

## 9/27/2004 This Week In Congress

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September 27, 2004

Dear Friend,

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

### Visiting Soldiers Touring Facilities at Fort Riley

On Monday, I visited troops and military leaders during a tour of Fort Riley. I was also able to tour the major new expansion of on-base housing. Due to an increase in responsibility and soldiers, the Fort Riley area faces a housing shortage for troops and their families. During each of the last two years, I have supported federal funding for new housing because our soldiers need the resources necessary to be successful.

The time I spent at Fort Riley helped to remind me of the important and dangerous mission our fighting men and women are carrying out to defend our freedom and preserve our way of life. To date, over 80 percent of the soldiers at Fort Riley have been deployed or are preparing to deploy to Iraq. Forty-three of these soldiers have given their lives in defense of freedom. I am continually impressed with the dedication, professionalism and vigilance of the Fort and its staff. I appreciate all that Fort Riley does for our state and nation.

## Hearing the Lessons of Iraq

This week, I joined my colleagues for a special and historic joint session of Congress featuring interim Iraqi President Ayad Allawi. President Allawi discussed the challenges facing his emerging democracy and thanked the American people for helping to liberate his country. The Iraqi President went on to stress that the country's first democratic elections will take place in January of 2005.

The situation in Iraq remains difficult and dangerous, but the country continues to take the necessary steps toward democracy. It will be some time before things are safe, but the promise of free and fair elections is something that Iraqis have never experienced before, and I remain hopeful that this country will be a success.

## Speaking on the Need for Drought Assistance

On Wednesday, I spoke before the House of Representatives, discussing the need for drought assistance in the hardest-hit areas of our country. Not since the 1930's dust bowl has Kansas seen such dramatic weather conditions. According to Kansas State University, Kansas alone lost \$1.1 billion in agriculture in 2001 and 2002. In 2003, it is estimated that \$275 million was lost by our producers; and in 2004, wheat producers lost another \$150 million. The majority of the 2004 losses, \$82 million, occurred in northwest Kansas, which has had drought for a solid five years.

For the full text of the speech, visit:

<http://www.house.gov/apps/list/>

[speech/ks01\\_moran/DustCloudsspeech092204.html](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/speech/ks01_moran/DustCloudsspeech092204.html).

## Helping Rural Businesses Through Tax Incentives

Stimulating our rural economy and preserving our rural communities is critical. This week, I joined other members of Congress in urging the passage of tax incentives aimed at encouraging business investment in counties that have lost a large number of residents, which includes many counties in the First District of Kansas.

Rural Investment Tax Credits would be allocated to businesses that move to or expand to high out-migration counties, defined as any non-metro county that has suffered a net out-migration of at least 10 percent over the last 20 years. Businesses use these credits to offset the cost of newly constructed or existing buildings. Micro-Enterprise Tax Credits would be allocated to qualifying start-up or expanding micro-enterprises with five or fewer employees. Micro-enterprises would use these credits to offset the cost of new funding needed for business expansion. I look forward to supporting continued efforts to include these tax incentives in tax legislation that is being considered by a conference committee of the House and Senate.

## Providing Necessary Tax Relief

This week, the House and Senate approved the Working Families Tax Relief Act. This legislation is designed to extend numerous tax breaks due to expire later this year for individuals, families and businesses. The act will benefit an estimated 93 million tax-paying Americans. The legislation also contained language that will grant tax-incentives to companies for wind generation. Wind generation projects on hold in western Kansas will now be able to move forward. Wind generation is an important new resource for Kansas in those communities that support it. I believe strongly that final authority for wind generation must reside on a local level because only they fully understand the needs of their communities.

As our economy continues to grow, it is important to provide the tools necessary for families to recover and thrive. This legislation will also extend the child tax credit, marriage penalty relief, and the expanded ten percent income tax bracket. It will also extend the popular teacher tax-credit that allows teachers to deduct the cost of supplies they have purchased for their classrooms. This legislation now goes to the President to be signed into law.

## Protecting the Pledge of Allegiance

On Thursday, I supported House passage of the Pledge Protection Act, which prevents federal courts from striking down "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, while reserving to the state courts the authority to hear cases involving the Pledge.

Kansans are proud of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who approved adding the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954. Since then, young Americans have recited this oath in classrooms across the country, affirming American ideals and freedoms. The legislation now goes to the Senate for their consideration.

## On The Road

## Eureka

On Saturday, I attended the Greenwood County Farm Bureau annual dinner. This was an excellent opportunity for me to meet with residents in this relatively new addition to the First District. The northern portion of Greenwood County was added to my district two years ago during redistricting. Among the issues that attendees shared with me were animal identification, wind energy and local watershed issues.

## Hays

On Sunday, I joined the Kansas Board of Regents during their meeting in Hays. The meeting gave me an opportunity to discuss the challenges facing higher education in Kansas and how we are positioning ourselves, as a state, to meet these challenges. The Regents are working to ensure that our educational system remains one of the best in the nation.

## In the Office

In the office for meetings were Earl Carter and John Geckles from Wichita, discussing issues facing the Wichita Technical Professional Unit. Arlene Clayton of Belleville was in to discuss student loan legislation, while Thomas Fahrback from Haven was in to talk about medical malpractice. Fort Hays State University President Dr. Ed Hammond was in to discuss legislation dealing with fraternity and sorority housing and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act.

Sherwood Applegate from Wichita and Joan Spero from Kansas City were in representing the Kansas State Association of Letter Carriers to discuss postal reform while Eldon Jackson from Topeka, Leonard Berkman from Hutchinson, Rick Budden from Milford and Stephen Manker from Wakarusa were in to talk about retirement and other issues pertaining to the Army National Guard. Josh Hubler and Susie Legault, representing the Emporia State Credit Union, Marvin Schmucker, Patsy Stoecker and Todd Brunner with the Hutchinson Credit Union, Rick Krehbiel with Mid-Kansas Credit Union in Moundridge and Janet Fritschi with Sunflower Credit Union in Marysville, were all in to discuss legislation pertaining to credit unions.

Tom Lankford and Stuart Bell from the University of Kansas School of Engineering were in the office to discuss transportation issues, while Ed McKechnie from Pittsburgh was in to talk about short line railroad legislation. Rick and Pam Wilborn of McPherson were also in.

In for tours were Doug and Pauline Sharp of Marion, Richard and Emily Frederick of Wichita and Patti Kubick and her sons John and Jake of Ellsworth, along with Diane Carter of Augusta. Also in for tours were, Gary and Joyce Holle of Bremen, Darlene and Delmar Holle of Hanover, Arlen and Laverne Henry of Seneca, Wayne and Kay Friedrichs of Greenleaf, Steve and Deanna Meier of Palmer and Kirk and Anne Bradford of Marysville. Jerry and Enid Cady of Marion were in, as were Trent Lebahn of Salina, Dan Engler of Downs, Kathy Goentzel of Marion, Neil McDanel of Osborne and son Roger of Stilwell, Mike Jensen of Wamego, Francis Jensen of Holton and Howard Jensen of Wathena.

Very truly yours,

Jerry

