

2013

A Fair Economy and A More Prosperous Arizona

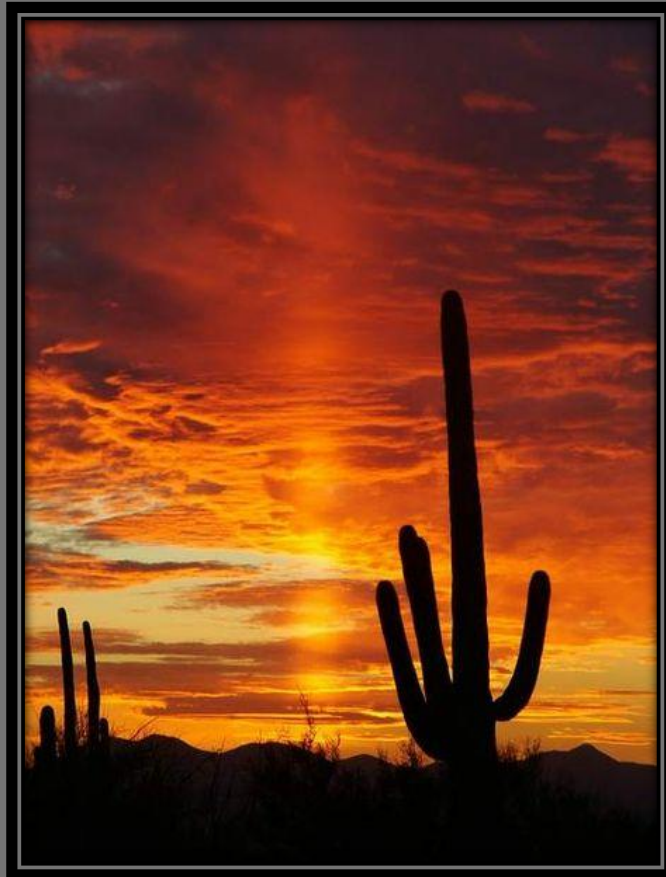


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Dear friends,

The story we've all been hearing is that Congress is broken and out of touch. Well, there are two sides to every story, and this report is that other side. In the following pages you'll see everything my hard-working staff and I did in 2013 – the bills I introduced, the forums we held, the hundreds of constituents we successfully helped with federal government issues, the money we helped save, the jobs we pushed to create. I'm proud of my record, and I believe voters deserve to know everything about how their representatives are acting on their behalf. That's why this report leaves nothing out.

When the House majority was voting to cut taxes for the rich and reduce unemployment insurance for the rest of us, I was fighting alongside my Congressional Progressive Caucus colleagues to protect working families and create millions of real jobs. When we were told to vote for corporate giveaways and put more of the burden on the middle class, I led the fight for a progressive Back to Work Budget that created jobs and put fairness back in the tax code. It was a busy year and it didn't always go the way we wanted, but being in the minority is no excuse not to fight hard every day for the working people of Southern Arizona. So that's what I did.

Our state has been through some tough times lately. We're still facing too many home foreclosures. Our state legislature focuses on socially conservative legislation that doesn't improve our economy or make Arizona a welcoming place to visit. The good people of our state are moving away from that divisive message and demanding economic action, and I'm right there with them. After reading this report I hope you'll have a fuller picture of how I've worked to serve you this past year.

Fighting for working families in Congress is a full-time job, but a lot of what my colleagues and I do in Washington is invisible to the public. Once a vote is cast or a letter is sent, Congress and the media move on. But it's important to remember everything that happened in the past year – not just the trials, but the triumphs. We put the national focus squarely on economic fairness. We prevented public lands giveaways to mining companies that aren't interested in keeping jobs in our state. Just as importantly, we kept fighting for comprehensive immigration reform.

I hope that by learning what we focused on in 2013 – creating jobs in our community, promoting a better economy and fairer labor laws, protecting Southern Arizona from mining industry overreach, and more – you'll be inspired to join the push for a stronger Arizona and a national economy that works for everyone. If you're wondering how we stayed busy, you can view a list of the letters I sent to agencies and colleagues at <http://1.usa.gov/10xyVr5>.

Thank you for helping me do right by our community every day. Thank you for believing that government can be a force for good in people's lives. And thank you for taking a moment to learn more about all we did in 2013 and all that remains to be done to make Southern Arizona a better place to live.

