



The CALVERT COURIER

Serving California's Forty-Fourth District

Meeting the Needs of Southern California

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I recently completed a series of meetings with citizens, business leaders, city, and county officials from the 44th Congressional District. I conduct these meetings regularly to help me better understand the important issues facing our community. I like to hear directly from constituents about what concerns they have and how I can best serve you in Washington.

My job as a Congressman is to listen. The topics covered in this edition of the Calvert Courier provide information about federal actions currently underway, and impact the 44th Congressional District.

Traffic congestion is a frequent subject of discussion when I talk to my constituents. Our transportation corridors must be improved and the federal government has a role to play in this process (p.2).

Immigration and border security in the United States must be strengthened. A vital component of any immigration reform is to make sure everyone who works in the U.S. is doing so legally (p.3).

Great progress is being made to control the cost of prescription drugs for Medicare recipients and retirees. The new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit and how to enroll in the program is discussed in depth in this issue (p.4).

I was excited to travel to Iraq for the third time in January to listen to our troops and assess the situation on the ground. I am always impressed by the dedication and resolve of the men and women of the U.S. Military. A tremendous amount of progress has been made over the last year in training Iraqi soldiers and police to secure their country. I look forward to a day when the Iraqis can stand against the forces of terror on their own and our troops can come home.

On the home front, I am pleased to report that the U.S. economy is strong. The unemployment rate has dropped to 4.7 percent, 193,000 new payroll jobs were added in January of 2006 and the average hourly earnings are increasing at a rate of 5.3 percent annually.

As I said before, public officials rely on communications from their constituents to get the job done. I encourage you to contact my office on any issue of importance to you. Working together, we can continue to build a bright future for California's 44th Congressional District.

P.S. Look on the back for ways to support our troops!



KEN CALVERT meeting with Mayor Wayne Eggleston at the Marine Monument at Park Semper Fi in San Clemente to discuss community issues.

Contact Congressman Ken Calvert at www.house.gov/calvert or at one of the following locations:

WASHINGTON, DC
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-1986
Fax: (202) 225-2004

RIVERSIDE COUNTY
3400 Central Ave., Ste. 200
Riverside, CA 92506
Phone: (951) 784-4300
Fax: (951) 784-5255

ORANGE COUNTY
26111 Antonio Parkway, Ste. 300
Las Flores, CA 92688
Phone: (949) 888-8498
Fax: (949) 888-8524

Transportation

When it comes to transportation, I have three critical priorities in Congress: 1) Improve the flow of traffic on the 91 freeway; 2) construct grade separations in Riverside County so that railroads do not bring car traffic to a standstill; and 3) complete the 241 toll road in Orange County.

Riverside-Orange County Corridor

The 91 freeway is far too congested. Over 250,000 automobiles use the 91 freeway daily to commute between Orange and Riverside Counties and the number of cars is expected to nearly double in the coming years. I have been working with the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to implement short-term and long-term solutions to improve traffic flow. In the short-term, RCTC and OCTA have built several auxiliary lanes and continue to improve specific chokepoints along the route, such as the SR-91 / SR-71 interchange.

In the long-term, we must build a new route that connects Riverside and Orange County. A recently completed study suggested one possible solution is to build a corridor connecting State Route 133 in Orange County and Interstate 15 at Cajalco Road in Riverside. I share many people's frustration by the number of studies required before construction can begin, but they are necessary to complete before any concrete can be poured. In 2005, I helped secure \$15.8 million to further complete these corridor studies. I will continue to work to secure the funding for improvements along SR-91 and for a new corridor between the counties.

Grade Separation

Riverside County is part of a national shipping corridor that extends from the Long Beach and Los Angeles ports to the East Coast. Trains carrying goods through our communities have seriously impacted traffic in our area. Essentially, we are bearing the effects of a national rail system that does little to benefit our region directly. Redesigning intersections between roads and railroads with grade separations, which allows traffic to pass over or under the trains, helps alleviate traffic delays in the region. However, each grade separation costs an average of \$27 million, depending on the complexity of each intersection. Riverside County needs more than \$400

million to complete all of the grade separations in our area.

The Federal Government designates certain critical transportation routes as "Projects of National Significance" which then become eligible for additional federal funding. Congress recently designated such a project to build grade separations and railroad improvements from the shipping ports to California's eastern border, known as "Alameda Corridor East" (ACE). This designation helped secure \$155 million, over 5 years, for ACE in southern California. I will continue to work with my colleagues in Congress to get additional resources to build grade separations in Riverside County.

