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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.

### GAS PRICES

Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a Democrat-led “price gouging” bill, which defines the act of price gouging as raising the price of gasoline to a level considered “unconscionably excessive,” without clearly defining what that means. The price of a barrel of oil is set by the global market, not by multinational energy companies. As long as politicians continue to demagogue energy companies and oppose legislation that addresses the long-term problem of rising energy costs, we will continue to fail the American people. This legislation increases the size of the federal government and refuses to allow for domestic and deep sea energy exploration, making the existing problems worse. The rising cost of gasoline is taking a toll on hard-working Americans, and I agree that substantive action needs to be taken. However, we must enact commonsense legislation that will increase supply and provide for research and development for alternative sources of energy. We must stop promoting legislation that will only make the problem worse and allow the issue of rising energy costs to be clouded with misinformation and politically motivated emotion. [Click here](#) to listen to my podcast on this issue, along with other issues that were under debate in Washington last week.



### SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS

Last Thursday, the House voted to pass the long-overdue final version of the War Supplemental, which provides funding for our troops in harm's way, as well as \$3 billion in disaster funding for farmers and ranchers. The revised supplemental establishes benchmarks intended to condition future U.S. strategy in Iraq based on the performance of the Iraqi government. It is well past time to get our troops the funding they need to do their jobs, complete their missions, and return home to their loved ones. Our mission in Iraq continues to be important for America; however the Iraqi government must take the proper steps to protect and provide for its citizens. I am confident that this legislation will provide the proper funding to help our troops in their mission and aid the Iraqi government in their fight toward a stable democracy.



While I am pleased that funding for agriculture disaster was passed, I am disappointed that this much-needed aid was used as a political bargaining chip. I have, and will, continue to offer my support for legislation to assist producers who are suffering from severe financial losses as a result of unpredictable, adverse weather conditions. Rural America needs our help; and in return they will continue to provide all Americans with the most abundant, safest and affordable food supply in the world.

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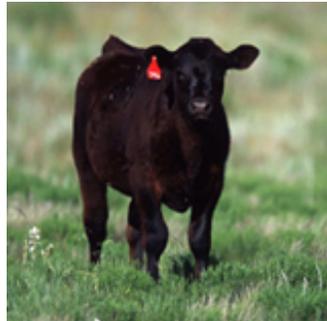
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Among others, the emergency supplemental also provides funding for: FEMA and hurricane Katrina disaster relief, aid for veterans, and funding for the minimum wage increase. The federal minimum wage will increase from \$5.15 to \$7.25 per hour over the next two years, and includes \$4.8 billion to help small business offset the increase. [Click here](#) to view a full breakdown of the legislation.

### **2007 FARM BILL**

Last week, two subcommittees on the House Committee on Agriculture began consideration of the 2007 farm bill. Overall, I am pleased with the proposals that the subcommittee approved. The



language approved would grant dairy product buyers and sellers the right to enter into voluntary, long-term contracts for their milk supplies. I believe forward contracting provides a way for buyers and sellers to achieve stable, fair and reliable prices. There are some issues of concern I have with the bill that I plan to work on before we take-up this legislation again in full committee. An anti-arbitration amendment was accepted that would, in my opinion, establish a dangerous anti-contract and anti-arbitration precedent. In many cases, arbitration is the least costly option versus a producer being forced to bear the cost of going to court. I look forward to working

with members in a bipartisan manner to reauthorize the Farm Bill so that America's farmers and ranchers will have the tools they need to provide for the American consumer.

### **LOBBYING REFORM**

In May of last year, 192 Democrats voted against H.R. 4975, the Republican "Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act", calling it a 'sham' bill. Last week, the Democrats brought virtually the exact same bill to the floor, which went on to pass 382-37. Both bills continue the current one-year prohibition of Members of Congress from lobbying Congress after they leave and requires Members to disclose negotiations with potential employers to avoid conflicts of interests. Both also mandate quarterly, electronic disclosure of lobbyist activity to a public database, and increases fines and criminal penalties for breaking lobbying regulations. The American people have a constitutional right to "petition the Government for a redress of grievances," and there should be greater transparency and accountability in the lobbying industry. After the corruption witnessed in both parties, the American people deserve strong reform, not broken promises. I am pleased that this legislation was passed, however I am disappointed in the Democrats hypocrisy and political grandstanding on this issue.

I hope that everyone had a safe and happy Memorial Day. I will be in the District the first part of this week and then traveling to Panama with the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee during the rest of the district work period. We will be back with you in a couple of weeks with another update from Washington.

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The Conaway Chronicle will be issued every Monday or Tuesday 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: (866) 882-3811 **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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