

# *Working Group at U.S. Congress Favors Relations with Cuba*

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Washington, December 17 (RHC)-- A dozen U.S. Democratic and Republican legislators announced on Wednesday the setting up of a working group at the House of Representatives to consolidate the rapprochement between Cuba and the United States.

The group's official launching takes place on Thursday, December 17th -- which marks a year since the historic announcement by Presidents Raul Castro and Barack Obama about the intention to re-establish bilateral diplomatic relations.

The group members said they expect to carry out seminars and meet with experts to draw attention on how the reforms in the United States and Cuba are opening new avenues for personal, diplomatic and commercial relations.

Marc Hanson, senior advisor of the Washington Office on Latin America, WOLA, said that the decision of the U.S. lawmakers is outstanding because it will be instrumental to translate the overwhelming support and eliminate the blockade of Cuba through legislations in the U.S. Congress.

Throughout the year, the legislators that now make up the group have presented several draft legislations that have not yet found their way through the legislative process on Capitol Hill. These bills lift travel restrictions and allow all U.S. citizens to visit Cuba. The legislation also provides that U.S. companies may

do business with the island with no restrictions.

So far, Washington and Havana have reached important accords in the fight against drug trafficking, the smuggling of persons, the protection of marine ecosystems, as well as the reopening of the postal service.

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