Peace,
Raúl

2013

Legislation and Policy



STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMY AND OUR PEOPLE



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every day in Congress, I help lead the fight to protect America’s working families and put Americans back to work. A strong progressive agenda will get our nation back on track, and I help shape this as co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. The CPC is the largest formally organized group of Representatives within the House Democratic Caucus. We promote *The Progressive Promise – Fairness For All*, and our core principles include:

- Fighting for economic justice and security for all
- Protecting and preserving our civil rights and civil liberties
- Promoting global peace and security
- Advancing environmental protection and energy independence

These same principles have guided my service to Southern Arizona for the past forty years. As we work to improve our economy, I have focused on several federal policy areas over the past year:

Job Creation and Economic Fairness – We cannot tinker around the margins and hope that things get better. We need to go big. Focusing on serious job creation projects right away will help prevent further unemployment and underemployment. We cannot afford to disappoint an entire generation of American workers with a weak economy. Some have sought to cut taxes for the largest corporations, wealthy oil companies and the richest two percent of the population.

This is a recipe for continued economic decline. Over the past year, I have introduced and supported legislation that takes a direct approach to job creation.

Keeping Americans in Their Homes – The ongoing foreclosure crisis largely was caused by fraudulent and predatory bank lending practices that have sparked large-scale state and federal investigations across the country. Millions of Americans have lost their homes. This year I introduced the Right to Rent Act and other measures to keep our economy strong and keep people in their homes, stabilize property values and reduce homelessness.

Protecting Social Security, Retirees and Seniors – I will always fight to protect Social Security. Even in this down economy, some lawmakers in Congress are intent on cutting benefits for the millions of retired and disabled Americans who are most in need. Social Security is not a piggy bank we break open to support welfare for oil companies, big corporations and millionaires. I will continue to preserve and protect Social Security for our seniors and future generations.

Medicare, Medicaid and Good Health Coverage – Some of my colleagues in Congress want to slash Medicare and Medicaid right now, when families in need most need these programs. This is unacceptable and unnecessary. We need to guarantee health care for all Americans, which is why I continue to fight for a public option and single-payer health care.

Protecting Veterans, Service Members and Their Families – Our armed forces put their lives on the line in service to our nation, and we owe them a great debt. America’s federal policies and programs should honor our veterans’ service and ease their transition when they reenter civilian life. Whether it’s housing assistance, medical care, education, job training or spousal support, we must take care of our veterans and ensure they are never forgotten.

Equal Pay and Equal Rights for Women – Women who work full-time jobs one year after receiving their college diplomas earn about 82 cents for every dollar men earned. Some people want to convince you this isn’t a real issue. Well, I believe women deserve equal pay for equal work, and I believe they deserve the same legal protections as men – in the workplace, in the home and everywhere else.

LGBT Equality – There’s no reason to discriminate – in civil society, in business, or in government – against anybody on the basis of sexual identity or preference. I have always been a proud supporter of marriage equality and eliminating outdated laws that only make some Americans’ lives harder. Helping expand LGBT equality in the workforce is a priority of mine.

JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC FAIRNESS

I am proud to co-chair the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC), where I lead the fight to protect the middle class and push sensible solutions to put America back to work. The CPC

includes more than 70 members of the House of Representatives and is the largest group within the House Democratic Caucus. We reflect the diversity and strength of the American people and give a voice to every American who believes in a fairer, more just society.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Progressive Caucus members promote a strong progressive agenda we call “The Progressive Promise--Fairness for All.” The Progressive Promise is rooted in the values, needs and aspirations of our people – not just the wealthy and privileged, but the full range of working Americans, whether they live on a family farm, in a small town or in the heart of a big city.

The four core principles of the Progressive Promise:

1. Fighting for economic justice and security for all
2. Protecting and preserving our civil rights and civil liberties
3. Promoting global peace and security
4. Advancing environmental protection and energy independence

Legislative Highlights

Co-authorship of the Balancing Act – Throughout 2013 the Congressional Progressive Caucus promoted the Balancing Act, our premier economic improvement plan, which eliminates the unpopular and failed sequester and ensures that we reduce our long-term deficit in a balanced way. The bill closes tax loopholes for America’s wealthiest individuals and corporations, creates more than 1 million jobs by investing in infrastructure, teachers, and putting money in consumers’ pockets, and cuts wasteful Pentagon spending. It represents the country’s popular demand for an economic plan that puts working families, not CEOs and wealthy corporate interests, in the driver’s seat. By replacing the sequester with \$960 billion in new revenue, the Act achieves a 1:1 ratio of revenue to budget cuts.

