



# ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

1140 19<sup>th</sup> STREET, NW • WASHINGTON, DC 20036-6608 • (202) 393-3434 • FAX: (202) 638-4904 • E-mail: [info@aaainc.org](mailto:info@aaainc.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 11, 2006  
Web: [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org)

CONTACT: Karoon Panosyan  
Phone: (202) 393-3434  
E-mail: [kpanosyan@aaainc.org](mailto:kpanosyan@aaainc.org)

## **CONGRESSMAN RENZI JOINS THE ARMENIAN CAUCUS** *Cosponsors Bill Prohibiting Aid for Bypass Rail Link*

Washington, DC – At the urging of the Armenian Assembly of America, Congressman Rick Renzi (R-AZ) joined the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues and signed on as a cosponsor of H. R. 3361, a bill that would prohibit funding for a rail link connecting Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan while bypassing Armenia.

“The Armenian Assembly appreciates Congressman Renzi’s support of the rail legislation and welcomes him to the Armenian Caucus,” said Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. “We look forward to working with him to strengthen the U.S.-Armenia relationship.”

The South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act, introduced by Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Joe Knollenberg (R-MI), along with Co-Chair Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Caucus Member George Radanovich (R-CA), is supported by nearly 100 lawmakers to date. Last month, the House approved the Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2006, which included an amendment which was strongly supported by the Assembly and sponsored by Representatives Joseph Crowley (D-NY), together with Congressmen Edward Royce (R-CA) and Brad Sherman (D-CA). The provision ensures that no Export-Import funding is used for a costly and unnecessary rail line that would exclude Armenia from economic and regional transportation opportunities.

The amendment, adopted by the House Financial Services Committee, states that “The [Export-Import] Bank shall not guarantee, insure, extend credit, or participate in an extension of credit in connection with the development or promotion of any rail connections or railway-related connections that do not traverse or connect with Armenia, and do traverse or connect Baku, Azerbaijan, Tbilisi, Georgia, and Kars, Turkey.”

Renzi is the second member from the state of Arizona to join the Armenian Caucus. He serves on the House Financial Services Committee, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Resources Committee.

The Armenian Assembly of America is the largest Washington-based nationwide organization promoting public understanding and awareness of Armenian issues. It is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization.

###

NR#2006-089

**Photograph:**



**Caption:** Congressman Rick Renzi (R-AZ) flanked by Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny (left) and Kevin Borland of Roundtable Strategies, LLC.