



June 11, 2007 – Volume 3, Issue 20

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.

### **Memorial Day Recess**

Last week, the House returned to Washington, D.C. after the Memorial Day work period. I was able to spend the first half of the work period in Texas meeting with constituents and eating some good Tex-Mex. Later in the week, I joined Ike Skelton, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, on a Congressional delegation trip to Columbia and Panama. The purpose of the trip was to discuss trade opportunities and to visit International narcotics and law enforcement programs. The efforts being made by the Colombian and Panamanian governments to combat narcoterrorism are extraordinary. I am particularly impressed with Colombian President Uribe for what appears to be a 180 degree turnaround in dealing with this issue in Columbia.



The bilateral free trade agreements with Columbia and Panama, which are expected to be voted on later this year, will have a positive impact on the U.S. trade surplus with both countries. Not only will the agreements strengthen relations, but the financial benefits to U.S. producers will be significant, as it will allow them to sell products duty free.

While in Columbia, I was also able to discuss the hostage situation of the American civilians being held by FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia) in the Columbian jungle. Thomas Howes, Marc Gonsalves and Keith Stansell were captured by the guerrilla's in 2003 after their plane crashed in FARC territory. FARC, which was originally financed by ransoms from extortion and kidnapping, is now mainly financed with money from narcotics. The U.S. has dedicated resources and personnel whose primary focus is rescuing the hostages. The Columbian government is assisting the search efforts at every level. Both governments are maintaining a constant vigil to bring these Americans home safely.

We need to continue improving U.S. relations with both of these important nations. Having these countries a partners in the Global War on Terror and the War on Drugs is vital to the security of the U.S. [Click here](#) to read an article on my visit in the Midland Reporter-Telegram

### **Stem Cell Research**

Last Thursday, the House voted to pass [S.5, Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007](#), by a vote of 247 to 176. This legislation, which was introduced by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and already passed the Senate, will expand the number of embryonic stem cell lines that are eligible for federally funded research. There are still many ethical questions regarding embryonic stem cell research that remain unanswered. Democrats continue to ignore major advances in ethical research; instead, they push ahead with controversial measures and choose to pass veto bait over legislation that would responsibly advance stem cell research. I want to encourage the search

### ***Tell a Friend***

Please use this form to forward this message to up to five of your friends.

Your Name:

Your E-mail Address:

Your Comments:

Friend E-mail 1:

Friend E-mail 2:

Friend E-mail 3:

for crucial all-purpose stem cells, from sources other than embryos, for life-saving research. It is vital that this and all medical research be carried out in a way that respects the sanctity of life. We should not sacrifice life for science. The President is expected to veto this legislation.

### **2007 Farm Bill**

Last week, the subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture and the subcommittee on Specialty Crops, Rural Development, and Foreign Agriculture sent their recommendations for the 2007 Farm Bill to the full House Committee on Agriculture. Fruits and vegetables, along with strong sugar and peanut specialty crops compromise a significant share of U.S. agriculture crops, and the 2007 Farm Bill should reflect their needs. There is much work to be done in the remaining subcommittees before the full committee's 2007 Farm Bill mark-up at the end of this month. I am looking 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.



### **Passports**

A couple of weeks ago, I sent a letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urging her to work to resolve the current backlog of passport requests to ensure safe international travel for U.S. citizens. The bipartisan letter, signed by 17 members of the Texas delegation, came on the heels of new rules requiring a passport to travel by air in the Western Hemisphere, which has significantly increased the demand for passports.



Last Friday, the U.S. Department of State announced that citizens traveling to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda who have applied for but not yet received passports can temporarily enter and depart from the United States by air with a government issued photo identification and Department of State official proof of application for a passport through September 30, 2007. The federal government is making this accommodation for air travel due to longer than expected processing times for passport applications in the face of record-breaking demand.

I am pleased with the State Department's decision to temporarily allow citizens to leave and enter the country with proper documents. While Congress has urged the strengthening of travel documents to prevent entry of terrorists across our borders, there must be adequate resources to fulfill the demand for passports before we can enforce the new requirements. Our security continues to be our number one priority, and I will continue to work with Congress and the State Department to see that the increased demand for passports is dealt with efficiently. You can [click here](#) to view questions and answers for the new rules.

---

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)!

*If you received this message in error, or you no longer wish to receive messages from the sender, you may [click here to unsubscribe](#).*



**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

This mailing was prepared,  
published  
and mailed at taxpayer  
expense. It is provided as a  
service to 11th Congressional  
District constituents.