Lead Author and Sponsor of the CPC Back to Work Budget – Millions of hard-working American families are falling behind while the very richest slice of the country takes home a bigger chunk of our nation’s gains every year. Americans face a choice: we can either cut Medicare benefits to pay for more tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, or we can close those loopholes and invest in jobs. The Congressional Progressive Caucus Back to Work Budget invests in America’s future because the best way to reduce our long-term deficit is to put America back to work. In the first year alone, we create nearly 7 million American jobs and increase GDP by 5.7 percent. We reduce unemployment to near 5 percent in three years with a jobs plan that includes repairing our nation’s roads and bridges and putting the teachers, cops and firefighters who have borne the brunt of our economic downturn back to work. We reduce the deficit by \$4.4 trillion by closing tax loopholes and making sure the wealthy pay a fair share. We repeal the failed and unpopular sequester and the Budget Control Act, which are damaging the economy, and we strengthen Medicare and Medicaid, which provide high quality, low-cost medical coverage to millions of Americans when they need it most.

Its key provisions include:

- **Infrastructure** – Substantially increases infrastructure investment to the level the American Society of Civil Engineers says is necessary to close our infrastructure needs gap.
- **Education** – Funds school modernizations and rehiring laid-off teachers.
- **Aid to States** – Closes the recession-caused gap in state budgets for two years, allowing the rehiring of cops, firefighters, and other public employees.
- **Public Works Job Programs and Aid to Distressed Communities** – Includes job programs such as a Park Improvement Corps, Student Jobs Corps, and Child Care Corps.
- **Fair Individual Tax** – Immediately allows Bush tax cuts to expire for families earning more than \$250,000 per year. Establishes higher tax rates for millionaires and billionaires (from 45 percent to 49 percent). Taxes investment income as wages.
- **Fair Corporate Tax** – Ends corporate tax bias toward moving jobs and profits overseas. Enacts a financial transactions tax. Reduces deductions for corporate jets, meals and entertainment.
- **Defense** – Returns Pentagon spending to 2006 levels, focusing on modern security needs.
- **Health Care** – No benefit cuts to Medicare, Medicaid or Social Security. Reduces health care costs by adopting a public option, negotiating drug prices, and reducing fraud.
- **Environment** – Prices carbon pollution with a rebate to protect low income households. Eliminates corporate tax subsidies for oil, gas, and coal companies

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

INVEST IN JOBS NOT TAX LOOPHOLES

COST	LOOPHOLES	OR	JOBS
\$112 BILLION	FOSSIL FUEL HANDOUTS	OR	REPAIRING OUR ROADS AND BRIDGES
\$70 BILLION	WRITE-OFFS FOR CORPORATE MEALS AND ENTERTAINMENT	OR	THREE-YEAR TAX CREDIT FOR WORKING FAMILIES
\$25 BILLION	STOCK OPTION LOOPHOLE FOR WALL STREET	OR	MODERNIZE 35,000 PUBLIC SCHOOLS
\$13 BILLION	TAX LOOPHOLES FOR YACHTS AND VACATION HOMES	OR	PUT 40,000 POLICE OFFICERS TO WORK
\$2 BILLION	TAX LOOPHOLES FOR CORPORATE JET OWNERS	OR	PUT 12,000 FIREFIGHTERS TO WORK

BACK TO WORK BUDGET

Legislation I am Cosponsoring and Programs I Support

Fair Minimum Wage Act – The minimum wage is about valuing and respecting work. No one who works hard and plays by the rules should live in poverty. Today, a minimum wage worker working 40 hours per week, 52 weeks a year earns around \$15,000. The real value of the minimum wage buys less than it did in 1956. Workers deserve a fair minimum wage. Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour will restore much of its historic value and will make a critical difference to tens of millions of low wage workers and their families.

Offshoring Prevention Act – This bill prohibits income tax deferral on profits earned from the manufacture of goods abroad for sale back in the U.S. and reduces the budget deficit by nearly \$20 billion over ten years, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation. Since 2000, the U.S. manufacturing workforce has declined by nearly one-third – a loss of more than 5 million jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. At a time when we should be working to restore this vital sector, I consider it unacceptable for our tax code to reward companies for off-shoring manufacturing jobs.

Humphrey-Hawkins 21st Century Full Employment and Training Act – This bill establishes a comprehensive direct job creation and training program that would create millions of new jobs for the nation’s unemployed. With almost 14 million Americans out of work, the time has come for the federal government to play a major role in creating jobs now.

Low-Wage Federal Contractor Employee Back Pay Act – This bill provides back pay to low-wage federal contractor employees who were furloughed during the federal government shutdown. This includes contractor employees who provide retail, food, custodial, and security services in federal buildings.

