

## 4/06/2009 This Week in Congress

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April 6, 2009

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." I will be traveling in Kansas over the next two weeks as Congress will be out of session for the spring district work period. I will be in Gray County this afternoon and in Mitchell, Cloud and Ottawa Counties later this week for stops for my annual Listening Tour. [Click here to view my upcoming tour stops.](#) I hope you find this newsletter useful.

### Opposing \$3.6 Trillion Budget Proposal

On Thursday night, I voted against the \$3.6 trillion Democratic Budget proposal. The budget creates a \$1.8 trillion deficit this year, which would be added to our already crippling national debt. Spending trillions of dollars that we do not have will not help future generations who will have to pay our debts.

In a separate vote Thursday night, I voted in favor of an alternative budget proposal. I have long supported the need for fiscal discipline and accountability. Taxpayers' dollars should not be used to bailout private businesses and banks and this budget alternative, H.Con.Res.85, would put an end to economic bailouts. The budget alternative would also place a

temporary moratorium on earmarks.

## Opposing Government Involvement in Private Business

The move by the Obama Administration to fire the CEO of General Motors and the recent statements by Treasury Secretary Geithner that more government forced restructuring of private companies may be in the works is very troubling to me. This type of action sets a dangerous precedent of government meddling into private affairs and is one of the reasons that I opposed every bailout proposal that has been voted on in the House of Representatives. This week, I voted against two bills in the House which would give the Federal government more power by giving the Treasury Department and the Federal Courts the ability to set compensation limits and benefits on employees from companies that received bailout money.

## Sponsoring Legislation to Protect the Rights of Parents

I sponsored legislation this week to protect the rights of parents regarding the upbringing and education of their children. Parents should have the authority to make decisions best suited for their children and should have the power to make judgment calls about whether children should be home schooled or enrolled in public schools. The legislation, the Parental Rights Amendment, would protect parents' rights from government infringement. I do not believe that the government should make decisions for the interest of children - this is the right of their parents.

The legislation has been introduced as the United Nation's prepares to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention established an 18-member panel in Geneva to review the rights of children in nations that are a part of the convention. The United Nations threatens to interfere with the ability of parents to raise their children as they see fit, so I support this legislation to rightfully retain this responsibility with parents.

## Meeting with Western Kansas Delegation

On Tuesday, I joined Senators Pat Roberts and Sam Brownback in a meeting with city officials from Liberal, Dodge City and Garden City. The three cities are trying to join together with other communities in the area and form a central voice on issues that are facing Southwest Kansas. We discussed a variety of issues including the need for affordable and rental housing in the area. We also discussed the need for the state and federal government to focus more attention on transportation needs to connect these communities with others in the area. It was very encouraging for me to see these communities bond together and advocate for the needs of Southwest Kansas.

## Announcing the Launch of My YouTube Web Site

This week, I announced the launch of my YouTube Web site that can be accessed by visiting [www.youtube.com/CongressJerryMoran](http://www.youtube.com/CongressJerryMoran). This YouTube channel will feature all of my speeches over a range of issues that include: agriculture, the economy, veterans' affairs, transportation, military and national security. My YouTube Web site will allow Kansans to watch speeches I make in Congress and will help keep them informed of my recent activities in Washington, D.C.

## Participating in Agriculture Committee Hearings

Subcommittee Hearing on the Agricultural Economy: On Wednesday, the Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management, on which I am the Ranking Member, held a hearing on the state of the agriculture economy in the United States. I had the opportunity to hear from a wide range of agricultural economists from across the country. Panels included witnesses from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Federal Reserve, the Energy Information Association and academia. I was pleased to have Troy Dumler, Kansas State University Extension Economist from Garden City, explain to the subcommittee how Kansas agriculture was performing in the current economic environment.

Following the economic collapse last fall, it was appropriate that members of the subcommittee hear about how the U.S. agriculture sector is fairing. Most of the economists testified that, as a whole, agriculture was faring better than the rest of the economy. The witnesses cautioned, however, that challenges exist and agriculture will see decreased profitability from levels seen in the previous two years.

Agriculture Hearing About Food Safety: On Thursday, I attended a hearing to review food safety programs. This was a good opportunity for me and other members of the Agriculture Committee to learn about the current regulatory system that is in place and about the efforts of food processors to ensure the safety of our food supply. Witnesses included meat and food processors, producer groups, retailers, academics and consumer groups.

### Selecting Architect for President Eisenhower Memorial

As a member of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, this week I voted to approve the selection of the architect who will design the memorial to President Eisenhower. The Commission selected Gehry Partners, LLP, headed by Frank O. Gehry, which is a Los Angeles-based architectural firm. Gehry is a world-renowned architect who has designed buildings such as the Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles; the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain; the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park in Chicago; and the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, Canada.

