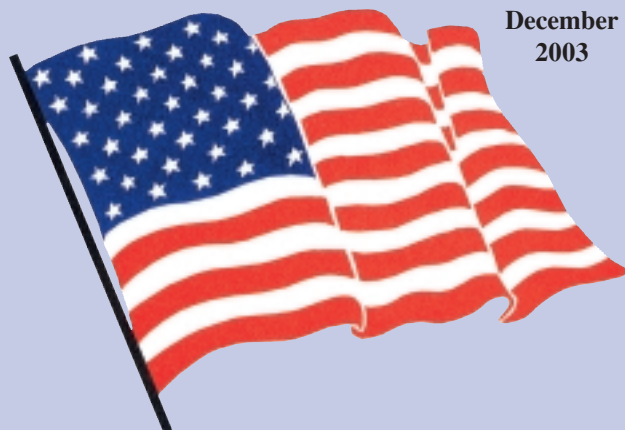


December
2003



CONGRESSMAN **HENRY HYDE**



SPECIAL REPORT TO THE SIXTH DISTRICT

**“One Nation Under God,
Indivisible, With Liberty
and Justice For All.”**

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the NEW Sixth Congressional District! This newsletter is my way of keeping you informed about important issues pending before Congress.

I welcome your comments and encourage you to contact me concerning any federal issue that is important to you. My experienced staff in Addison can assist you with problems you might be having with a federal agency, and they are happy to answer your questions about pending legislation.

Economic growth and unemployment are some of the most important issues facing our nation today. Congress has cut taxes to help working people meet their family obligations. We have reduced payroll taxes and authorized \$14 million in child-tax credits that has helped 25 million parents purchase school clothes, school supplies and other household necessities. In turn these and other economic incentives have spurred economic growth and created jobs.

Designing a comprehensive energy policy is important for individuals, the economy and homeland security. It is not in our national interest to remain dependent on foreign oil and nonrenewable fuel sources.

In June, Congress passed a \$29.4 billion appropriations bill for Homeland Security, including \$4.4 billion for state and local first responders. Inside this newsletter, you can read about how federal dollars are funding improvements in your hometowns.

You can also read about the war on terrorism, Medicare reform, a prescription drug plan for seniors, education reform, veterans benefits and transportation issues facing Illinois.

I hope you will find this Washington Report informative, and again, I welcome your comments.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henry J. Hyde".

Economy Is Back on Track

I know that many of you are worried about the economy. Some of you are out of work, while others of you have seen your retirement incomes shrink because of stock-market instability.

Both are frightening prospects, which is why Congress and President Bush have worked hard to turn things around.

The Jobs and Growth Tax Act, passed last spring, included tax cuts that allow you to keep more of what you earn. This legislation included an across-the-board income tax cut; it accelerated the elimination of the marriage penalty tax; and it increased the child tax-credit to \$1,000.

The bill also provided relief from the double taxation of stock dividends, and it gave small businesses incentives to grow their businesses, thus creating a need for more jobs.

Now it appears that this hard work is paying off. As of the printing of this newsletter, major economic indicators were showing positive signs:

- **Gross Domestic Product:** The U.S. economy expanded 8.2 percent in the third quarter of 2003 – the largest growth in nearly two decades – and the outlook for the remainder of the year is even better.
- **Home Sales:** The housing industry has experienced a record year. More than 1 million single-family homes had been sold by September – the highest rate on record!
- **Durable Goods:** A 1 percent rise in durable good sales in July, following a 2.6 percent growth in June. This suggests that a long-awaited rebound in business spending may be here.
- **Consumer Spending:** Increased 6.6 percent in the third quarter of 2003.
- **New jobs:** 286,000 new jobs have been created as a result of the *Jobs and Growth Tax Act*. Claims for unemployment also continue to drop.

How to contact Congressman Hyde ...

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50 East Oak Street, Suite 200
Addison, IL 60101
(630) 832-5950
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2110 Rayburn HOB
Washington D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4561
FAX (202) 225-1166

Constituents can e-mail Mr. Hyde through his Web site:
www.house.gov/hyde

Looking for Work?