Emergency Jobs to Restore the American Dream Act – This bill creates 2.2 million jobs that will meet critical needs to improve and strengthen communities:

- The School Improvement Corps would create 400,000 construction and 250,000 maintenance jobs.
- The Park Improvement Corps would create 100,000 jobs for youth.
- The Neighborhood Heroes Corps would hire 300,000 teachers, 40,000 new police officers, and 12,000 firefighters.
- The Health Corps would hire at least 40,000 health care providers.
- The Child Development Corps would create 100,000 jobs in early childhood care.
- The Community Corps would hire 750,000 individuals to do needed work in our communities, including housing rehab, weatherization, recycling, and rural conservation.

National Infrastructure Development Bank Act – To meet and finance our country’s infrastructure needs, this bill establishes a National Infrastructure Bank to leverage private dollars and make objective, merit-based investments in infrastructure projects of significance with clear economic, environmental and social benefits.

Equal Employment for All Act – This straightforward bill prohibits employers from using credit checks to hire or fire employees.

American Jobs Act – This bill cancels sequestration for fiscal years 2014-2021, preventing public-sector layoffs and creating pathways to hire people to build roads, hi-tech infrastructure, and schools. It also cuts taxes for struggling people and small businesses in order to boost consumer spending and new hiring.

Half in Ten Act – This bill, co-authored by House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer and CPC Whip Barbara Lee, establishes a Federal Interagency Working Group on Reducing Poverty, which will develop and implement a national strategy to reduce poverty by half in ten years and provide regular progress reports to Congress.

Inclusive Prosperity Act – This bill creates a tax on financial transactions in order to invest in strengthening America’s families and communities. A nominal tax on the sales of stocks, bonds and derivatives could raise between \$150 billion and \$350 billion a year. These funds could be used to strengthen financial security and expand opportunity for low- and moderate-income families, strengthen the social safety net, and expand resources for child care, Social Security, affordable housing, health care, and savings incentives.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to Speaker of the House Rep. John Boehner opposing sequestration, 02/2013 – As my colleagues and I predicted in this letter, the \$85 billion across-the-board cuts in spending undermined job creation and the economic recovery, and families throughout the country – in every state and district – continued to bear the burden of a needlessly difficult economy.

Letter to Speaker Boehner urging him to oppose a government shutdown, 10/2013 – We also asked him to oppose using the threat of defaulting on our nation’s debts as a political tool. The American people depend on Congress to solve problems without grandstanding.

Letter to Securities and Exchange Commissioner Mary Jo White, 11/2013 – My colleagues and I wrote in support of a proposed SEC rule to require publicly traded companies to disclose the ratio between CEO pay and median employee compensation. It’s important for investors and the public to know the salaries of chief executives at publicly traded corporations and that the information is put in proper context.

Letter to House and Senate budget conferees, 11/2013 – My colleagues and I wrote to encourage budget negotiators to consider the sacrifices that our federal workforce had already made to address our budget problems and to take proposals to further reduce federal worker pay and benefits off the negotiating table.

Special Focus: Emergency Economic Assistance

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Legislation to Protect Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program – All current EUC beneficiaries will soon lose their benefits, and individuals exhausting their limited state

unemployment benefits will no longer be eligible for EUC benefits in 2014. EUC benefits remain a critical support for Americans looking for work in an economy that still has 1.5 million *fewer* jobs than when the recession started six years ago. The total amount of weeks of unemployment benefits provided (state and federal) has dropped by more than a third. The weekly benefit amount provided by the EUC program has been cut under sequestration. To receive EUC benefits, an individual is required to actively seek work, and has ample reason to do so given the average benefit amount is less than \$300 a week. Cutting off unemployment benefits to millions of Americans searching for a new job will hurt consumer demand and therefore impede our economic recovery. In fact, the Economic Policy Institute estimates that allowing the EUC program to expire in December would cost our economy 310,000 jobs.

Weekends Without Hunger Act – This bill helps prevent children from going hungry by establishing a five-year pilot program that helps schools and food banks provide nutritious food to at-risk school children over the weekend and school holidays during the school year.

Social Work Reinvestment Act – This bill establishes the Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide independent counsel to Congress and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on policy issues associated with recruitment, retention, research and reinvestment in the social work profession.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to the Appropriations Committee urging rebuilding funds after Hurricane Sandy, 01/2013 – This letter urged support for a rebuilding effort that will reduce future flood losses and minimize their impacts on human safety, health, and welfare.

