

Protecting Workers' Safety and Rights

Nearly 50 miners have been killed in accidents so far this year, more than in all of 2009. At oil rigs, chemical plants and other job sites dozens of workers also have lost their lives. In fact, 15 workers are killed each day in workplace accidents.

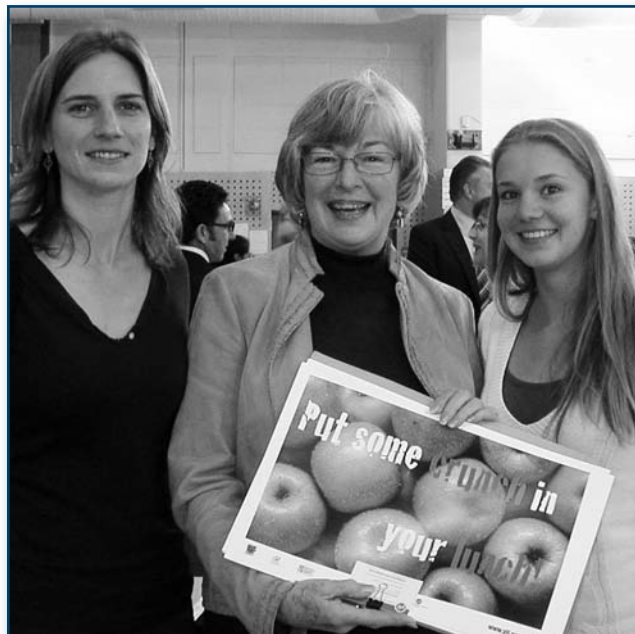
As chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee of the Education and Labor Committee, I am fighting to bring workers safety and healthy policy into the 21st Century.

My subcommittee has held two legislative hearings this session on my bill—H.R. 2067, Protecting America's Workers Act—examining its civil and criminal penalties, whistleblowers, and family rights provisions. The bill, which offers the first substantial amendments to the act since it was passed 40 years ago, provides OSHA coverage for public employees, improves whistleblower protections, and strengthens enforcement.

In response to Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch Mine tragedy in West Virginia in which 29 miners lost their lives, I have been working with the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee on a mine safety bill that would provide stronger oversight and penalties to ensure that employers comply with the law. It also empowers workers to speak up about safety concerns and gives the Mine Safety and Health Administration the tools it needs to ensure that all workers go home safe and healthy at the end of the day.

Workers are hurt not only by accidents but also by unscrupulous employers who deny them the rights and protections they deserve. In April, I reintroduced H.R. 5107, The Employee Misclassification Prevention Act, to crack down on such a practice—

misclassifying workers as independent contractors to avoid the costs associated with employees, such as workers compensation, Social Security and Medicare payments; vacation; sick leave; and pensions. At least 30 percent of workers here in California are misclassified as independent contractors and the IRS estimates this widespread practice costs taxpayers nationwide about \$2.7 billion dollars a year.



Rep. Lynn Woolsey hosts "Giving Kids Healthy Choices" at Davidson Middle School in San Rafael to promote better school nutrition. Leah Smith (left) and Kelsey Ripp (right) also took part.

Afghanistan And an Unwanted Milestone

On April 20, 2004, I took to the floor of the House to argue that we needed a new approach to national security, saying for the very first time— before any other Member of Congress was brave enough to say it— that it was time to bring our troops home from Iraq.

More speeches followed, almost every night that the House has been in session, until almost 6 years later, on April 14th, I spoke for the 350th time, a much unwanted milestone for me.

Seven years in Iraq, 8 1/2 years in Afghanistan, and we still haven't figured out that we can't win people's affection, loyalty, and trust by waging war on their country. To truly capture their hearts and minds and also to defeat terrorism and make America safer, we need a smart security approach. That means empowering Iraqis and Afghans with civilian support and humanitarian aid, with programs to alleviate poverty, build schools, promote public health and so very much more.

The president is now asking us to support expanding what is already America's longest war, in Afghanistan, a conflict that has cost us more than a 1,000 precious lives and more than a quarter trillion dollars.

We must say no, and I will continue do so—with my votes and on the floor of the House, most every night it is in session.

Video of my 350th speech is posted here:

<http://woolsey.house.gov/SMARTfloorstatements.asp?ARTICLE4824=2857828>



Rep. Lynn Woolsey hands out Congressional Gold Medals to members of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) in her Santa Rosa office.