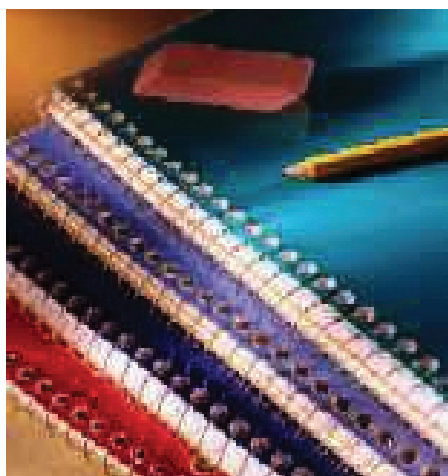
Here are a few online sources to help you find federal and state jobs:

- www.usajobs.opm.gov.
- www.ides.state.il.us.
- www.illinoismatch.com.

Energy

On Nov. 18, the House passed the conference report to *The Energy Policy Act of 2003* (HR 6). However, that bill is now being held hostage in the Senate by a small minority that are using a delay tactic known as a filibuster to prevent the majority from voting on this much-needed bill.

Although HR 6 won't fix all of our energy concerns, I voted in favor of this legislation because HR 6 provides the nation with a comprehensive blueprint for our energy future. This bill will create 800,000 jobs; spur investment in the overburdened electricity grid; encourage essential energy conservation and efficiency measures; and reduce our dependence on foreign energy supplies by encouraging the use of renewable energy sources and synthetic fuels. Specifically, it contains new incentives to encourage the use of ethanol fuels, which is good news for Illinois corn growers and ethanol producers.



Education

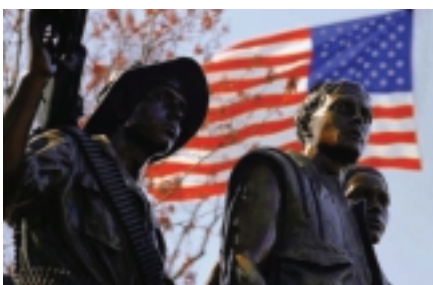
Thanks to the *The 2003 No Child Left Behind Act*, major changes have been made in our national education system, including a common-sense, back-to-basics approach to teaching our children. We are now spending more on education than ever before in American history. In fact, education funding has increased not once, but twice since Congress passed this law, and it's on track to increase again in 2004! This year, for example, states and schools will receive a staggering \$23.8 billion to help them implement No Child Left Behind reforms, including a \$1.3 billion increase in Title I funding for disadvantaged students and \$380 million to help states design and implement statewide reading and math tests.

This year, Congress made critical changes to the Head Start program, increasing teacher quality and academic standards to better prepare disadvantaged students for school. Congress also passed legislation that helps repay the student loans of math, science and special education teachers in high-need schools.

Medicare / Prescription Drugs

More than 40 million seniors rely on Medicare to meet their health needs, with more than 1.6 million of them living in Illinois. *The Medicare and Prescription Drug Modernization Act* (HR1), signed into law on Nov. 26, expands Medicare coverage; improves its services; strengthens its financing; and gives seniors more control over the health care they receive. Not only will Medicare remain a strong and vital program under this legislation, but for the first time ever, seniors will be able to sign up for a federal prescription drug benefit.

Although this bill did not include a proposal to allow the lawful reimportation of prescription drugs from Canada, I want you to know that I am outraged that pharmaceutical companies have tried to block seniors from importing cheaper drugs from Canada. That's why I have asked the Justice Department to investigate this practice for anti-trust violations.



Veterans

As a veteran myself, I take seriously my commitment to veterans issues. That's why I recently voted against the appropriations bill that will fund veterans programs in 2004 because it included inadequate funding for health care and other programs that benefit our nation's veterans. However, I have supported other bills that improve veterans services such as *The Veterans Benefits Act* (HR 2297) that expands and extends important programs for veterans and their surviving spouses. This bill expands programs that help disabled vets purchase specially-adapted automobiles and homes.

