

2/27/2006 This Week in Congress

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February 27, 2006

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." I hope you find this newsletter useful.

Working to Prevent Contamination of Water Supply in Salina

This week the City of Salina, Salina Airport Authority and Kansas State University-Salina held a meeting to discuss the contamination issue at the former Schilling Air Force Base. The meeting included a presentation by the environmental investigation firm that reviewed the findings of the Army Corps of Engineers and the extent of contamination at the former military base. It is the responsibility of the Army Corps of Engineers to study and remove any contamination that occurred at the site while under federal control.

The study was very critical of the findings of the Corps and showed that contamination is much closer to the city's water supply than previously believed. I have been working on this issue since being elected to Congress ten years ago. During this time, approximately \$18 million has been spent. I am frustrated that there has been little progress to justify the amount that has been invested. I will do everything possible to work with local officials to make sure this problem is corrected.

Ensuring the Security of U.S. Ports

Much controversy erupted this week as Dubai Ports World, a United Arab Emirates-owned company, received approval by the Administration to purchase a British firm that runs commercial operations at six major U.S. ports on the East and Gulf Coasts.

I am troubled that the Administration did not consult with Congress during the approval process on such an important national security issue. The safety and security of the U.S. must be a top priority. I also question why U.S. companies cannot benefit more from port operations. Congress should investigate this proposed sale and conduct a thorough review of the security implications of foreign ownership and operation of major ports.

Dubai Ports World has volunteered to postpone its takeover, and the Administration will conduct a second review of the deal. Hearings are also scheduled to take place when Congress reconvenes tomorrow to evaluate the transaction. I will continue to monitor this issue and will work to ensure the security of our country's ports.

Visiting Oakley High School Senior Government Class

This week I visited Oakley High School to talk to Mr. Andy Starbucks' senior government class. I talked to the group of students about the situation in Iraq, the importance of education and the future of our country.

Attending No. 1 Ranked Fort Hays State Men's Basketball Game

This weekend I joined former Fort Hays State University (FHSU) student body president Daron Jamison for the FHSU men's sell-out basketball game against rival University of Nebraska-Kearney. The women's game was also sold out. The Fort Hays men were ranked No. 1 in the nation in NCAA Division II going into Saturday, but lost in a close game against Nebraska. With a record of 25-2, the Tigers will begin postseason play on Wednesday.

From Hope to Paradise: Continuing My Big First Listening Tour

As part of my Big First Tour, I was in Lakin, Ulysses, Johnson City, Syracuse, Dodge City, Cimarron, Colby, Atwood, LaCrosse and Belpre. Visit my website at www.house.gov/moranks01/ for times and locations of the remaining stops of my Big First Listening Tour, scheduled to end in Paradise on Friday, March 24.

In the Office

While in Washington, D.C., for youth education programs, Liborio Castaneda of Hutchinson and Rachel Lantis of Hays came by my office to visit and share what they were learning during their time in our nation's capital. Alan Morgan, Executive Director of the National Rural Health Association, of Holton was in my office to talk about rural health care funding, as well as health care programs for training health professionals.

The Board of Directors for the United States Canola Association were in my office to discuss the benefits of canola production to Kansas and surrounding regions and to talk about continued support of canola research and promotion. Kansas representatives included Forrest Chumley, Kansas State University Associate Director for Research, of Manhattan, and Victor Martin of St. John.

Lana Messner and Clarissa Maddy of Wichita, Leadell Ediger of Salina and Linda Childress of Manhattan were in my office representing Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies to talk about the importance of quality child care and the need for adequate government support to carry out the goals of the organization. Also stopping by my office this week representing the Silver Haired Congress was Keith Grasp of Silver Lakes.

Very truly yours,

Jerry