



Congressman Marsha Blackburn 2006 SUMMER REPORT

SEVENTH DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

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Representative Marsha Blackburn

SEVENTH DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

ECONOMIC GROWTH, SPENDING REDUCTIONS NEEDED TO BALANCE AMERICA'S BUDGET

America is experiencing record unexpected tax revenues that have significantly reduced the deficit. We have historically low unemployment rates and solid economic growth. The tax relief passed in 2001 and since has helped the nation overcome recession and terrorist attacks that could have set our economy back for far longer. This is all good news.

We also passed legislation in December 2005 that enacted an across-the-board reduction in federal spending as part of H.R. 4241, the *Deficit Reduction Act*. The legislation was based in part on a bill I introduced to require a one percent reduction in all discretionary non-defense, non-homeland security funding. That was a good first step and one I want to see us build on this year.

Already this year we've eliminated 95 wasteful programs and passed a line item veto. The

House has also rejected \$45 billion in spending proposals. As Chairman of the House Task Force charged with rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse in government, I know there's plenty of room to make cuts. I believe there's no way we can afford to continue with this level of spending.

I am a cosponsor of both H.R. 5766, the *Government Efficiency Act* and H.R. 3282, the *Abolishment of Obsolete Agencies and Federal Sunset Act*. These bills would require reviews of federal agencies and programs and put those deemed wasteful before Congress for elimination.

The key to achieving a balanced budget is both economic growth and curbing government spending. We've promoted economic growth and we're seeing those results, but we have to fight even harder to reduce the size of government.

GAS PRICES RESULT OF DEMAND & EXPLORATION, REFINERY POLICIES

Tennesseans want to know why gas prices have gone up. Whether you're a mom or dad driving the kids to school, a small business owner fueling equipment, or a farm family working to keep the farm profitable, gas prices can dramatically affect the budget.

If we're going to discuss energy prices we have to recognize that an increase in global demand coupled with our refusal to harvest vast oil deposits in Alaska, the Gulf of Mexico, and elsewhere all contribute to the problem. It's estimated there are nearly 100 billion barrels of oil in just the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve and restricted areas of the Gulf of Mexico.

Countries like China, Cuba, and Venezuela are working to harvest oil in parts of the Gulf of Mexico we will not explore.

In 1996 Congress passed legislation to allow oil harvesting in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve. That bill was vetoed. Efforts to again pass that

legislation have been killed by domestic exploration opponents. This is just part of the problem.

No new oil refinery has been built on American soil since the 1970s. We've gone from 324 refineries to 132 and have less refining capacity today than we did twenty five years ago. The maze of local, state, and federal regulations make it virtually impossible to construct a new refinery. Our refining capacity is also concentrated in few locations. The result is massive supply problems during natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina which reduced our refining capacity by twenty percent and drove up prices 45 cents a gallon in just a few days.

We are all paying the price for policies that limit America's ability to expand resources and diversify production.

In the House we've passed several bills to harness American oil and streamline the refinery construction

process. There are no short term solutions, but we can begin shifting policy in the right direction.

The House has passed H.R. 5254, the *Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act* to cut through the red tape strangling our refining capacity. We also passed H.R. 5429, the *American-Made Energy Act* to permit oil exploration in Alaska.

We're not just concentrating on oil and gas production though. Congress has appropriated billions of dollars for research and development of alternative energy sources, but until those technologies are efficient we will continue to rely on oil. Congress should have long and short term solutions for energy costs, but America must also recognize that we can tap our own resources without destroying the environment. Responsible management of these resources will help stabilize prices.

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BORDER SECURITY MUST BE A NATIONAL PRIORITY

A porous border makes every state a border state and every town a border town. The illegal entry problem is unacceptable and must be addressed. The House of Representatives has passed H.R. 4427, the *Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act* to put security

first. Unfortunately, some support legislation that largely ignores the need for a border wall and improved surveillance in favor of what essentially amounts to amnesty for those who've come here illegally. We cannot and must not condone

lawbreaking—amnesty is not an option. I support the security first approach contained in the House bill and will work for passage of measures that address illegal entry into the United States. We absolutely must have control over who is entering the nation as a matter of national security.



During a meeting at the U.S.-Mexico border, a border agent gave Blackburn a copy of this pamphlet paid for by the Mexican government containing information meant to help those entering the U.S. illegally.

Blackburn joins Representatives Hayworth from Arizona and Poe from Texas at a border security hearing in San Diego where border agents discussed the challenges facing law enforcement.