Overseas Job Loss

American companies are downsizing and moving jobs overseas. Many businessmen in my district tell me they are concerned about unfair competition from overseas. Government subsidization of businesses in violation of international trade agreements, value added taxes and currency manipulation have contributed to American trade deficits and job losses. This is unacceptable! The government must protect American jobs, and that's why Congress cut the number of H1-B worker visas it offers to foreign workers by more than two-thirds this year.

The U.S. government must do a better job of enforcing trade agreements already in existence and increasing penalties for those violating these agreements. We need to force other countries to open their markets to U.S. goods, especially China, which as the world's third largest importer only imports 8 percent of its goods from the United States. As chairman of the International Relations Committee, I recently held a hearing about the U.S.-China trade imbalance, and I plan to hold additional hearings about trade imbalances and monetary exchange rates. Congress can and must do more to correct this trade imbalance and to protect American jobs from unfair overseas competition.





Secretary of State Colin Powell and Rep. Hyde, chair of the House International Relations Committee, discuss Middle East Security issues.

Our Goal for Iraq: A Free and Democratic Country

Following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, President Bush pledged to destroy the terrorists wherever they cowered. Now our troops are in Afghanistan and Iraq doing just that.

The terrorist Al Qaeda network is entrenched worldwide, including in the United States. However, with new investigative powers granted by the USA Patriot Act, law enforcement officials have been able to detain, interrogate and prosecute terrorist operatives. We also have frozen their financial assets.

In Iraq, we removed a madman from power. Saddam Hussein threatened regional and U.S. security. He tortured his own people and used biological weapons against Iraqis, Kurds and Iranians. He repeatedly scoffed at 17 United Nations-passed resolutions demanding that he disarm, and he created and maintained a clandestine network of laboratories that developed horrendous diseases that were used against his own people. He also sponsored and harbored known terrorist groups.

David Kay, our chief weapons inspector in Iraq, reported that Saddam's weapons program spanned more than two decades, involved thousands of people, billions of dollars and was elaborately shielded by deceptive operations. In fact, most of these programs were concealed from UN inspectors.

Our goal for Iraq is clear: establish democracy in Iraq while also keeping Saddam and his forces from returning to power. Twenty thousand troops from 30 countries are aiding us in this effort. Others will soon send troops or offer financial and technical assistance.

The Iraqi governing council is writing a national constitution and preparing to hold free elections next year. We have reopened and replenished hospitals and schools; courts are adjudicating. Electricity is back on; clean water is flowing. A free press is operating, and free trade is taking hold.

For this, we can thank our U.S. troops. We owe these men and women a great debt of gratitude for the sacrifices they continue to make in defending our nation.

How Can I Support Our Troops?

Can I send packages to the troops?

Unfortunately, "Any Soldier" care packages are not accepted because they would delay mail sent by families.

Can I E-mail the troops?

Absolutely! Send e-mail via www.operationdearabby.net or www.defendamerica.mil/nmam.html.

How else can I support our troops?

Get involved with organizations that support our troops like the United Service Organization (USO.) And don't forget about our nation's veterans. Try volunteering at a local hospital, an American Legion post or VFW post.

Illinois Receives Millions for Terrorism Preparedness

America's first line of defense in any terrorist attack is the "first responder" community – local firefighters, police officers and emergency medical professionals. Properly trained and equipped first responders have the greatest potential to save lives and limit casualties after a terrorist attack.

That is why Congress and President Bush continue to devote billions of dollars to improving each state's ability to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks. The President's 2003 budget request, for example, asked for \$3.5 billion to enhance first responder capabilities – a 10-fold increase in federal spending for these heroic people.

I remain committed to ensuring that Illinois and the Sixth Congressional District receive their fair share of these federal dollars. Already, billions of dollars have been released to Illinois, and millions more are in the works.

