



Congressman Tom Petri

News from Congress



MARCH 2010

THIS IS NO WAY TO CREATE JOBS

BY REP. TOM PETRI

After spending a year trying to pass a massive, unpopular health care proposal, the President and congressional leadership are finally putting the issue of jobs on the front burner. It's about time.

But job creation is more than passing a "jobs" bill. Wisconsin business leaders large and small tell me they need a more predictable economic environment if they are to take a chance on hiring new employees.

Instead, policy initiatives over the past year have added to the uncertainties already present due to the recession. For instance:

Spending—Many economists favor deficit spending during recessions to stimulate economic activity, but current deficit projections are so massive that businesses, entrepreneurs and investors reasonably fear long-term consequences, including job-killing higher taxes, tight credit markets and rapid inflation. This lack of confidence means fewer jobs.

The Administration is proposing \$3.8

trillion in spending for fiscal year 2011. Of this, \$1.3 trillion—one-third of the budget, equaling 8.3 percent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—would be paid for with borrowed money.

Under the President's plan, for 2011 alone the federal government will borrow \$4,122 on behalf of each Wisconsin resident—adults and children alike.

For the long term, the Administration predicts that deficits will decline to 3.7 percent of GDP in 2017, but then will start rising again. Deficits of this size are not compatible with a healthy economy.

Health Care—We need sensible health care reform, but by pushing for a comprehensive, big government approach, President Obama has sought to rearrange the rules governing 1/6th of America's economy.

We have had a year of wrangling, secret meetings and sweetheart deals to get health care reform passed. Through all this, American businesses have had to anticipate major changes in the costs of

hiring and keeping employees.

What would these changes be? Who would have to provide health care for employees? What would happen if you didn't? How much would it cost? Would reform really restrain costs, or would it accelerate health care inflation?

These are all troubling uncertainties surrounding a major cost per employee. This uncertainty encourages businesses to delay hiring now, and the added costs of government-mandated insurance can be expected to be a drag on employment in the future.

Cap and Trade—We all need a healthy environment, but changes have to be affordable if they are to be sustained. Despite the recession, however, President Obama and the House leadership succeeded in pushing ruinous cap and trade legislation through the House in an effort to reduce CO2 emissions.

Wisconsin relies heavily on coal-generated power, and the national economy is sensitive to the price of

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Asian Carp—The need to stop a devastating invasion of Asian carp into the Great Lakes was the focus of a Capitol Hill hearing February 9th.

Despite a record snowstorm in Washington, Rep. Petri participated in the hearing, noting that an Asian carp infestation would be ruinous both to the ecology of the Great Lakes and to businesses, particularly commercial fishing and recreation, which rely on the Great Lakes for their livelihood.

"The urgency of the issue demands our attention now," said Petri, who is shown discussing the carp issue before the hearing with Matt Frank (far left), Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

This Is No Way to Create Jobs *continued from page 1*

hydrocarbons. Threatening homeowners and businesses with sharply higher government-mandated energy price increases is hardly the way to build confidence in our economy.

Regulations—It should be apparent to the business community and the majority in Congress tend to favor increased regulation.

Clearly, there is a real need for regulations to keep business practices honest and safe for consumers and workers. But regulations impose real costs. If we want economic growth and jobs, jobs, jobs, we need to avoid the uncertainties caused by regulators who are eager to tell owners and managers how to run their businesses.

Banks—Socking it to the banks may be good politics, but the Administration's proposal to tax the banking industry—purportedly to make banks repay the cost of the bank bailout—will inevitably make lending more expensive at the very time the business community is suffering from a severe credit crunch.

The President is right to advo-

cate updating banking regulations to prevent a repeat of the 2008 financial meltdown, but too much micromanaging will chill lending, lessening the number of jobs which could be created. The situation requires a delicate balance.

Government Motors—Last but not least, government ownership of General Motors and Chrysler as well as mortgage lenders Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac gives Washington an unprecedented role in auto manufacturing and housing. Without a clear path to disentangling Uncle Sam from these two vital industries, private investors will continue to be discouraged from investing in them, resulting in less working capital, reduced business activity and fewer jobs.

Make no mistake: The severity of the recession has reasonably led to emergency responses from the government. But to get the economy back on track, businesses and consumers both need to see greater predictability in Washington, with laws affecting the economy being changed in an orderly way, and without "Big Bang" attempts to remake everything all at once.

"No" to a Congressional Pay Raise

In town meetings, Internet discussions, and constituent e-mail messages, I am hearing a consistent theme: Members of Congress should not vote themselves a pay raise when so many are struggling without work and federal deficits are growing. I agree, and have cosponsored H.R. 4255, the Stop the Automatic Pay Raise for Members of Congress in 2011 Act.

Under current law, Members of Congress receive an automatic cost-of-living-adjustment based on the average wage increase of private sector employees unless both the House and Senate vote to disallow the increase. I oppose these automatic increases and object to congressional leaders' frequent practice of blocking straight up-or-down votes to disallow them.

Last year, I cosponsored a bill to cancel the 2010 pay increase, and we were successful in stopping it. I am hopeful that we will be able to repeat that success.

Our nation faces a challenging economy. We must confront double-digit unemployment and persistent and unsustainable federal budget deficits so that we can restore growth. Allowing the automatic congressional pay raise to go forward sends the wrong message, and it's bad policy.

New On Facebook

To expand my connection with constituents, I have created a page on the popular social networking site, Facebook. My Facebook page will serve as another channel to post material included on my congressional website (<http://petri.house.gov>), such as press releases, videos, photos, statements, columns, articles, newsletter information, and upcoming events. I hope this page will be convenient for Facebook users, notifying those of you who choose to become "fans" when new material is posted. Visit my new page at: www.facebook.com/ThomasPetri and click to become a "fan."