PRESERVING AMERICAN VALUES

There's a reason Tennesseans feel so strongly about faith and family. We know our communities are stronger when marriage and life are protected.

This year we voted to ensure that marriage is between one man and one woman, and the House has stood firm in defense of life by banning partial birth abortion and the "farming" of human fetuses for research purposes. We are also addressing the ever increasing and troubling trend of sex predators targeting children through the

internet. I have taken part in several hearings on this issue to investigate how predators are approaching our kids online. I cosponsored H.R. 5319, the *Deleting Online Predators Act* to require alerts on sites that have discovered predators using their chat rooms. Congress passed and the President signed a bill last month that I strongly supported to strengthen our sex offender registry laws and target child pornography. H.R. 4472, the *Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act* is a strong measure for a serious problem.



In June Blackburn traveled to Iraq to meet with Tennessee soldiers and review the transition of security responsibilities to Iraqi forces.

NEWS FLASH

Blackburn effort to extend Sales Tax Deduction for Tennesseans will likely be voted on in the House soon. In 2003 Blackburn helped restore the deduction for two years and is now seeking to make that restoration permanent. The deduction has meant hundreds of millions of dollars in tax savings for Tennesseans.

Blackburn effort to allow competition and bring lower rates to the cable TV market passes the House. H.R. 5252, the Communications, Opportunity, Promotion, and Enhancement Act was approved in the House on June 8th. The bill clears regulations preventing new cable TV providers from entering the marketplace.

WAR ON TERRORISM TAKES TIME AND UNWAVERING COMMITMENT

America's national security is threatened by several hostile and isolated Middle Eastern nations ruled by murderous thugs and their terrorist supporters.

The truth of this fact is written in the blood of Americans and the citizens of dozens of other free nations—the people

who've been murdered by terrorists.

We should actively work to make clear that those who promote barbaric and brutal attacks on America and our allies will pay a price.

Nations harboring or supporting terrorists must face consequences for

their active participation in the effort to destroy the United States and the free world.

We decided on September 11th that enough was enough, but that decision was also based on a lengthy list of attacks.

DECADES OF TERROR

- **November 4, 1979** - Iranian radicals seize U.S. Embassy in Tehran and hold 53 hostages for 444 days
- **April 18, 1983** - 63 people killed in bombing of U. S. Embassy in Lebanon
- **October 23, 1983** - Suicide bomb attack on U.S. compound in Lebanon kills 242 Americans
- **April 5, 1986** - A Berlin discotheque popular with U.S. servicemen is bombed and 2 soldiers are killed, while 79 servicemen are injured in a Libyan bomb attack in West Germany
- **December 21, 1988** - Pan Am flight 103 is blown up by Libyan terrorists killing all 259 passengers
- **February 26, 1993** - World Trade Center is bombed killing 6 people and injuring over 1000
- **November 13, 1995** - U.S. military complex in Saudi Arabia is bombed killing a U. S. citizen, several foreign national employees of the U.S. government and over 40 others
- **June 25, 1996** - The Khobar Towers U.S. Air Force barracks in Saudi Arabia are bombed killing 19 U. S. military personnel and wounding 515 people, including 240 U.S. personnel
- **August 7, 1998** - Two attacks on U.S. Embassies in Africa kill more than 300 people
- **October 12, 2000** - U.S.S. Cole bombed by al-Qaeda killing 17 sailors and injuring 39 others
- **September 11, 2001** - Al-Qaeda members hijack American commercial airplanes and crash them into the World Trade Center Towers and Pentagon. A fourth plane designated for the U.S. Capitol crashes in a Pennsylvania field. Nearly 3,000 Americans and foreign nationals are killed

The list is only a portion of the attacks against the United States and others over the past twenty five years, but it makes clear that appeasement and peace treaties do not work with terrorists.

I know some in Congress would like to disengage from the Middle East and while that might be tempting, it will simply put off till tomorrow a problem we ought to take care of today.

I have been dismayed by those seeking to weaken our intelligence community's ability to track phone calls from overseas into the United States. The same critics who demanded the repeal of the Patriot Act which we know has helped us fight terrorism consistently work to take our intelligence operations back to a pre-September 11th level. I also disagree with the Supreme Court's decision that appears to equate

terrorists with the soldiers of a foreign nation. A terrorist should not be given the same consideration we and every other civilized nation afford service men and women.

I believe the nation made a choice after September 11th to finally address the root of terrorism. This is no easy task ahead of us but we're making progress.