

REPORT: First 100 Days of Serving the Lowcountry

U.S. Congressman Joe Cunningham spent his first 100 days in Congress working to accomplish real results for the Lowcountry. Below is a report of his first 100 days in office.

Joe held to his major priorities in his legislative agenda – introducing legislation to implement a ban on offshore drilling, closing the Charleston loophole, and bridging the partisan divide by working across the aisle. In an era of divided government and unprecedented dysfunction, including the longest government shutdown in American history, Joe has worked to identify common ground where he can work with Republicans and the President to move the Lowcountry forward. The publication Congressional Quarterly recently ranked him the most independent Democrat in Congress.

100 DAYS BY THE NUMBERS

- **6** bills sponsored or served as primary cosponsor, **3** have passed the House
- **66%** of cosponsored bills are bipartisan
- **11** tours of local businesses
- **11** listening sessions
- **\$249,160** returned to constituents through casework
- Over **2,700** response calls and emails to constituents

LEGISLATION

Bills sponsored or served as primary cosponsor:

- **H.R. 291, Coastal Economies Protection Act** – places a ten-year moratorium on offshore oil and gas leasing off the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.
- **H.R. 972, Reconstruction Era National Parks Act** – re-designates and expands the Reconstruction Era National Monument in Beaufort County, South Carolina, and establishes the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network. **Passed the House.**
- **H.R. 1112, Enhanced Backgrounds Check Act of 2019** - closes the Charleston Loophole that currently allows the sale of a firearm to proceed by default if a background check is not completed within three days. **Passed the House.**
- **H.R. 1658, VA Providers Equality Act** –improves veterans’ access to podiatric care and puts podiatrists on a level playing field with other physicians, ensuring VA facilities can recruit and retain the high-quality health care providers they need to care for our veterans. **Passed the House and signed into law.**
- **H.R. 1690, Safe Housing for Families Act** – requires HUD to provide carbon monoxide detectors in all public housing units.
- **H.R. 1941, Coastal and Marine Economies Protection Act** - permanently bans oil and gas leasing off the coast of the Pacific and Atlantic.

Helped Pass:

- **H.R. 1, The For the People Act** - once-in-a-generation anti-corruption legislation that protects and expands the right to vote, ends the dominance of big money in politics and partisan gerrymandering, and restores ethics and accountability in the federal government by ensuring public servants put the public interest above special interests.
- **H.R. 7, The Paycheck Fairness Act** – landmark legislation that strengthens and closes loopholes in the 1963 Equal Pay Act to help close the wage gap and support working families.
- **H.R. 8, Bipartisan Background Checks Act** - requires a background check on every gun sale or transfer with careful exceptions for gifts to family members, hunting, target shooting, and self-defense.
- **H.R. 1381, the Burn Pits Registry Enhancement Act** - improves the burn pits registry by allowing entries to be updated with the cause of death after a registered veteran passes away, improving and expanding the data available for studies related to burn pits.
- **H.R. 1585, Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act** – critical reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act which strengthens, safeguards, and builds upon the lifesaving protections for women.
- **H.R. 1644, Save the Internet Act of 2019** – restores net neutrality, establishes enforcement authority, and promotes competition online.
- **Public Lands Package** –includes the permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Act.
- **H.R. 840, Veterans Access to Child Care Act**—directs the Secretary for the Department of Veterans Affairs to “provide child care assistance” to veterans eligible for VA healthcare services who must travel to receive those services.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND CAUCUSES

Congressman Joe Cunningham serves on the House Veterans Affairs Committee and the Natural Resources Committee, committee assignments that are specifically important to the Lowcountry. The Lowcountry's vibrant natural resources are vital to its economy and way of life, and Joe is proud to use his seat on Natural Resources to work to protect them. Additionally, South Carolina's First Congressional District has the highest population of veterans in the state of South Carolina. Joe is honored to serve on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and ensure Lowcountry veterans and their families receive the best and most reliable care, services, and benefits.

On the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Joe was assigned to the Technology Modernization and Economy Opportunity Subcommittees. Part of ensuring Lowcountry veterans are receiving the best possible care means modernizing the VA and investing in the right technology to do so. It's also an unfortunate and unacceptable reality that many veterans struggle to find economic success when transitioning to civilian life. Joe believes it is our responsibility to honor the sacrifice Lowcountry veterans have made by supporting them just as much in their civilian life by ensuring access to educational benefits, job opportunities, and affordable housing.

On the Natural Resources Committee, Joe sits on the Subcommittees on Energy and Mineral Resources and Water, Oceans, and Wildlife. The Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources oversees America's mineral and energy resources on public lands, including our oceans, ensuring they are developed in a safe and equitable manner.

Caucuses Joined:

- **Blue Dogs** (Vice Chair of the Infrastructure Task Force) – a group of centrist and pragmatic Democrats dedicated to pursuing fiscally-responsible policies, ensuring a strong national defense, and transcending party lines to get things done.
- **Problem Solvers Caucus** - a group of Democrats and Republicans who meet weekly to discuss common-sense policies and issues on which they can work together.
- **New Dems** – a group of moderate Democrats committed to pro-economic growth, pro-innovation, and fiscally responsible policies.
- **Future Forum** - young Members of the House of Representatives who are focused on issues and opportunities for millennial Americans.
- **Black Maternal Health** – A diverse group of House members committed to improving Black maternal health outcomes.
- **Congressional Taskforce on Alzheimer’s Disease** – a bipartisan group dedicated to advancing research and public awareness of Alzheimer’s disease.
- **Bipartisan Oceans Caucus** - bipartisan group of House members committed to taking action to protect the health and future of our oceans.
- **Congressional Travel & Tourism Caucus** – a bipartisan forum for the development and collaboration of national policy to promote domestic and international travel for leisure, business, educational, and medical purposes.
- **Auto Care Caucus** – a bipartisan group focused on an agenda to benefit businesses that manufacture, distribute and sell motor vehicle parts, accessories, equipment, materials and supplies, and perform vehicle service and repair.