Letter to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack on Emergency Food Assistance, 07/2013 – This letter urged Secretary Vilsack to once again use his administrative authority to distribute existing funding to purchase The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) commodities in fiscal year 2013. The program provides food banks with healthy, nutritious, American-grown food commodities.

Letter to House Agriculture Committee opposing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program cuts, 11/2013 – This letter said the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) should not be cut as part of any reconciliation between the House and Senate versions of the 2013 Farm Bill. SNAP, commonly known as “food stamps,” is an indispensable program for the nearly 50 million Americans that rely on it. We urge opposition to any reduction in SNAP funding.

Letter to House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan and Senate Budget Committee Chairman Patty Murray, 12/2013 – This letter asked that any budget agreement fund SNAP at the Senate level, given that the House budget represents an 18 percent cut to the SNAP program. By cutting \$135 billion in needed SNAP funds, the Ryan Budget could result in 12 million to 13 million families losing their food assistance. Too many families already struggle to feed themselves with the current meager benefit that food stamps provide.

Special Focus: Supporting the U.S. Postal Service



Legislation I am Cosponsoring

United States Postal Service Stabilization Act – This bill requires the Office of Personnel Management to recalculate the existing postal employee Federal Employee Retirement System surplus using postal-specific salary and demographic assumptions. It returns any resulting overpayment amount to its outstanding payment obligations.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, 04/2013 – for all types and classes of mail. Postmaster General Donahoe announced USPS’s intent to amend its delivery schedule in early August 2013 to a five-day letter mail delivery schedule and a six-day delivery schedule for packages and prescription drugs. This transition could have an adverse affect on not only USPS’s standard of service but could also eliminate up to 80,000 postal worker jobs across the country.

May letter urging Post Master General to honor his commitment to keep mail processing centers open until Congress considers legislation. Urging maintenance of operations at all mail processing facilities as originally reported to allow Congress to take action on postal reform legislation.

September Letter to Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Cantor urging them to bring the Postal Service Protection Act to the floor when Congress returns from the District work period. It is time for Congress to act not only to ensure the financial stability of the USPS but to protect the over 500,000 Americans who work for the USPS.

KEEPING AMERICANS IN THEIR HOMES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The mortgage crisis continues to affect the entire nation, and Arizona has seen some of the worst impacts. Many banks refuse to assist in refinancing or restructuring debt, and some lenders have issued fraudulent foreclosure notices. Unfortunately, the remedies proposed and enacted by the federal government have so far been inadequate. Initiatives such as the Home Affordable Modification Program have miscalculated the scope of the problem. Many culpable bankers have received massive subsidies, and settlements have rarely benefited deceived homeowners.

Legislation I Have Introduced

Right to Rent Act – My bill gives immediate relief to millions of families facing foreclosure and helps prevent the spiral of vacancy, neglect, blight, and lowered property values for neighbors who have managed to keep their homes. Right to Rent grants foreclosed homeowners the option to remain in their homes as renters for up to five years and pay a fair market rent set by a judge. The bill aims to give relief to middle-income homeowners, not speculators or people living in unaffordable mansions. It allows families to keep the house they call home and stops neighborhood blight and vacancy from spiraling out of control.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Helping Homeless Veterans Act – This bill reauthorizes vital programs to provide transitional housing, employment assistance, supportive services, and much more to our nation's veterans to help keep them in their homes and off the streets.

Permanently Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act – This bill ensures that current federal protections for renters living in foreclosed properties do not expire. While much of the response to the foreclosure crisis has focused on homeowners, 27 percent of properties and 40 percent of the units in foreclosure are **renter-occupied**. These renters often have no idea that their landlord has fallen behind on mortgage payments.

Homes for Heroes Act – This bill authorizes the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide housing assistance to private nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives to expand the supply of permanent affordable housing.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to President Obama on the Hardest Hit Fund, 03/2013 – This letter asked for an executive order directing the Treasury Department to release money from the Hardest Hit Fund to help homeowners.

Letter to House Appropriations Committee members on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, 06/2013 – A proposed bill reduces CDBG formula grants by nearly 50 percent, which would mark an historic low since the program’s beginnings in the 1970s. Halving the program would impact local economies, threaten the program’s national scope, curtail on-the-ground lead abatement projects that are helping to revitalize our older cities, and reduce ongoing capabilities to aid veterans and other workforce training services. HUD reports that between FY2007 and FY2011, CDBG helped more than 174,000 businesses expand economic opportunities.

Letter to Secretary Vilsack and Under Secretary O’Brien on Rental Assistance, 07/2013 – This letter urged administrative measures necessary to ensure that low-income residents are not displaced and that apartments continue to receive operating assistance to ensure the safety and welfare of residents.

