C.) sounded a note of caution. "We can be a lot more aggressive than we have been," says Watt. "You may not see immediate results, but I think you'll start to see some [votes] on some of those issues."

Watt says a major focus will be placed on the war in Iraq, and what he describes as a new level of "transparency and oversight" of President Bush. "We will be asking questions about the allocation of resources and the priorities of our country," he says.

He said Democrats will move swiftly to increase of the minimum wage, with a vote likely within the first 90 days, Watt says. "There will be an up or down vote on the minimum wage and I think it will pass. That's a concrete thing that I think we're going to see."

But that's not enough says University of Maryland Political Scientist Ron

Walters. "The criminal justice issues have not been dealt with. Half of everyone locked up in America is black. That really begs the revocation of 'Three Strikes You're Out,' and mandatory minimum sentencing and doing something with drugs and drug-sentencing programs and the whole series of the complex criminal justice issues that are feeding the incarceration binge even though crime has gone down," says Walters. "So, it's issues like these that I'm talking about that's critically impacting on our community that we need to raise up in a very forceful way... The war is not going to take up all their time."

Walters is worried that presidential politics might complicate things for House leaders.

"They are not going to want

to deal with issues that have greater specificity to the African-American community, primarily because they are going to be positioning themselves for 2008," he explains. "So many of the agenda items that they're going to highlight are going to be the agenda items that they think will get them a Democratic president elected," he says. "Our issue is whether we are sympathetic to that and tuck our tails or whether or not we mobilize and push our issues forward so that the nominee in 2008 understands what that agenda is about."

Melissa Nobles, president of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, says if Republicans retain control of the Senate, which might not be decided for weeks, Democratic gains in the House might be neutralized.

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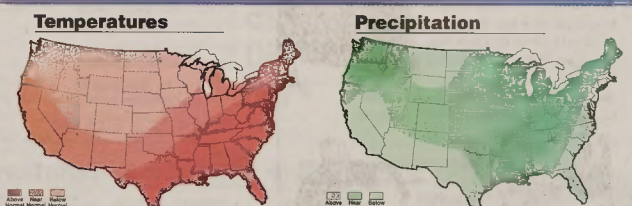


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AccuWeather.com 7-DAY FORECAST FOR CHARLOTTE, NC

Thursday	Thu. night	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Sunny and warmer	Clear	Fog in the a.m., sunshine	Clouds and sun	Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Times of clouds and sun	Cloudy with rain possible
72°	44°	74° / 50°	72° / 50°	72° / 46°	68° / 45°	64° / 46°	69° / 47°
RealFeel® 74°	RealFeel® 48°	RealFeel® 73° / 52°	RealFeel® 69° / 50°	RealFeel® 70° / 48°	RealFeel® 67° / 45°	RealFeel® 60° / 35°	RealFeel® 64° / 41°

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IN THE SKY

Sun	Rise	Set	Moon	Rise	Set	Moon Phases
Thursday	6:53 a.m.	5:22 p.m.	Thursday	9:58 p.m.	11:27 a.m.	Last
Friday	6:54 a.m.	5:21 p.m.	Friday	10:03 p.m.	12:34 p.m.	New
Saturday	6:54 a.m.	5:21 p.m.	Saturday	11:05 p.m.	12:51 p.m.	First
Sunday	6:55 a.m.	5:20 p.m.	Sunday	none	1:22 p.m.	Full
Monday	6:56 a.m.	5:19 p.m.	Monday	12:07 a.m.	1:49 p.m.	
Tuesday	6:57 a.m.	5:19 p.m.	Tuesday	1:05 a.m.	2:19 p.m.	
Wednesday	6:58 a.m.	5:18 p.m.	Wednesday	2:01 a.m.	2:35 p.m.	

