



## **Rep. Petri's E-Newsletter August 11, 2010**

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### **YouCut**

The federal budget is out of control, and people want to know where we can make cuts.

House Republican Whip Eric Cantor is bringing the public into the discussion through his "YouCut" website. Visitors to his site are asked to vote on various proposals, and each week while the House is in session, the winning proposal is brought to the House floor.

Republicans don't control the House, so we can't make it consider our proposals. But we do have some parliamentary opportunities to stage symbolic votes which let each member of the House and each party go on the record.

So far, the vast majority of Republicans in the House have voted in support of \$120 billion in specific cuts plus federal property sales. It's just a start, but it's a start we would like to make despite the ardent opposition of the current majority which, of course, voted the other way.

What cuts have Republicans endorsed in response to citizen votes on <http://republicanwhip.house.gov/YouCut/> ?

We would cut \$25 billion from a new welfare program which undermines the vital reforms of 1996 by rewarding states for increasing their welfare rolls.

We would save \$30 billion by eliminating the federal employee pay raise.

We would save \$30 billion by reforming the two government-backed accomplices in the mortgage meltdown, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

We would raise \$15 billion from the sale of excess federal property.

We would save \$15 billion by prohibiting the hiring of new IRS agents to enforce the new health care law.

We would save \$1.2 billion by stopping taxpayer-subsidized union activities.

We would save tens of millions of dollars by prohibiting stimulus funding for promotional signage and recoup previously-spent funds.

We would save \$1.2 billion by prohibiting subsidies for "first-class" tickets on Amtrak.

And we would save \$1.1 billion by terminating the advanced portion of the earned income tax credit.

More information on all of these proposed cuts are available on the YouCut website.

## **FEMA and Flood Maps**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is in the process of issuing new flood plain maps, causing a great deal of concern from people who have found that their property is now designated as at risk of flooding. This designation generally and significantly increases insurance costs while reducing the market value of the property.

On Aug. 6 in Fox Lake, I brought local residents together with representatives from FEMA and the Department of Natural Resources to discuss the concerns of people who believe their property has been incorrectly categorized and to explain what property-owners need to do to prove their case.

The new maps have been rolled out on a staggered schedule, and as new maps have become final, I've heard from other parts of the 6th District, particularly Fond du Lac County.

Of particular concern is the cost of challenging the elevation FEMA claims for individual pieces of property. If the map is wrong, it's reasonable to expect the government to cover the cost of making the correction. I was pleased on July 15 to support H.R. 5114, legislation which included a provision requiring reimbursement of costs incurred by property owners who successfully demonstrate that their property should not be included within the designated flood plain. This bill is awaiting Senate action.

## **On My Schedule**

My schedule is still being filled in, but current highlights follow.

On Thursday, Aug. 12, I will host a government grants conference at Lakeshore Technical College in Cleveland.

On Friday, Aug. 13, I am scheduled to tour Badger Mining Corp. in Berlin.

On Monday, Aug. 16, I will host a small business conference at Moraine Park Technical College in Fond du Lac.

On Tuesday, Aug. 17, I am scheduled to tour Northwoods Paper Converting in Beaver Dam.

On Wednesday, Aug. 18, I plan to tour the Neenah Foundry Company and the Rosendale Dairy.

On Thursday, Aug. 19, I will be the featured speaker at an Oostburg Kiwanis Club meeting.

On Tuesday, Sept. 7, I will be the featured speaker at a Waupun Kiwanis Club meeting.

On Wednesday, Sept. 8, I will be the featured speaker at a lunch at the Campus Life Senior Center in Sheboygan.

## **What I've Been Up To - The Highlights**

On July 17, I participated in the Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen Award Program Recognition Ceremony in Sheboygan for members of the Army Reserve's 330th Military Police Detachment.

On July 31, I attended the EAA AirVenture fly-in.

On August 6, I participated in a meeting in Fox Lake with the Federal Emergency Management Agency held to discuss disputes over the new flood plain maps (see FEMA story above).