This selection moves the process forward so that there will soon be a permanent memorial on our National Mall in Washington, D.C. to President Eisenhower. Kansans are honored to call President Eisenhower one of their "sons" and this memorial will officially celebrate the life and contributions he made as one of our nations' great presidents.

### Touring "Broadband Nation"

On Wednesday, I toured a 20,000 square foot exhibit called "Broadband Nation," which featured the new products and services supported by cable's broadband networks. Broadband Nation showed how consumers in urban, suburban or rural parts of the country are benefiting from the wide-scale deployment of cable broadband. I was particularly impressed by the latest advancements in medical technology enabled by broadband and what this means for the future of health care.

The showcase was put on by the National Cable & Telecommunications Association and its member companies and partners. Thanks to Gary Shorman of Hays, President of Eagle Communications, and John Federico of Topeka, for showing me around.

### Faith Based Tour of the U.S. Capitol Building

On Tuesday night, I joined several members of Congress in participating in a faith-based tour of the U.S. Capitol. Our tour guide, Dave Barton, an attorney from Texas, is an expert on the religious motivations of the founding fathers. Through the use of religious texts, personal correspondences and official documents, Dave illustrated the obvious religious undertones in the creation of our country. Many people have been led to believe that the men who founded our country were agnostics or deists. It was refreshing to see our history through a religious lens and useful to be reminded

that our nation was founded on moral principles influenced by the faith of the framers of the U.S. Constitution.

Introducing Olathe Mayor Michael Copeland for his State of the City Address

En route home to Hays, I stopped in Johnson County on Friday to introduce Olathe Mayor Michael Copeland as he delivered his 2009 State of the City Speech. In his remarks, the Mayor discussed the state of the economy, upcoming city projects, proposed events and possible economic efforts of the city. It was good to hear how successful the area has become and how it is continuously attracting new residents.

Thanks to Mayor Copeland for inviting me to attend his address, and to Tim Danneberg for his hospitality.

62nd Annual Sedgwick County Beef BBQ

On Monday, I attended the 62nd Annual Sedgwick County Beef BBQ in Wichita at the Sedgwick County Extension Office. I visited with more than 200 attendees about agricultural, energy, the economy and trade issues affecting Kansans.

During an informative question and answer session, I discussed several issues with audience members regarding the administration's desire to re-open the Farm Bill, excessive government regulation, the possibility of a "Cow Tax" and increased federal spending. I expressed my interest in the administration taking a common sense, sound science approach that provides farmers, ranchers and rural communities the opportunity to succeed.

Thanks to Gary Cramer, KSU Sedgwick County Ag Agent, for inviting me to take part in this special event.

### Making Community Visit to Plainville

On Friday, I went to Plainville to visit local businesses and talk with community members. I stopped at Ruder Oil Company, Crawford Supply Company, Penco Engineering, Farm Implement and Supply, Turnbull Oil, Stan's Barbershop, Unrein Pharmacy, the Post Office and Short Stop Convenience. My stop allowed me to have many discussions with local residents on current Kansas issues and gave me the opportunity to provide an update on activities in Congress.

### In the Office

Kelly McCartney and Will McIntyre of Kansas City; Larry Ewing, Jody McGeeney and Larry Tiffany of Topeka; Glenda Littlejohn and Dawn Neece of Wichita; and Gary Townson of Rose Hill were in with the National Association of Postal Supervisors to update me on legislation affecting current and retired postal employees. Gary Curmode of Park City was in with the Kansas Professional Fire Chiefs Association to voice his support for funding federal fire programs and grants. Sue Peachy of Pratt, John Crain of Fort Scott, Bev and Mo Greenwood of Junction City, Trina Ceballos of Topeka, Bob Shields of Oswego and Chuck Simpson of Kansas City were in with the Kansas Association of Professional Insurance Agents to talk about flood insurance and to share their support for continued state regulation of insurance.

Lenora Cook of Garden City and Pat Altwegg of Topeka were in with Garden City and Dodge City Community Colleges to advocate for the Workforce Investment Act. Alex Poulter and Jason Powers of Lenexa and Tom Byron of Leawood were in with PoliticalChips.org to talk about health care reform ideas. Christine Seaton and Jacquie George of Wichita and Robin Hertel of Hays were in with the Nurse in Washington Internship Program to discuss the shortage of nursing personnel. Kristen DeHart of Overland Park was in with the Mid-American Rehabilitation Hospital to talk about the President's budget and his proposed changes to payment structuring.