Letter to Speaker Boehner, Leader Cantor, and Whip McCarthy urging a vote on the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act, 12/2013 – The 2007 Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act freed homeowners from a crippling tax burden by temporarily excluding the debt forgiven on a primary residence from their taxable income. According to the National Association of REALTORS, after reaching a post-housing crisis low earlier this year, the number of distressed home sales has started increasing again. Thus many homeowners continue to face foreclosure or are in a position where they must complete a short sale or some form of modification to their mortgage in order to avoid foreclosure. My colleagues and I urged a vote to reauthorize the law.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY, RETIREES AND SENIORS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Social Security was created to ensure that seniors and certain people with disabilities have a livable income once they leave the workforce. It guarantees that every American who works hard will have a decent retirement. Since its creation 75 years ago, Social Security – in the forms of Supplemental Security Income, survivor benefits, and retirement benefits – has helped countless Americans care for themselves and their families. Social Security is forbidden by law to contribute to the national deficit, and anyone who wants to cut benefits to “save the country money” is not being honest. Recent attempts to reduce benefits would amount to a devastating blow to seniors in this country and do nothing improve the country’s economic situation.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring and Programs I Support

Strengthening Social Security Act – This bill increases benefits for current beneficiaries and makes Social Security stronger for future generations. Social Security continues to be one of our nation’s strongest anti-poverty programs. By updating the current benefit formula, we can boost benefits for current beneficiaries to provide a better standard of living. To extend the life of the trust fund, the bill phases out the current Social Security taxable income cap of \$113,700 so that payroll taxes apply to wealthy individuals as much as working families.

No Loopholes in Social Security Taxes Act – This bill makes income above \$250,000 taxable by Social Security and keeps the current cap of \$113,700 for those earning less than \$250,000. This would extend the Social Security trust fund for another 50 years. You can read the letter of support from the National Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicare [here](#).

Protecting Our Promise to Seniors Act – This bill lifts the cap on high-income contributions and improves benefits for seniors, people with disabilities and other beneficiaries by basing cost-of-living adjustments on the price of needs like prescription drugs and housing – instead of electronics or new cars – to better reflect how seniors spend their money. It does not increase the retirement age or cut benefits in any way.

Elder Protection and Abuse Prevention Act – This bill strengthens federal guidance and resources for states to prevent and respond to cases of elder abuse. Every year, an estimated 14.1 percent of non-institutionalized older adults experience physical, psychological, or sexual abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation. For every case reported, another estimated 23 cases of abuse go unnoticed. The Elder Protection and Abuse Prevention Act amends the existing structure of the Older Americans Act (OAA) to provide for better incorporation of elder justice activities into senior services and state planning.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to President Obama opposing chained CPI Social Security cuts, 04/2013 – In this letter my colleagues and I told the president that “chained CPI” – a way of calculating the price of goods that amounts to a Social Security benefit cut – is bad policy because it does not track seniors’ and disabled beneficiaries’ real expenses. Beneficiaries have gone without increases in recent years and are often managing meager household budgets.

Letter urging the Budget Conference Committee to support Senior Nutrition Programs, 11/2013 – As a result of funding cuts, Meals on Wheels and related programs across the country have been forced to cut meals served to seniors, eliminate staff positions, lower meal quality, reduce delivery days and/or close sites. The situation has been exacerbated by the economic downturn and the increased numbers of seniors needing meals. Nutrition programs created in the Older Americans Act provide vital support for seniors who are at significant risk of hunger and are losing their ability to remain independent in their own homes and communities.

Letter urging the Budget Conference Committee to protect Social Security and Medicare, 11/2013 – Seniors have put in a lifetime of hard work helping to expand our economy and make our nation strong. They deserve a safe, healthy and secure retirement. This letter urged the Budget Conference Committee to remember the commitments we made to retirees.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID AND GOOD HEALTH COVERAGE

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has made great progress in reducing disparities in access to quality health care. I still believe much more needs to be done to address ever-increasing health care costs and racial and ethnic minority health disparities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I support legislation and programs that ensure American citizens have access to affordable, high-quality health care. The federal government plays an important role in helping states and communities make health care more accessible to their citizens. Along with loan repayments, scholarships and grant programs for health professionals, a strong Medicaid program is vital to ensure our nation's children get the vital pediatric care they need.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act – Under H.R. 676, the American health care system would transition to a privately delivered, publicly financed non-profit universal health care system. The United States remains the only country in the industrialized world that has a for-profit health care delivery system that often places a heavy burden on state, local and family budgets. A universal health care system would place our nation on a sustainable fiscal path, provide better care and save us all money for decades to come.