On August 7, I participated in a "Bagging for Bucks" event in Sheboygan Falls to benefit the Sharon Richardson Community Hospice.

On Aug. 9, I was a guest on the "Between the Lines" show on WFDL radio in Fond du Lac, I attended an Oshkosh Rotary Club meeting, and I toured the new Eden Meadows campus of the Lutheran Homes of Oshkosh.

The House was called back into session Aug. 10 to consider a \$26 billion state aid bill approved by the Senate Aug. 5 (see more below). We then continued our six-week District Work Period.

## **Legislative Update**

### ***August 10, 2010:***

The House considered the Senate's amendments to **H.R. 1586**. The amended bill provides \$26 billion in aid to states, \$10 billion in the form of education funding and \$16.1 billion in Medicaid assistance.

The House passed H.R. 1586 by a vote of 247 - 161. I voted against the bill out of concern that it uses permanent tax increases to pay for temporary spending needs and also cuts funding to important food assistance programs. The President signed the bill into law the same day.

### ***July 29, 2010:***

The House considered **H.R. 5850**, the Fiscal Year 2011 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act. This bill would appropriate \$67.4 billion in discretionary spending for these two federal departments.

H.R. 5850 passed the House by a vote of 251 - 167. I voted against passage of this bill due to concerns with these spending levels.

Also, the House considered **H.R. 5900**, the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010. In addition to extending temporary funding for the FAA until Sept. 30, this bill improves pilot training and safety standards.

As Ranking Republican on the Aviation Subcommittee, I helped write this bill. It was passed by voice vote, and has since been signed into law.

### ***July 28, 2010:***

The House considered **H.R. 5827**, the Bankruptcy Firearms Protection Act. This legislation would allow individuals going through bankruptcy to exempt personal firearms valued at up to \$3,000 from the property taken over by the bankruptcy trustee.

This legislation was considered under the "Suspension of the Rules" procedure requiring a two-thirds vote. H.R. 5827 was passed by the House by a vote of 307 - 113. I voted with the majority of the House in favor of this legislation.

### ***July 27, 2010:***

The House considered a motion to accept the Senate amendment to a House-passed bill (**H.R. 4899**) providing a supplemental appropriation of \$58.8 billion, of which \$42 billion is designated for the Department of Defense, primarily for military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The remaining funds are designated for oil cleanup in the Gulf of Mexico, FEMA to cover the cost of past disasters, and compensation for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange.

The House agreed to this Senate amendment by a vote of 308 - 114. I voted with the majority in favor of the amendment. President Obama signed H.R. 4899 into law on July 29, 2010.

***July 22, 2010:***

The House voted to concur in a Senate amendment to **H.R. 4213** which would extend eligibility for emergency unemployment benefits. This eligibility expired on June 2, 2010. The Senate's amendment would extend the program through November 30, 2010, and provide retroactive benefits dating to June 2.

The House agreed to the amendment by a vote of 272 - 152. I voted in favor of extending eligibility for these benefits. President Obama signed this legislation into law later the same day.

***July 21, 2010:***

The House considered **H.R. 4380**, United States Manufacturing Enhancement Act of 2010. This legislation provided for the temporary reduction or elimination of many import duties on products used by American manufacturers but not available from domestic producers. This provides important tax relief for U.S. manufacturing companies competing in the global market.

H.R. 4380 was considered under "suspension of the rules," a procedure requiring a two-thirds majority for passage. This bill was approved by a vote of 378 - 43. I voted for passage of this legislation. It has since been approved by the Senate and sent to the President.

***July 15, 2010:***

The House considered **H.R. 5114**, the Flood Insurance Reform Priorities Act of 2010. This legislation provides for a five-year reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program, a program that has been operating under multiple short term extensions. Additionally, this bill would make important progress toward enacting many badly needed reforms of the National Flood Insurance Program.

H.R. 5114 was passed by the House by a vote of 329 - 90. I voted with the majority in favor of H.R. 5114.

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