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Constituent Update Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey

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A Note from Your Congresswoman

August 2010



Dear Friend:

I hope you are taking advantage of the warm summer months to enjoy the spectacular scenery of our beautiful district.

The environmental disaster unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico, however, reminds us that we cannot take this natural beauty for granted.

The pristine Sonoma coast must be protected from the kind of ravages the Gulf is now suffering.

For many years the California coast was shielded from new off-shore drilling by moratoriums established by the president and Congress. Those protections were removed in 2008.

In May, I became an original co-sponsor of a bill to once again bar all new drilling off the Pacific Coast.

I have been working for years, however, to provide even greater protection to the Sonoma coast with a bill that would expand the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine sanctuaries along the entire coast of Sonoma County to Point Arena in Mendocino County.

Although congressionally mandated moratoriums on drilling can and have been lifted, Congress has never changed laws and regulations protecting National Marine Sanctuaries from offshore oil.

My bill, H.R. 223, which the House passed in the last Congress, would thus provide a more permanent shield for the state's most vital, unprotected waters, and this must move forward this session.

The coast we love, the fishing and tourism jobs we need, and the sublimely complex ocean ecosystems we can never duplicate deserve nothing less.

As your Representative, I am fighting to protect not only the environment but also your rights, jobs, and safety. And, as always, I am fighting to end what I believe are pointless wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I hope this newsletter gives you a good sense of my work on your behalf, and you can keep track of my activities at www.woolsey.house.gov.

It is an honor to serve you in Congress.

Sincerely,

Lynn Woolsey
Lynn Woolsey

Learning the Lessons of the San Francisco Spill

Californians should not be surprised by the ineffective response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The much smaller San Francisco Bay spill of 2008 revealed the inadequacy of our oil spill containment technology.

Federal research and development for preventing and cleaning up oils spills, which is spread out over 14 agencies, has been hampered by a lack of coordination and direction.

That is why I have introduced H.R. 2693, The Oil Pollution Research and Development Program, which would significantly reduce the number of agencies leading the federal effort and update the framework for research. The bill also increases R&D grants for preventing and combating oil spills.

The bill was passed by the House of Representatives on July 21 and now awaits action in the Senate.

Passing this bill is long overdue.

Women's History Month— Sonoma's Gift to the Country

Women's History Month has always been important to me because its birthplace is here in Sonoma County. This year was particularly special because I joined with Speaker Nancy Pelosi to host Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at an event in the U.S. Capitol.

It was 30 years ago in Sonoma County that a group of dedicated, relentless women started a movement to bring women's achievements into our classrooms, libraries, clubs, and communities.

And many of those founding mothers were on hand in March at the event in Statuary Hall, including Molly Murphy Macgregor, who with the late Mary Ruths-dotter and three other amazing women—Maria Cuevas, Paula Hammett and Bette Morgan—convinced the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women that it was time to write women back into history and honor them during the month of March, which evolved, with their continuing efforts, into Women's History Month.

What better way to mark that anniversary than coming together with two of our greatest role models—Nancy Pelosi and Hillary Clinton.

To be an effective voice for California's Sixth District, I need to hear regularly about what is most important to you. My website offers a great way for us to keep in touch about the issues. Please visit www.woolsey.house.gov today!

Working for You

*Since entering Congress in 1993,
I have brought home almost \$250 million for our district.
Here are some examples of local projects in Marin and Sonoma
counties that I have been able to provide
federal dollars in FY2010.*

Environmental/Conservation

- ▲ Hamilton Airfield Wetlands Restoration — \$14,250,000
- ▲ Dry Creek (Warm Springs) Lake and Channel Maintenance — \$4,884,000
- ▲ Petaluma River Flood Control Project—\$727,000
- ▲ Corte Madera Creek Flood Control—\$472,000
- ▲ Emergency Response and Health Investigations for Endangered and Threatened Pinniped Populations in the Pacific—\$300,000
- ▲ The North Bay Water Reuse Project—\$200,000
- ▲ Bolinas Lagoon Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study—\$90,000
- ▲ COAST Equipment and Infrastructure—\$897,000

Transportation

- ▲ SMART Preliminary Engineering—\$2,500,000
- ▲ Golden Gate Bridge Seismic Retrofit—\$1,948,000
- ▲ Fort Baker Transportation Improvements—\$750,000