Town Meetings With Representative Tom Petri

Town Meetings provide opportunities to discuss national issues in a group setting. My latest round of Town Meetings will take place from March 31st through April 8th at 12 locations throughout the 6th Congressional District. Please come and express your opinions!

Wednesday, March 31st

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.—**Neenah**
City Hall, 211 Walnut St.
City Council Chambers

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.—**Oshkosh**
City Hall, 215 Church Ave.
Rooms 404 & 406

Thursday, April 1st

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.—**Kohler**
Village Hall
319 Highland Dr.
Kirkpatrick Center

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.—**Oakfield**
Community Center
130 North Main St.

Monday, April 5th

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.—**Watertown**
Watertown Senior & Community Center
514 S. First St., Terrace Room

3:00 – 4:00 p.m.—**Beaver Dam**
City Hall, 205 South Lincoln Ave.
City Council Chambers

Tuesday, April 6th

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.—**Montello**
Marquette County Service Center
460 Underwood Ave.
Demonstration Room

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.—**Green Lake**
County Courthouse, 492 Hill St.
Demonstration Room

Wednesday, April 7th

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.—**Friendship**
Village Hall, 507 West Lake St.

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.—**Redgranite**
Municipal Building
161 Dearborn St.

Thursday, April 8th

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.—**Two Rivers**
Lester Public Library
1001 Adams St.
Community Room

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.—**Chilton**
Calumet County Courthouse
206 Court St., Room 025
(Use west entrance)

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS?

Your opinions are of vital concern to me. Please take a few minutes to answer these important questions.

You can answer online at <http://petri.house.gov/2010survey> or mark your responses on the form below.

Check only one response for each question.

1. What is your top priority for Congress in 2010:

- A. Economy/Jobs
- B. Health Care Reform
- C. National Security/Terrorism
- D. Federal Spending—reducing the deficit
- E. Other

2. Choose the option that most closely describes your position concerning what Congress should do about health care reform:

- A. Drop the topic now
- B. Start over with bipartisan cooperation
- C. Pass comprehensive reform proposal as advocated by the President
- D. Pass more targeted reform bills that focus on segments of the health care system, such as tort reform or ending discrimination based on pre-existing conditions
- E. Other

3. Which statement best expresses your view on climate change/global warming?

- A. I believe we are in a time of prolonged global warming, largely due to human activity, which, if unchecked, could

have significant negative consequences and possibly threaten human existence.

- B. I believe global warming and cooling is natural and cyclical.
- C. I am skeptical about global warming. The evidence is insufficient to make the case.
- D. Other

4. Some are proposing the creation of a bipartisan commission to consider federal spending (including Social Security and Medicare) and tax policies and report to Congress a plan to balance the federal budget, followed by a mandatory up-or-down vote in Congress on the commission's recommendation. Do you support this as a way to address our deficit issues?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Unsure

5. Unemployment is higher than at any point since the early 1980s. Should we create public sector jobs to lower the unemployment rate, or should we focus on economic policies that encourage private sector job creation?

- A. Public Sector
- B. Private Sector

6. Do you believe that suspected terrorists should be tried in the criminal court system or by military commissions?

- A. Criminal Courts
- B. Military Commissions
- C. Unsure

7. Do you support increasing U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan?

- A. Yes
- B. No

8. The U.S. Postal Service is currently facing a severe financial crisis due to the general decline in the use of mail for communications coupled with the recession. One proposed solution is to reduce postal delivery from 6 days a week to 5 days. Would you support a 5 days a week mail delivery schedule?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Unsure

9. On balance, do you think America is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- A. Right Direction
- B. Wrong Direction

SAVE POSTAGE! Repond to the questionnaire online at: <http://petri.house.gov/2010survey>



Respondent #1

- 1. A B C D E
- 2. A B C D E
- 3. A B C D
- 4. A B C
- 5. A B
- 6. A B C
- 7. A B
- 8. A B C
- 9. A B

Please indicate your age range 18-34 35-59 60+

Respondent #2

- 1. A B C D E
- 2. A B C D E
- 3. A B C D
- 4. A B C
- 5. A B
- 6. A B C
- 7. A B
- 8. A B C
- 9. A B

Please indicate your age range 18-34 35-59 60+

Questionnaire, Town Meeting Schedule Inside

Reports

Tom Petri
Representative

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Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Sixth Congressional District
Wisconsin

M.C.
EGRWSS
PRSRT STD



CENSUS 2010—BE COUNTED!

The U.S. Census counts every resident of the United States and is required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years. The 2010 Census is important! It will help to determine each community's share of more than \$400 billion in federal funds each year for things like hospitals, job training centers, schools, senior centers, roads, bridges and other public works projects, and emergency services.

The data collected by the census also help to determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and where the lines are drawn for federal, state and local districts.

This month, census forms will be delivered to every residence in the United States. When you receive yours, just answer the 10 short questions and then mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope provided. Let's help our communities move forward by mailing completed census forms back!



6th District Offices

Washington

2462 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2476

Fond du Lac

490 West Rolling Meadows Dr.
Suite B
Fond du Lac, WI 54937
(920) 922-1180
Toll-free 1-800-242-4883

Oshkosh

2390 State Road 44, Suite B
Oshkosh, WI 54904
(920) 231-6333

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Email: Follow the link on the front page of the website above.

To receive Rep. Petri's periodic electronic newsletter or email issue updates, go to <http://petri.house.gov/subscribe.shtml>



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Please
Place
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Stamp
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Questionnaire Responses