This Week in Congress

October 11, 2010

Dear Friend,

Welcome to “This Week in Congress.” I have enjoyed traveling in Kansas this week while Congress has been out of session. Congress will reconvene in Washington D.C. after the November elections. This week's headlines are:

- Government Needs to Change Direction
- Honoring Great Bend Couple as "Angels in Adoption"
- Visiting with Members of American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association
- Visiting Philips Lighting Company in Salina
- Supporting Good Work of Reins of Hope in Hutchinson
- Speaking with Pretty Prairie High School Students
- Attending Kingman Lions Club
- KSU vs. University of Nebraska Football Game
- Attending Haven's Fall Fest
- In the Office

Government Needs to Change Direction

This week, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the nation's unemployment rate remained at 9.6 percent in September and 95,000 jobs were lost. The unemployment rate has now been above 9 percent for 17 consecutive months. It is clear that current economic policies are not working. Washington has increased the tax and regulatory burden on businesses at the expense of American workers. Rather than hiring new workers, businesses are using their resources on costly tax increases, burdensome government mandates and intrusive regulations. These policies have created an environment of uncertainty and hindered job growth in America.

It is time for our government to change direction. That's why I introduced H.R. 6367, Restore American Jobs Act, to spur job creation across America. This bill will encourage job creation and business investment by reducing the tax and regulatory burdens. It will also spur job creation by providing new opportunities for American goods in countries like Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. And lastly, it will repeal the costly and burdensome health care law, so it can be replaced with true reforms that lower health care costs for businesses and families across the nation.

Congress has a responsibility to reduce economic uncertainty, so businesses can move forward with confidence and start creating jobs again. When businesses have the certainty, resources, markets and freedom, they will succeed and the economy will recover. Click here to read more

about my legislation.

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Honoring Great Bend Couple as "Angels in Adoption"

I recently nominated Dr. John and Lori Simmons of Great Bend to receive the 2010 "Angels in Adoption" award for their advocacy for adoption. The Angels in Adoption program highlights the good work of those who strive to improve the lives of children through adoption and foster care.

This week, I enjoyed visiting with the Simmons during their visit to Washington, D.C. to receive their award. John and Lori's efforts to care for orphans in Ethiopia prove that one family can make a lasting difference in the lives of others. The Simmons adopted two young girls from Ethiopia, and have worked tirelessly to care for many more Ethiopian orphans and involve the Great Bend community in that mission. Their efforts have galvanized their community around a common goal and have shown that when individuals work together, there is no limit to what they can accomplish. The Simmons' compassion will change the lives of hundreds of orphaned children forever. Click here to view a photo from their visit.

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Visiting with Members of American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

On Monday, I spoke at the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association meeting in Kansas City. There are over 500 short lines that operate nearly 50,000 miles of track in the United States, close to almost a third of our national railroad network. For large portions of the country, including Kansas, short line railroads are the only connection to the national railroad network. For small businesses, farmers, and ranchers in Kansas, short line railroads play a crucial role in getting their goods to market.

We discussed the need to extend the 45G railroad track maintenance credit which allows short line railroads to improve their track so as to better serve customers. I was the original sponsor when this credit became law and have seen first-hand the critical infrastructure improvements that have been made because of it. The tax credit expired last year and I have been working hard to try and extend it for this year. Thanks to Chairman Mike Ogborn of for his hospitality during the event.

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Visiting Philips Lighting Company in Salina

I had the privilege of meeting with the folks of Philips Lighting Company in Salina and touring their plant on Thursday. I appreciated the opportunity to talk with about 50 employees and answer their questions after the tour. I was pleased to learn that the Salina facility has been selected to undertake a new project which will bring five additional jobs to the facility. In addition, the facility will also benefit from realignment within the company which will add nine more jobs in the near future.

This is good news for Kansas and for the folks of Philips in Salina. I am proud that such an efficient, productive, and successful business model is thriving within the heart of Kansas. Thanks to Randy Moorehead, Dan Mendicina, the management and employees of Philips for their kindness and hospitality during my visit. Click here to view photos from the meeting.

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