REGIONAL CITIES

City	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Albany, GA	75 45 s	80 49 s	77 50 pc	78 47 pc	Memphis, TN	78 80 s	78 59 c	84 46 sh
Augusta, GA	74 45 s	78 50 s	76 52 pc	76 48 pc	Myrtle Beach, SC	73 51 s	78 58 s	75 80 pc
Charleston, SC	74 51 s	78 57 s	76 59 pc	81 57 pc	Norfolk, VA	71 52 pc	67 52 s	72 57 pc
Columbia, SC	78 46 s	78 49 s	77 54 pc	78 47 s	Raleigh, NC	72 48 s	74 50 s	75 52 pc
Durham, NC	71 49 s	73 47 s	73 48 pc	71 46 pc	Richmond, VA	74 48 s	70 49 s	72 52 pc
Greensboro, NC	73 46 s	71 53 s	72 53 pc	68 44 pc	Roanoke, VA	71 49 s	71 50 s	71 49 s
Greenville, SC	73 49 s	75 52 s	73 52 s	67 45 pc	Savannah, GA	74 48 s	79 63 s	78 60 pc
Knoxville, TN	72 46 s	74 52 s	72 49 s	67 43 pc	Wilmington, NC	72 51 s	77 54 s	77 60 pc
Lynchburg, VA	70 43 s	70 47 s	69 48 s	62 39 pc	Winston-Salem, NC	72 48 s	71 52 s	71 52 s

U.S. CITIES

City	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Atlanta	73 53 s	75 56 pc	71 53 s	70 48 pc	Miami	81 67 s	83 71 s	84 70 pc
Boston	66 47 c	55 41 c	56 47 pc	59 45 r	Minneapolis	55 38 c	41 28 sn	43 25 pc
Chicago	64 45 s	59 46 r	62 34 c	50 35 pc	New Orleans	81 66 s	81 64 pc	78 59 t
Cleveland	59 43 pc	58 49 pc	64 48 r	54 38 pc	New York City	68 50 c	58 47 c	60 52 pc
Dallas	87 66 s	82 53 pc	85 46 s	70 32 c	Orlando	78 56 s	80 51 c	82 64 s
Denver	63 33 pc	45 24 r	55 26 pc	51 28 pc	Pittsburgh	62 44 c	64 49 pc	64 48 r
Detroit	64 40 pc	56 46 c	56 41 c	50 36 pc	Phoenix	84 58 pc	80 51 pc	79 54 pc
Houston	69 67 s	83 64 pc	76 54 pc	76 58 pc	San Francisco	63 47 s	63 50 pc	63 51 pc
Kansas City	69 51 s	58 40 r	64 35 pc	64 36 pc	Seattle	48 41 pc	50 42 r	49 44 r
Los Angeles	69 52 pc	72 52 s	74 54 s	70 56 pc	Washington, DC	68 50 pc	68 48 s	68 52 pc

WORLD CITIES

City	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Amsterdam	54 49 pc	54 43 pc	54 46 pc	54 43 pc	Paris	57 37 c	54 34 pc	55 45 s
Berlin	48 31 r	48 37 s	46 38 r	45 32 pc	Rio de Janeiro	70 62 c	71 65 pc	71 66 pc
Buenos Aires	75 54 s	74 66 s	76 68 s	77 69 s	Rome	70 62 s	70 50 pc	68 46 pc
Cairo	74 52 s	75 57 pc	74 60 s	73 52 s	San Juan	88 76 pc	88 76 pc	88 76 pc
Jerusalem	65 43 s	65 45 s	64 51 s	59 49 pc	Seoul	41 29 s	45 24 pc	50 27 s
Johannesburg	77 53 s	77 54 s	76 56 pc	73 52 pc	Sydney	68 57 pc	72 65 pc	78 70 pc
London	52 36 pc	55 45 pc	54 43 sh	52 39 sh	Tokyo	66 53 s	65 55 pc	68 46 pc
Mexico City	69 48 c	69 48 pc	71 49 sh	71 49 pc	Toronto	55 36 pc	48 37 pc	46 35 sh
Moscow	40 27 sn	32 26 sn	26 14 sn	24 19 c	Zurich	57 43 sh	55 38 pc	52 41 c

Weather (W) = sunny; pc=partly cloudy; c=cloudy; sh=showers; t=thunderstorms; r=rain; sh= snow flurries; sn=snow; f=ice

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