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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.

**The Federal Budget: Washington's Spending Problem**

Last week, the House Budget Committee met to mark-up the federal budget for the Fiscal Year 2009. My Democrat colleagues have decided to pass a budget that not only employs the largest tax increase in history by raising taxes by \$683 billion over five years, but also adds \$276 billion in spending to the President's budget over the next five years. Sound tax policy should be comprised of consistency and stability. When Americans are uncertain about the future of our economy and taxpayers are wary of making long-term spending decisions, this type of action has an adverse effect on our economy. But the majority continues to foster these doubts by guaranteeing years of increased taxes for hard-working Americans.

I was able to offer a few amendments with my colleagues during the markup. The 'Savings in Appropriations' amendment, which I have offered in the past, amends the rules of the House to allow Members of Congress to offer budget-reducing amendments to general appropriations bills and, in turn, will reduce the deficit or increase the surplus. You can [Click here](#) to watch me offer this amendment in the Budget mark-up.

I also offered an amendment to reject an increase in the Estate Tax, better known as the 'Death Tax'. I firmly believe that taxing death is not good public policy, as too many small businesses and family farms in District 11 have gone out of business due to the forceful hand of the federal government. Americans are taxed in every aspect of their lives and it is past time to draw the line. [Click here](#) to watch me offer the amendment on the Death Tax.



Some of my Republican colleagues and I also offered a sense of Congress on war funding, stating that it is the job of Congress to provide consistent funding for our troops in a timely manner instead of playing political games in Washington. Unfortunately, all three amendments failed on a party-line vote.

At a time when economic growth and job creation is slowing, and Americans are concerned about high gasoline prices and lower home values, reducing the deficit and controlling spending should be top priorities. Unfortunately, my Democrat colleagues are intent on doing the opposite. Congress must get serious about curing Washington's spending disease and I will continue to work on reforming how the federal government spends taxpayer money.

**New Website**

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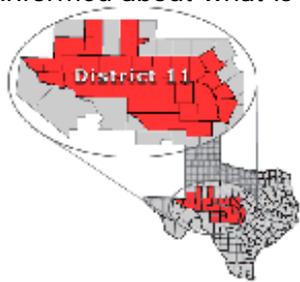
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Last week, my Congressional office launched a new-and-improved official U.S. House of Representatives website. Now, it will be even easier for you to stay connected and informed about what is happening in Washington, D.C. and throughout Texas' 11th Congressional district. It is important to me that West Texans are able to find as much information as possible with the click of a mouse. On my new website, you will find as much information as possible through the use of video, interactive maps, weekly podcasts and our blog.



Whether you are looking to visit Washington, D.C., find help with a federal agency, have a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol, or if you are simply browsing the news and issues pages to stay informed about what Congress is doing in Washington, I am confident that you will be able to find everything you need on our new interactive site. Also, check out my blog at [www.conawayblog.com](http://www.conawayblog.com) to get up-to-date information from me and my staff on the upcoming issues here in Washington. I encourage everyone to visit the site at <http://conaway.house.gov>, where the virtual door is always open!

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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](http://www.house.gov/conaway) or don't hesitate to call me at (202) 225-3605. Check out my blog at [www.conawayblog.com](http://www.conawayblog.com)!

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**Washington, D.C. Office**  
511 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
phone: (202) 225-3605  
fax: (202) 225-1783

**San Angelo, TX Office**  
33 Twohig, Suite 307  
San Angelo, TX 76903  
phone: (325) 659-4010  
fax: (325) 659-4014

**Midland, TX Office**  
6 Desta Drive, Suite  
2000  
Midland, TX 79705  
phone: (432) 687-2390  
fax: (432) 687-0277

**Llano Regional Office**

County Annex  
104 W. Sandstone  
Llano, TX 78643  
phone: (325) 247-2826  
fax: (325) 247-2676

**Odessa Office**

City Hall  
411 W. 8th Street, 5th Floor  
Odessa, TX 79761  
phone: (432) 331-9667  
fax: (432) 332-6538  
**Toll Free in Texas**  
**(866) 882-3811**

**E-mail Congressman Conaway**

**Brownwood Office**

Brownwood City Hall  
501 Center Ave.  
Brownwood, TX 76801  
phone: (325) 646-1950  
fax: (325) 646-2979

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