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Thank you for reading The Conaway Chronicle, a weekly review of my activities in Congress. This newsletter is to let you know what's going on in Washington and what important issues are being debated in Congress.

Solving the Energy Crisis must be a High Priority

This week, House Republicans released an energy legislation package that is a product of the House Energy Security and Climate Change Task Force, who developed the legislation after four months of hearing from experts in the energy industry.

With record-setting prices at the pump, Americans are desperate for real relief. By cutting through the bureaucratic red tape and increasing the supply of domestic energy, prices at the pump will significantly decrease. The Republican plan for energy security will increase the production of domestic energy in an environmentally-safe manner. This includes the exploration of oil, natural gas, and coal and the production of alternative nuclear and renewable energy from sources such as wind and hydroelectric power for future generations.

The House majority has passed bill after bill that will increase costs to generate energy, and yet my Democrat colleagues continuously complain about the high prices that are a direct result of the policies they put in place.

Contributing to the task force, I presented and offered a Republican motion to the National Defense Authorization Act that would repeal a provision in last year's energy bill that restricts the Department of Defense from buying coal-based jet fuels. The provision, Section 526, was crafted by environmentalists who argue the government should restrict the purchase of coal products to reduce greenhouse gases. It is irrational to place new energy restrictions on the DOD during an energy crisis. In preventing the procurement of American produced resources, Section 526 will increase our reliance on Middle East oil.

The Republican motion also included expedited site selection for three new oil refineries on closed military bases. The site selection would address all environmental concerns and would allow the State's governor to veto any site he deems unsatisfactory. I was very surprised that my Democratic colleagues failed to see the benefit of expanding American produced energy and voted against the motion.

I along with Congressman Jeb Hensarling (TX-5), have also introduced a standalone bill (**HR 5656**) to repeal section 526 of the Majority-led "No" Energy bill.

Click here for more information on the Republican plan to lower gas prices and increase energy production.

Farm Bill Almost Becomes Law

On Wednesday, President Bush vetoed the House and Senate-passed version on the Farm Bill (**H.R. 2419, the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008**). The U.S. House of Representatives, along with the U.S. Senate, voted to override the President's veto making it law. Unfortunately, due to a clerical error the President did not veto the correct version of the Farm Bill. The House and Senate were forced to vote again on the Farm Bill and will again have to override the President's veto after Memorial Day.

It is a widely held axiom that good agriculture policy is good Federal policy. This Farm Bill is a fulfillment of that very statement. This legislation will continue a safety net for America's producers and consumers while providing a proper return on investment to the American taxpayer. The commodity market is an extremely unpredictable place in which our producers have no ability to set the price for their products. Furthermore, farmers and ranchers in all areas of the world are forced to deal with uncontrollable production risks that could at any time, wipe out an entire year's income in a moment's notice. These are fundamentals that will never change and I firmly believe that we will always have a need for policies and mechanisms to address these issues. This long-overdue and extremely important piece of legislation, once law, will return a sense of certainty to farmers, ranchers and rural America.

Supporting and Remembering Our Troops on Memorial Day

On Thursday, I voted in support of the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act. There were a number of major provisions in the annual bill that aim to better the lives of the men and women who fight for our freedom. Included in the legislation is a 3.9 percent pay raise that will go into effect next January. The legislation also increases the size of the Army and Marine Corp and authorizes the construction of new housing to address the embarrassing substandard housing recently found at Fort Bragg. I am proud that the House and the Armed Services Committee addressed many of the quality of life concerns that have been brought to my attention by our men and women in uniform. **Click here** to listen to my podcast on this issue.

On Memorial Day, our entire nation will pay tribute to those who gave their life vigilantly defending the freedoms we enjoy in the United States of America. People across the country will celebrate in different ways, whether getting together with friends and family for a barbeque, watching a hometown parade, or heading to the swimming pool to take in the sun at beginning of summer. But for the families and friends who have lost a loved one defending our country, Monday should be a celebration of a life.

As I do every year on Memorial Day, I like to encourage people to make today personal, meaning to remember a specific person that has given their life so that we may live free today. Personally, I remember the young soldiers from West Texas who have given their lives fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, and their brave families with whom their memories will live forever. I also think of a young athlete whom I was a peer with at Odessa Permian High School, Rex Young, who was killed while defending our country and protecting his platoon in Vietnam. I also remember Mac Wilson, another fellow Odessan, who sacrificed his life by throwing himself on an enemy grenade to save a fellow comrade. Both of these brave men were posthumously presented with the Medal of Honor and their legacy will live on forever in West Texas.

I wish everyone a safe and happy Memorial Day weekend.

The Conaway Chronicle will be issued every week when Congress is in session. I hope that you will find it informative and will continue to stay informed with my recent legislative activities in Washington. In the meantime, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for future issues of the Conaway Chronicle, please visit the website at **www.house.gov/conaway** or don't hesitate to call me at (202) 225-3605. Check out my blog at **www.conawayblog.com**!

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