James Hissong of Lenexa, B. Kay Schweiger of Olathe and Mike Gross of Overland Park were in with the National Association of Health Underwriters to tell me about their suggestions on how to reform health care. Judi Hurd and Ruth Mullhatten of Wichita were in with the Business and Professional Women's Conference to discuss legislation that helps women military veterans who are transitioning back into the civilian workforce. Dr. Jody Shelton of Overland Park was in with the American Society of Association Executives to update me on legislation that would help small businesses provide health insurance. Sunee Mickle of Topeka was in with Kansas Blue Cross Blue Shield to discuss health care reform proposals.

Tony Schleich and Dave Claxton of Hutchinson were in with the Association of Independent Corrugated Converters to tell me about the challenges facing American Packaging Corporation in Hutchinson as well as the current state of the business environment in Kansas. Dr. Pat Ackerman of Manhattan was in to share information about the National Writing Project and the importance of helping teachers develop their abilities to teach writing to their students. Bob Bush of Hutchinson, Steve Beykirch of Frontenac and Bill Goodlatte of Wichita were in with the Kansas Beer Wholesalers Association to visit with me about the industry in Kansas and to talk about the impact of excise taxes and proposed changes to labor rules. Jeff Burton of Junction City was in to tell me about the Warriors Internship Network at Fort Riley.

Kent Cornish and Jim Ogle of Topeka, Joan Barrett of Wichita, Joe Jindra of Concordia, Rich Wartell of Manhattan and Mark Vail of Hays were in with the Kansas Association of Broadcasters to bring me up to date on issues important to local broadcasters and to share their thoughts on upcoming legislation. Angela Kreps and Jennifer Brunnin of Lenexa were in with the Kansas BioScience Organization to discuss the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility and legislation important to Kansas bioscience industries. Stan Stark of Haviland was in with Land O'Lakes to visit with me about Land O'Lakes products and services and policy issues affecting the farmer-owned cooperative.

Bill and Ashley Cozine of Wichita, Mike Turnbull of Emporia and Pam Scott of Topeka were in with the Kansas Funeral Directors Association to discuss Supplemental Security Income (SSI) changes, the estate tax and small business health insurance. Kendra Baehler and Alex Spence of Hutchinson, Reagan Kays of Pittsburg, Seth Diehm of Parker, Clarissa Shields of Lenexa and Michelle Hill of Wichita were in with Kansas 4-H to tell me about their recent accomplishments and to learn about my role as a Congressman. Stuart Lowry and Steve Parr of Topeka and Earl Watkins of Hays were in with the Kansas Electric Cooperatives to discuss the effects cap and trade legislation could have on Kansans' utility bills.

Dr. Donna Sweet of Wichita was in with the American College of Physicians to talk about the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission. Lydia Peele, Robert Swift, Amy Schultz, Emily Haug, Katie Beye and Dalton Henry were in with the Kansas State University Student Government to tell me about the importance of enhancing study abroad programs. Allene Owen, Ken Roberts, Howard Partington, Nick Gregory and Jan Peters were in with the City of Great Bend to tell me about current projects in Great Bend. Pete Olson, Cliff Mayo, Randy Partington, Eric Depperschmidt and Paul Joseph of Garden City; Gabe Schlickau of Dodge City; and Gary Newman of Holcomb were in with Finney County to brief me on numerous issues including a current proposal by FEMA to remap flood plains.

Chuck Stones of Topeka, John Boyer of Kingman, Mollie Carter of Salina, Barney Horton of Atwood, Earl McVicker of Hutchinson, Craig Meader of Waverly, Kent Needham of Overbrook, Jeannette and Jim Richardson of Stafford, Bruce Schriefer of Wichita and Michael Stevens of Sublette were in with the Kansas Bankers Association to tell me about the current state of Kansas banks and legislation that would be helpful to them. Cindy Malek, Gina Broeckelman, Ken Strobel, Cherise Tieben, Ken Smoll, Rick Sowers, Ed Elam, Kim Goodnight, Joann Knight and Larry Weaver of Dodge City were in with the City of Dodge City to discuss their federal priorities with me. Mark Loughry, Ron Mellick, Chris Channell, Allan Lytton, Toby Dougherty and Bob Muirhead of Hays were in to update me on priorities for the city.

Several Kansans visited my Washington, D.C., office to receive a tour of the United States Capitol including Les and Brenda Herrman of Hays; Dennis, Rita and Travis Smith of Weskan; Amy Wendelken of Wakefield; and Tony Schleich of Hutchinson.

Very truly yours,

Jerry