Health Insurance Rate Review Act – This legislation gives the Department of Health and Human Services the authority to deny, modify, or provide rebates for unreasonable health insurance premium rate increases.

Rural Veterans Mental Health Improvement Act – This bill greatly improves the care available to our nation's veterans and their families. Rural veterans often face many difficulties in accessing quality VA mental health care services.

Mental Health in Schools Act – This bill provides better access to mental health services in our nation's 95,000 public schools.

Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act – This bill authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate lower prices for Medicare prescription drugs. Negotiating with drug companies on the price of Medicare Part D drugs could save up to \$156 billion over 10 years and lower drug costs for seniors.

Medical Debt Responsibility Act – This bill provides immediate relief to Americans who, due to a catastrophic medical debt, face adverse credit reports. Under the federal Fair Credit Reporting

Act, adverse information associated with medical debts remains on a person's credit report for up to seven years. This legislation removes all information related to a fully paid or settled medical debt within 45 days of payment.

Indian Health Service Advance Appropriations Act – This bill allows Congress to fund the Indian Health Service on the same advance appropriations schedule used for Veterans Administration medical accounts. This ensures timely funding in needed areas.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Act – This bill authorizes grants to public and non-profit organizations to expand training and support services for families and caregivers of patients with Alzheimer's disease. Expanding access to training and support services will help caregivers provide effective, compassionate care and allow more Alzheimer's patients to remain in their homes with people who love them.

Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program Reauthorization Act – This bill reauthorizes a Department of Justice program that helps local communities and law enforcement officials quickly identify persons with Alzheimer's disease who wander and reunite them with their families. This program saves law enforcement officials valuable time and allows them to focus on other security concerns. It also reduces unintentional injuries and deaths among Alzheimer's patients and brings peace of mind to their families.

Border Health Security Act – This bill strengthens both the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission and the Canada-United States Pan-Border Public Health Preparedness Council and provides grants to improve and protect the health of border area residents. Grants will focus on areas such as infectious disease testing, monitoring, and surveillance; public health and infrastructure; medical and health services research; health care infrastructure; health disparities; environmental health; and workforce training and development.

Rural Hospital Access Act – This bill extends the Medicare-dependent Hospital Program and the low-volume hospital program. It ensures that rural health care providers continue to make high quality care available to their patients.

Ban Poisonous Additives Act – This bill eliminates the use of BPA from all food and beverage containers. Researchers have found that BPA leaches from cans and containers into food and beverages and has been linked to a host of health problems, including cancer, reproductive dysfunction, heart disease and behavioral problems.

Access to Substance Abuse Treatment Act – Treatment is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce drug abuse and ameliorate its impacts on society. The Office of National Drug Control Policy estimates that every dollar spent on treatment saves \$7.46 in lost productivity and criminal justice system spending. This bill authorizes grants to increase the availability of treatment for abuse of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and other drugs, and better coordinates medical services and housing assistance for those in treatment.

National Health Service Corps Improvement Act – This bill reinstates optometrists in the NHSC student loan repayment program and help bring qualified eye doctors to the rural and urban areas where they are needed.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter requesting the continuation of the mandatory Health Center Fund, 10/2013 – This letter urged the White House to include appropriations for the Health Center Fund for fiscal years 2016-2020 in the President’s Budget Request for fiscal year 2015. This continued funding will provide stability for existing centers and their patients and make it possible for health centers to continue expanding to meet the primary care needs of millions of newly insured Americans.

Letter to Speaker John Boehner and Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, 11/2013 – This letter urged both recipients permanently to replace the flawed Medicare sustainable growth rate formula with a system that rewards health care quality and helps control costs.

Letter urging the Budget Conference Committee to allow the negotiation of Medicare Part D drug prices, 11/2013 – The Veterans Administration currently negotiates with drug companies on the price it pays for veterans’ prescription drugs, paying 40 percent less than Medicare Part D each year for commonly prescribed drugs. Simultaneously, the federal government wastes billions of taxpayer dollars paying full retail prices for Medicare Part D prescription drugs. This bill would end that waste.

PROTECTING VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I support efforts to improve benefits for our current and past service members. Now more than ever, we must provide for the men and women who are willing to sacrifice for their country. We must ensure their health and prosperity not just while they serve, but when they return to civilian life. Our troops put their lives at risk to protect us. As a nation we have to honor the sacrifice that our troops and their military families make by ensuring the health and prosperity of current and former soldiers and service members.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

VA Claims, Operations and Records Efficiency Act – This bill, which became law, directs the Department of Defense to provide complete service-treatment records to the Department of Veterans Affairs in an efficient electronic format. The average veteran waits more than 250 days for a decision on a claim. About 175 days of that time is the VA waiting for the Pentagon to send the complete records, which DOD currently processes on paper rather than electronically.