Here are just a handful of the federal dollars released to Illinois. For a more complete list, please visit my Web site:

- \$68.9 million via the State Homeland Security Grant Program.
- \$60 million for urban search and rescue team training.
- \$40.9 million via the Urban Area Security Initiative.
- \$34.1 million for security improvements in Chicago and 128 nearby communities.
- \$33.6 million in Community Oriented Policing Grants for police programs, ranging from hiring additional officers to paying for homeland-security related overtime.
- \$26.2 million in federal grants for local fire departments.
- \$10 million to improve existing state emergency operation centers.
- \$10.6 million via the State Domestic Preparedness Program.
- \$6 million to improve interoperability of communications equipment.
- \$5.48 million in Emergency Management Performance grants.
- \$5.1 million transit security grant for the Chicago Transit Authority.
- \$4.3 million to update state and local emergency operations plans.
- \$3.1 million transit security grant for METRA.



Rep. Hyde meets with members of the Addison Fire District, which recently qualified for a \$78,300 federal grant to purchase a vehicle exhaust system for the firehouse.

News You Can Use

Social Security Benefits To Increase in 2004

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income Benefits for more than 51 million Americans will increase 2.1 percent in 2004.

The 2.1 percent Cost-of-Living-Adjustment will begin benefiting 7 million Supplemental Income beneficiaries this December. Then in January, 47 million Social Security beneficiaries will receive their increase. Log onto my Web site for more specifics about this increase: www.house.gov/hyde/SeniorCitizen.htm.

Identity Theft

Identity theft is a serious crime. People whose identities have been stolen can spend months or years – and thousands of dollars – cleaning up the mess the thieves have made of their good name and credit record.

In September, the House passed *The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act* (HR 2622) which gives law enforcement new tools to fight identity theft. It also provides consumers free access to their credit reports and it mandates a new fraud alert system.

If you've been a victim of identity theft, call the Federal Trade Commission's Identity Theft Hotline toll-free at 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338). Counselors will take your complaint and advise you on how to deal with the credit-related problems that could result. To learn more about identity theft, please log onto: www.consumer.gov/idtheft.



Rep. Hyde presents a plaque to Carly Hamilton who was Mayor For The Day of Elmhurst, Illinois. After winning an essay contest, Carly and her family traveled to Washington D.C. to meet Mr. Hyde.

National Do-Not Call Registry

Although the courts continue to thwart Congress' efforts to establish a National Do-Not Call Registry, I will continue to support legislation that ends these harassing telemarketing calls. If you haven't already done so, you can add your phone number to the National Do-Not Call Registry by calling: 1-888-382-1222. You can also register online at: www.donotcall.gov.

Spotlight on Health Care:

I remain committed to finding solutions to our healthcare crisis. Here are just a few of the healthcare-related bills recently passed by the House:

- ✓ **Health Insurance for Children:** Congress remains committed to improving access to healthcare for children whose parents can't afford health insurance. This commitment has been demonstrated through the expansion of the Medicaid program and the establishment of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) in 1997. Nearly \$40 billion for the SCHIP program has been appropriated through 2007.
- ✓ **Health Insurance Plans for Small Businesses:** The House has passed several pieces of legislation, including *The Small Business Health Fairness Act* (HR 660), that will help small businesses band together so that they can provide affordable employee health plans. Other legislation will provide tax incentives for small businesses that offer their employees health insurance.
- ✓ **Health Savings Accounts:** The new Medicare reform bill includes a provision that would allow you to save for future health expenses by investing in tax-free Health Savings Accounts. This would help both the uninsured and the insured save for expenses such as the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of health problems; prescription drugs; and long-term care services.
- ✓ **Fixing the Medical Liability System:** Good doctors are being forced to stop practicing medicine because their malpractice insurance premiums are too high. Other doctors raise their fees to survive, and this hurts all of us. In March, the House passed *The HEALTH Act* (HR 5), which would improve the fairness and cost-effectiveness of our current health care liability system, while still ensuring that those injured by health care workers receive fair and adequate compensation.

CONGRESSMAN
**HENRY
HYDE**

*Special Report
to the
Sixth District*



Congressman Henry Hyde
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Official Business



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry J. Hyde".

M.C.
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6th Congressional District
Illinois