

6/07/2004 This Week In Congress

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June 7, 2004

Dear Friend,

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

Honoring the Sixtieth Anniversary of D-Day

This weekend marked the 60th anniversary of the D-Day invasion during World War II on the beaches of Normandy. The commemoration brought leaders from around the globe to commemorate the battle that led to the Allied victory in World War II.

It was an honor to visit with veterans who came to the ceremonies. Many of them traveled thousands of miles to share their stories and memories of the event, and also to remember their comrades who gave their lives. During the commemorations, I also presented a statue of General Dwight D. Eisenhower to the American Battle Monuments Commission, which operates the American cemetery in Normandy. I presented the gift on Saturday after the Mass at the American Cemetery at Omaha Beach on behalf of Kansas and the Eisenhower Library and Museum in Abilene.

In the greatest amphibious assault of recorded history, General Eisenhower led the battle against tyranny and evil. On June 6, 1944, more than 150,000 American, British and Canadian troops stormed the northern beaches of France to push back the invading German Army. The American forces landed on Omaha and Utah beaches. The day of the invasion, forever known as D-Day, marked the beginning of Operation Overlord and the battle for Europe, which eventually forced the unconditional surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945.

But while we recognize the 60th anniversary of D-Day, we must remember that this was just one battle to end the war. While thousands give their lives on the beaches of Normandy, our country lost more than 400,000 during World War II. We also must remember that regardless of the battle or war, the sentiment is the same - as Americans, we are all charged to carry out a duty, just as the many members of our Armed Forces have carried out their duties for our nation. We must remember the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of our soldiers to the common defense of a nation and to the broader causes of peace and freedom from tyranny throughout the world.

Paying Tribute to Kansas Senator Stan Clark

On Wednesday, I spoke on the House floor about the tragic loss of Kansas State Senator Stan Clark. I had the honor of serving alongside Stan Clark in the State Senate for two years of his decade of service. Senator Clark was unwavering in his pursuit of issues based upon principle, and he deservedly earned a reputation for being a conscientious and dedicated legislator.

My family and I extend our deepest sympathies and prayers to his wife, Ruthie, his son, Will, and their entire family during this time of loss. Stan will be greatly missed by me, by my family, and by our many friends and Kansans.

A full copy of the speech can be found at: http://www.house.gov/apps/list/speech/ks01_moran/sp060304StanClark.html

Celebrating the Life and Service of President Reagan

During the weekend, our country lost a great American with the passing of our 40th president, Ronald Reagan, who died of pneumonia after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. President Reagan rekindled the nation's pride in itself with a message of a bright new dawn in America and guided the United States through the Cold War, bringing about a peaceful resolution to a decades-long battle.

He was a world-class leader who was able to put partisan politics aside for the greater good of the country and the world. President Reagan will be missed, but his legacy will live on as Americans remember the life and service of one of our greatest presidents. Activities are planned throughout the week in Washington, D.C as we lay "The Great Communicator" to rest.

Helping Teachers, Helping Graduates

A highly educated workforce is critical to America's future competitiveness, and the quality of education in America's schools is directly related to the quality of the teachers entrusted with the vital task of educating the nation's students. This week, I supported House passages of legislation to help our teachers and graduates be better prepared to meet tomorrow's challenges.

To increase faculty in high-demand subject areas, I supported H.R. 4411, the Priorities for Graduate Studies Act, which will target federal aid for graduate studies in certain subject areas. Across our country, there is a shortage of highly qualified math, science, and special education teachers that extends beyond the nation's K-12 classrooms. A lack of faculty at the graduate level to train the teachers of tomorrow is also contributing to these shortages, and must be addressed to fortify the pipeline of highly qualified teachers.

I also supported H.R. 4409, the Teacher Training Enhancement Act. This will allow our state to strengthen teacher-training programs by improving the accountability and expanding innovative opportunities to train teachers. By improving the training our teachers receive, we will have students who are better educated and have highly qualified teachers for Kansas schools.

Getting Americans Back to Work

While there are signs indicating that our economy is recovering, there are still many Kansans who are struggling to find a job. This week, the House passed legislation that would establish "personal re-employment accounts" for jobless workers. Under the proposal, workers who were at risk of exhausting their traditional state unemployment benefits would be given up to a \$3,000 stipend for such things as job re-training, child care or transportation in order to make finding a job easier. If the workers found jobs within 13 weeks, then they would be able to take the balance of the stipend as a "re-employment bonus."

It is important that during these tough economic times that we give Americans the resources necessary to find a job - rather than just a check. It is my hope that these accounts will allow people more flexibility and more incentive to find employment.

Helping Rural Communities Attract Doctors

This week, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration approved a one-year extension for a program that allows foreign doctors, trained in the United States, to practice medicine in areas that have a shortage of physicians and specialty doctors. I introduced this legislation, H.R. 4453, Access to Rural Physicians Improvement Act, which would allow these doctors to stay in the United States for three years after their training.

For many rural Kansas hospitals and clinics, this program is the only way to get an experienced doctor to serve their patients. Since 1993, 115 foreign doctors have served in Kansas communities through this program, and 67 physicians, or 58 percent, have remained in practice in the state following the completion of their three-year service obligation. The bill will now go before the full committee for review.

In the Office

This week, students, sponsors and teachers from several Kansas schools were in for a tour of the Capitol, including Kansans from Emporia, McPherson and Stafford. A group from the Kansas State University at Salina were in for a tour, as were Miles and Joan Kennedy of Ellsworth, and their daughter, Cheryl; Matt Jones of Salina; Dale and Pam Dodd of Esbon; Darren and Jamie Dodd of Colorado Springs; and Mike and JoAnn Dodd of Omaha.

Very truly yours,

Jerry