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**Darren Willcox, Top Policy Advisor to Speaker Dennis Hastert, joins The  
Dutko Group Companies as Senior Vice President and Head of Health Policy  
Practice**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – June 17th, 2004 – The Dutko Group Companies, the nation’s leading national government affairs firm, consistently ranked in *FORTUNE* magazine as one of the top 10 lobbying firms, today announced the appointment of Darren Willcox as Senior Vice President and head of The Dutko Group Companies Health Policy practice.

Willcox, who hails from Buffalo, New York, brings to The Dutko Group Companies years of experience on all health care and Social Security issues, including Medicare, Medicaid, private health insurance, FDA and public health issues. Willcox has served as one of Speaker Dennis Hastert’s (R-IL) top advisors for over three years.

During his tenure with the Speaker, Willcox was responsible for managing many of the top policy and political goals of the White House and GOP Conference – chief among them the passage of patient protection legislation and last year’s Medicare Modernization Act. Willcox also played an important role in the passage of medical liability reform, association health plans and the enactment of the Medical Device User Fee Modernization Act.

“Darren has been my go-to guy on health care and Social Security issues for over three years, noted Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) “He deserves tremendous credit for the passage of several pieces of major health care legislation, especially last year’s historic law that created the first ever prescription drug benefit in Medicare. I wish Darren the best in his future endeavors.”

Prior to joining the Speaker’s staff, Darren served as Administrative Assistant to U.S. Representative Porter Goss (R-FL). Willcox worked for Rep. Goss from 1995 through 2001 as a chief strategic and policy advisor, including serving as liaison to the House Rules Committee.

“Darren has been one of the key players among Congressional staff on all major health issues over the past several years, said Gary Andres, Vice Chairman of Dutko’s Public Policy and Research, “We believe his experience and background as a strategist will add tremendous depth to the Dutko team”.

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Willcox, 33 will head up the Dutko Group Companies Health Care policy practice and will work to expand Dutko's quickly expanding health care practice. "Darren brings a new dimension to our health care services offering, but perhaps more importantly, brings a wealth of knowledge and abilities gained from his service to the Speaker and House leadership", said Mark Irion, CEO of the Dutko Group Companies. "We are aggressively pursuing the most talented individuals around the country as we pursue a strategy to offer best-in-class government affairs services. Darren had a number of options, and he chose Dutko."

Willcox holds a B.A. in Political Science from Miami, University in Oxford, Ohio and has been recognized with several professional awards and honors including the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Congressional Staff Award (2002), the National Association of Community Health Centers, 2003 Congressional Staff Award, and the Dean and Betty Gallo Prostate Cancer Center, 2003 Ed Krenik Congressional Staff award.

He was most recently recognized in The Hill newspaper as one of the Top 35 staffers under 35 and featured last month in National Journal as one of the key policymakers on drug pricing.

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### **About the Dutko Group Companies**

The Dutko Group Companies, Inc. provides comprehensive government affairs management and strategic counsel and helps build public—private partnerships with federal, state and international levels of government. Dutko is consistently ranked as one of the "top 10 most powerful lobbying firms" in the country by *FORTUNE* magazine. The firm offers best-in-class expertise and service in five distinct disciplines: The Dutko Group which has a quarter century of experience in working with both chambers of Congress, the White House, federal agencies, and national associations; Dutko/KNP, which specializes in state and local government affairs, builds partnerships at the state level on behalf of our clients to help impact public policy at the state *and* federal levels; Dutko Government Markets, providing strategic counsel and consulting services in accessing federal and state government markets; and Dutko Research, a public opinion research and communications firm led by Gary Andres that specializes in developing the themes, messages and communication approaches which advance our clients' objectives. Dutko has recently formed Dutko Global Advisors, to help our clients build partnerships abroad in emerging market economies. For more information go to [www.dutkogroup.com](http://www.dutkogroup.com) or call us at 202-484-4884.