Completing the 241 Foothill South

The I-5 freeway through south Orange County is growing worse each year. Twenty years ago, the California legislature created the Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA) to build and operate a system of toll roads in Orange County, including a road to alleviate traffic on I-5. TCA raised money through bonds and uses current and future tolls to pay back those bonds. Once the bonds have been paid off, the roads become freeways, completely toll-free.

The Foothill toll road (State Route 241) currently runs from the 91 freeway, but ends awkwardly at Oso Parkway, feeding traffic onto surface streets to connect to I-5. The Foothill South extension, which has been planned since 1987, would connect the current SR-241 with I-5 just south of San Clemente. A locally preferred alternative has been chosen that traverses property owned by Camp Pendleton and leased to California.

I will continue to support this critical extension to complete the toll road system and alleviate

traffic in south Orange County.



Securing America

Immigration and Border Security



CARGO SHIP prepares to unload in the Port of Long Beach

The U.S. immigration system is broken. Since January 2000, 3.7 million illegal immigrants have entered and settled in

the U.S. – that’s more than 2,000 people each week. It is mandatory that Congress take action to secure our borders and stop illegal immigration. The status quo is unacceptable and I share many of your frustrations with this issue. Last December, the House of Representatives passed an immigration package, H.R. 4437, which included a provision on employment verification that I authored. This bill must now be passed by the Senate before going to the President for signature, therefore, I encourage you to contact Senators Feinstein and Boxer regarding your views during this time of Senate consideration.

I am unequivocally opposed to giving amnesty to illegal aliens. We must secure our borders and enforce laws already in place before any discussion of a guest worker system begins.

Highlights of H.R. 4437, the ***Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act***

- **Combats Hiring of Illegal Workers** – The bill institutes nationwide, an employment eligibility verification system in which employers will check all new employees’ names and Social Security numbers against Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) records in order to weed out fraudulent documents and ensure that all employees are authorized to work in the U.S. Currently, the program is voluntary and available for use in all 50 states via the internet or a toll free number.
- **Protects our Southern Borders** – The bill mandates the construction of a fence along our southern border. There are currently several

segments of fence line along the southern border which are very effective at reducing illegal immigration and drug-smuggling in those areas.

- **Eliminates the “Catch and Release” Practice** – In 2005, 115,000 illegal aliens from countries other than Mexico were apprehended by the Border Patrol, only to be released due to a lack of detention space. This bill mandates detention for all immigrants apprehended at U.S. land borders attempting to cross illegally.
- **Combats Alien Gang Activity** – This provision would render alien street gang members deportable, and authorize the Attorney General to designate groups or associations as criminal street gangs if they meet certain criteria. It also requires the detention of alien street gang members and bars alien gang members from receiving humanitarian benefits.

Current Law: Employment Eligibility Verification

Under current law, as a condition of employment, new employees must fill out the immigration I-9 Form and present documents to their employer which establish their identity and employment eligibility. However, the information is never verified unless the employer is audited by the Department of Homeland Security. This creates a huge loophole in the system and puts the employer in a no-win situation.

In 1997, I created the Basic Pilot Program, which uses *existing databases* to verify the information provided on the I-9 Form. Over 5,000 employers currently use the program, which is free, reliable, and guards against identity theft and is available in all 50 states and Washington, DC. Employers can voluntarily sign-up for the program today by calling 888-464-4218 or by visiting www.vis-dhs.com/employerregistration.

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Medicare Part D – *The new Prescription*

As you are probably aware, enrollment for Medicare's new prescription drug benefit, Medicare Part D, is currently underway. The voluntary program was created under the Medicare Modernization and Prescription Drug Act of 2003, to help seniors reduce out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs. With rising costs for healthcare services, Medicare Part D can be a cost-saving program for millions of Medicare beneficiaries.

I believe that it is absolutely necessary to ensure that seniors receive the prescription drugs they need at a reasonable price. Although this new benefit has encountered some bumps with the initial transition, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), are working diligently to ensure that all beneficiaries are well-informed about the program and getting the prescriptions they need. With over 24 million beneficiaries enrolled in Part D and thousands more enrolling each week, I am confident that enrollment numbers will continue to rise, and the resources available to help beneficiaries choose the best individual plan for their needs will continue to improve.

In fact, 70 percent of the eligible seniors in California's 44th Congressional District are already enrolled in the new program. I believe that Medicare Part D will ultimately be a cost-saving program for America's seniors.

Timeline:

OCTOBER 17, 2005 – Medicare Part D individual insurance plan information became available to Medicare beneficiaries.

NOVEMBER 15, 2005 – Optional open enrollment began for the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit.

JANUARY 1, 2006 – Prescription drug coverage began for those who have enrolled by December 31, 2005.