Historical Restoration

- ▲ Angel Island State Park, Immigration Station Hospital Rehabilitation—\$1,000,000

Community and Health Services

- ▲ Re-Entry and Community Integration Services—\$250,000
- ▲ Marin County Breast Cancer Research—\$200,000
- ▲ Building Skills and Capacity of Children of Prisoners—\$125,000
- ▲ Health Center Expansion—\$500,000

In addition, I have worked with my Pacific coast colleagues for:

- ▲ Pacific Coastal Salmon Restoration Fund—\$80,000,000

My appropriations requests for FY2011 are posted at my website:
http://woolsey.house.gov/SupportingFiles/documents/2011_Budget.pdf

Federal Funds Boost Marin and Sonoma Medical Community

Stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) have already provided a much-needed shot in the arm to the medical community in Marin and Sonoma counties.

To date, more than \$16 million has been allocated to hospitals, medical centers and community clinics throughout the 6th Congressional District.

The Petaluma Health Center received a nearly \$9 million award for renovations and to open a new 52,000-foot facility to serve an additional 17,000 residents.

The Redwood Community Health Network, which has centers throughout Marin and Sonoma counties, also received \$2,079,598 in federal stimulus funds to expand its electronic health records system.

The House also voted to give doctors in our district some long overdue help by passing the Workers, State, and Business Relief Act of 2010, H.R. 4213.

The act permanently fixes the longstanding problem of physician pay discrepancies under Medicare, which has been particularly troublesome for physicians in Sonoma County.

I have been working to change this since coming to Congress and am happy that physicians in the district would see an increase of more than 6% in their Medicare reimbursement rates under the bill, which is awaiting action in the Senate.

Here's a breakdown of some of the stimulus funds that have gone to the Marin and Sonoma medical community:

ARRA Funding (to date):

- ▲ Coastal Health Alliance—\$639,263
- ▲ Marin Community Clinic—\$1,087,137
- ▲ Petaluma HC Inc.—\$9,901,735
- ▲ Redwood Community Health Coalition—\$478,125
- ▲ Southwest Community HC: \$1,338,292
- ▲ Redwood Community Health Network—\$2,079,598
- ▲ West County HC—\$752,449

These medical awards are just the latest in the more than \$835 million of stimulus funding that has flowed into the 6th Congressional District to support a wide variety of projects. A list of these projects in Marin and Sonoma counties is posted at my website:

http://woolsey.house.gov/SupportingFiles/documents/ARRA_updated_6_25.pdf

Public Option: The Next Step in Health Care Reform

The Affordable Care Act passed in April extends health insurance to 32 million Americans who do not have it, imposes much-needed regulation on the health insurance industry, and creates a new market for those who cannot afford insurance and provides subsidies to help them pay for it.

It also stops insurers from denying coverage on the basis of pre-existing conditions, ends life time caps on coverage, and closes the donut-hole in Medicare drug plans.

The legislation is a historic first step toward comprehensive health care reform.

This summer I proposed taking the next step by introducing a bill that would establish a robust public option that would increase competition and rein in costs. The bill already has more than 100 cosponsors.

A robust public plan, based on the current Medicare provider network and infrastructure, would force insurance companies to control premium costs by providing lower-cost competition. It will also provide savings that can be invested in increasing subsidies. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that such a public option would save \$68 billion over the first six years from 2014–2020.

The public option would strengthen the health care bill, which—when all of its provisions take effect—will greatly improve the lives of thousands of residents of the 6th Congressional District. According to the House Energy and Commerce Committee the Affordable Care Act will:

- ▲ Improve coverage for 419,000 residents with health insurance.
- ▲ Extend coverage to 42,000 uninsured residents.
- ▲ Guarantee that 10,000 residents with pre-existing conditions can obtain coverage.
- ▲ Give tax credits and other assistance to up to 121,000 families and 20,400 small businesses to help them afford coverage.
- ▲ Improve Medicare for 101,000 beneficiaries, including closing the donut hole.
- ▲ Protect 800 families from bankruptcy due to unaffordable health care costs.
- ▲ Allow 49,000 young adults to obtain coverage on their parents' insurance plans.
- ▲ Provide millions of dollars in new funding for 28 community health centers.
- ▲ Reduce the cost of uncompensated care for hospitals and other health care providers by \$45 million annually.



Rep. Lynn Woolsey visits the Elsie Allen Health Center on the campus of Elsie Allen High School in Santa Rosa.