IN THE NEWS

[Daily Beast](#): This Freshman Democrat Tunes Out AOC to Keep His Job

It’s not only Cunningham’s “(D-SC)” designation that makes him look out of place. In this 63-member Democratic freshman class, which is defined by avowed lefties like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Cunningham is a centrist who occasionally sides with Republicans on key votes and aims to work with them whenever possible. “Thousands of Republicans voted for us,” he said in describing his upset election win. “I’m honored, and we won’t ever forget that either.”

[Post and Courier](#): Joe Cunningham files bill to permanently ban offshore drilling, seismic testing

U.S. Rep. Joe Cunningham on Thursday introduced a bill to ban offshore drilling and seismic testing, making it the most significant legislative attempt yet by the Charleston Democrat to keep the practices away from South Carolina’s beaches.

Named the “Coastal and Marine Economies Protection Act,” the legislation calls for a permanent and complete ban on offshore drilling and seismic testing in both the Atlantic and Pacific regions.

In many ways, the bill is Cunningham’s way of upping the ante around a centerpiece issue that helped him score a surprising midterm win in South Carolina’s coastal 1st District, a historically Republican stronghold.

“It feels great to be able to look people in the eye back in the 1st District and say I kept promises. Unfortunately, that’s a rarity in politics these days, but we ran on a set of limited issues, and I didn’t over-promise on things that I didn’t think I could deliver on,” Cunningham told The Post and Courier about his hopes for the bill on the eve of its introduction.

[Washington Post](#): A Trump official said seismic air gun tests don’t hurt whales. So a congressman blasted him with an air horn.

A hearing on the threat seismic testing poses to North Atlantic right whales was plodding along Thursday when, seemingly out of nowhere, Rep. Joe Cunningham (D-S.C.) pulled out an air horn and politely asked if he could blast it.

[...] As committee members engaged in a predictable debate along party lines — Republicans in support of testing and President Trump’s energy agenda, Democrats against it — Cunningham reached for the air horn, put his finger on the button and turned to Oliver.

[...] Cunningham, who represents Charleston and other coastal cities, pressed on. What if it happened every 10 seconds for days, weeks and months, he said. He asked Oliver to guess how much louder commercial air guns are than his store-bought air horn. When Oliver didn’t bite, he told him the sound from air guns is 16,000 times that of his air horn.

[Live5 News](#): Rep. Joe Cunningham meets with coastal mayors about bill banning offshore drilling forever

Congressman Joe Cunningham met with coastal mayors and community members Friday touting his proposed federal legislation against offshore drilling.

His bill would permanently ban oil and gas leasing off the Pacific and Atlantic coastlines.

“I promised the people of the Lowcountry that I would make sure there was NEVER drilling off our coasts - and that's a promise I intend to keep,” Cunningham said in a statement. “Our beaches, businesses, and way of life should not be for sale. South Carolinians want nothing to do with offshore drilling and the devastating threat it poses to our vibrant natural resources. I am proud to have the support of a bipartisan group of lawmakers, advocates, and organizations up and down South Carolina and across both the Atlantic and Pacific coastlines. It’s an honor to have the opportunity to lead this bipartisan bill across the finish line to ban offshore drilling off our coast once and for all.”

[McClatchy](#): Joe Cunningham votes no on Pelosi as speaker, backs House campaign head instead

South Carolina Democratic Rep. Joe Cunningham on Thursday kept his first campaign promise: He voted for someone other than Nancy Pelosi for speaker — and instead backed a colleague who could help him immensely as he faces what will likely be a tough re-election next year.

[...] Cunningham was one of the few who remained steadfast in opposition. He was one of 16 House Democrats, and four incoming congressmen, to put his name on a letter vowing not to vote for Pelosi for speaker. He also was one of 33 House Democrats who opposed nominating Pelosi in early December.

Post and Courier: EDITORIAL: Expanded background checks an important step

The U.S. House vote to expand background checks for gun purchases was a victory for supporters of common-sense gun reform. While the measure faces a steep climb in the Senate and a promised veto from President Donald Trump, Americans should be heartened that more lawmakers are heeding their call for action on the scourge of gun violence.

[...] Mr. Cunningham introduced the bill along with fellow South Carolina Democrat Jim Clyburn and Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y.

CONSTITUENT OUTREACH

As a part of Joe's commitment to community engagement, accessibility, and hearing from his constituents, he and his staff have hosted numerous public events since taking office.

Joe has held 'Joe in the Neighborhoods' across the district in Beaufort, West Ashley, Sullivan's Island, and John's Island. He toured the Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center, Booz Allen, USC Beaufort, the U.S. Coast Guard, Century Aluminum, Geismar North America, and many more important economic centers. He's participated in a Town Hall Project Town Hall in Charleston.

He's participated in important community events across the Lowcountry including the Martin Luther King Parade, the Gullah Festival, the March for our Lives, SEWE, the Charleston STEM Fest, Black Expo, the Heritage Classic and the Commissioning of the USS Charleston.

He held listening sessions with federal employees during the partial government shutdown. He has also held similar listening sessions with faith leaders, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, African American leaders, student veterans, labor leaders, Women in Construction, the Beaufort Chamber of Commerce, offshore drilling opponents, and other coastal stakeholders.



Rep. Cunningham is here to serve you. Please contact Joe and his staff at any of the following locations.

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