MAY 15, 2006 – Initial enrollment of Medicare Part D ends. If beneficiaries enroll in a prescription drug plan after this date, additional premiums may be incurred.

Check List:

Before you sit down to enroll in a prescription drug plan, remember to gather the following information:

- List of current prescription medications
- The name and location of your pharmacy
- Your Medicare card

Medicare Part D Resources:

Do not let confusion about Medicare Part D stop you from learning how you can save money on the costs of prescription drugs. There are many resources and dedicated professionals who can help you learn more about this new benefit. For more information, visit the following:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
1-800-MEDICARE
www.medicare.gov

Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy (HICAP) of Riverside County
6296 River Crest Drive, Suite L
Riverside, CA 92507
(951) 697-6565
www.inlandagency.org

Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy (HICAP) of Orange County
1971 E. 4th Street, Suite 200
Santa Ana, CA 92705
(714) 560-0424 or (800) 434-0222
www.coaoc.org

Department of Health and Human Services Eldercare Locator
1-800-677-1116
www.eldercare.gov



KEN CALVERT meets with troops in Iraq to discuss the training of Iraqi security forces.

irst Century

on Drug Benefit

Ken Calvert Medicare Events:

Thursday, March 23, 2006 – San Clemente

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: The San Clemente Community Center - 100 North Calle Seville

Friday, March 24, 2006 – Corona

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Crossroads Christian Church - 2331 Kellogg Ave.

Featuring:

- Introduction and welcome message by Rep. Ken Calvert
- General overview, presentation and Question and Answer period about Medicare Part D by representatives from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and HICAP



KEN CALVERT discusses health care issues with staff at the Riverside County Regional Medical Center.

Please check my website at www.house.gov/Calvert for more information and other events. These are two of the many meetings in our community regarding Medicare Prescription Drug plans. Please contact your local senior center for more information about other events which they may be hosting. (For the city of Riverside, many events have been held at the Janet Goeske Senior Center).

Building a Strong Economy

The American economy is on solid ground and continues to show signs of growth. In addition to tremendous job growth, Americans are taking home more money as evidenced by the 7.1% growth in real after-tax income per person since January 2001. With more money in the average American's wallet, more money is being spent in the marketplace. Retail sales are up 6.4% from 2004 and over the last year new orders for durable goods have increased by more than 12%. The strong state of our economy has muted inflationary concerns and quickly recovered from the spike in energy costs following last year's devastating hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region. I believe the low tax policies implemented by Congress and the President over the past few years have had a significant and positive effect on our economy. I will work to ensure

Southern California continues to enjoy the benefits of a flourishing economy.

"I plan to vote to make permanent the tax relief enacted by Congress during 2001 – 2003."

—KEN CALVERT

Since 2003, 4.7 million new jobs have been created in the United States

Congressman Ken Calvert

urges all citizens to vote on June 6th

Registering to Vote

Who Can Vote? You must be a United States citizen, California resident and at least 18 years of age by election day.

Where do I obtain a form to register? Your local Post Office, library, Department of Motor Vehicles, city and county offices, or the California Secretary of State's website at www.ss.ca.gov/elections.

Mail your form to register to vote! The postage is pre-paid. Just drop it in any mailbox. Last day to register is May 22nd for the June 6th election.

Watch for your voter notification card in the mail! The card is proof that you are registered and is usually sent 3 to 4 weeks after your voter registration form is processed.

What else can I do? Inform a new neighbor how he/she can register to vote and the location of their polling place.

Voter's Checklist for Primary Election

☐ **May 8, 2006**

First day to apply for an absentee ballot by mail. Call the Riverside Registrar of Voters at 951-486-7200 or the Orange County Registrar at 714-567-7600 to request an absentee ballot.

☐ **May 22, 2006**

Last day to register to vote. Also, if you do not receive your sample ballot two weeks before the election, call the Registrar of Voters Office immediately to be sure you are correctly registered and to obtain the location of your polling place.

☐ **May 30, 2006**

Last day to request an absentee ballot.

☐ **June 6, 2006**

ELECTION DAY! Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Absentee ballots must be received by mail or in person by close of polls on June 6th.

VOTE!!

Supporting the Troops

Our troops are serving throughout the world in the Global War on Terror to keep us safe at home. Below are the websites of some organizations that provide services to our men and women in uniform.

www.americasupportsyou.mil

www.operationcareandcomfort.org

www.lettersfromhomeprogram.org

www.uso.org



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This mailing was prepared, published, and mailed at taxpayer expense.

This mailing is provided as a service to Ken Calvert's constituents

A handwritten signature of Ken Calvert in black ink.

M.C.

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Forty-Fourth Congressional District
California