Preference for Local Veteran Contractors Act – This bill adds local businesses to the VA list of preferences to ensure they have an opportunity to serve their community. Many veteran men and women open businesses when they return home, through which they hope to give back to other veterans and to their community. While preferences are currently given to veterans who meet certain criteria for contracts, many of our local veteran-owned businesses are unable to compete for these contracts. This bill would close that loophole.

Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund Act – This bill creates a Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund and a check-off box on the annual federal tax return form that would allow taxpayers to make a voluntary contribution in the amount of their choice to this fund.

Equality Discharge Review Act – This bill ensures that members of the armed forces who served honorably, but were discharged and given a punitive discharge classification solely because of their sexual orientation, have their records corrected to reflect their honorable service. This will allow them to access benefits normally given to our veterans, including health and burial rights. It also guarantees that same sex couples in the military have the same freedoms to engage in their relationships as partners of the opposite sex.

Military Spouse Job Continuity Act – This bill offers a tax credit up to \$500 to any military spouse who has to renew or transfer a professional license due to a PCS order that takes him or her across state lines.

Veterans Education Flexibility Act – This bill allows our service members and veterans who were eligible for the VEAP, MGIB-AD, or Post-9/11 GI Bill to get the education and job training they have earned, at a pace that makes sense for the modern workforce. Caring for our veterans is far more than thanking them for their service. We must do what we can to provide our veterans with the skills and training they need to fill both the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Veteran Employment Transition Act – This bill allows employers to claim a new, streamlined \$2,400 credit when they hire a recently discharged veteran. In addition, like the President's Fiscal Year 2014 budget, this legislation makes the existing veteran Work Opportunity Tax Credits permanent.

Wounded Veteran Job Security Act – This bill clarifies the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and ensures that our veterans are not discriminated against in the workplace for time spent receiving treatment for injuries caused by their service.

Veteran Pensions Protection Act – Under current law, if a veteran is seriously injured in an accident or is the victim of a theft and subsequently receives insurance compensation to cover expenses or the cost of pain and suffering, he or she will likely lose his or her pension. This bill closes that loophole.

Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act – This bill provides veterans with the training and assistance they need at a time when 13.1 percent of post-9/11 veterans are unemployed. By equipping veterans with the skills they need to succeed in today's workforce and helping them

get small businesses off the ground, this bill helps the American men and women who served by providing them with future opportunities.

Veterans Education Equity Act – Current law unintentionally allots more education funds to veterans enrolled in private colleges than those in public institutions. This bill ends that preference, helping more than 20,000 veterans who are paying for school out of pocket despite being promised full funding for their college education.

Veteran Spouses Equal Treatment Act – This simple legislation would remove the current, discriminatory definition of “spouse” as someone “of the opposite sex,” ensuring equal treatment for all veteran spouses. For far too long, the so-called *Defense of Marriage Act* denied legally married same-sex couples access to federal benefits, including those provided by the VA. Recent Supreme Court decisions have sent a clear message that all Americans, gay or straight, are entitled to equal protection under the law.

Pay as You Rate Act – This bill requires the Veterans Administration to pay specific portions of veterans’ benefits claims as they are reviewed, rather than in a lump sum at the completion of the entire claim. This expedites the process for veterans seeking to receive the benefits they have earned.

Veteran Excellence Through (VET) Education Act – This bill provides academic and related support services for enrolled veterans to achieve their educational and career goals. As our men and women in uniform return home from war, many will have to make decisions regarding their career paths. For some veterans, embarking on a new civilian career often requires additional training and education.

Veterans E-Health and Telemedicine Support Act – This bill would allow Veterans Affairs health professionals, including contractors, to practice telemedicine across state borders if they are qualified and practice within the scope of their authorized federal duties. It removes outdated location requirements and helps veterans – especially those suffering from deployment-related mental health conditions – get the help they need.

Women Veterans and Other Health Improvements Act – This bill gives veterans with service-connected disabilities access to in vitro fertilization and adoption assistance. It would also expand services specifically designed for the care of women veterans. Severely injured veterans have already paid too high a price in service to our nation. They should not have to pay a higher cost to have a family.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to President Obama asking him to prioritize and get directly involved with ending the VA backlog crisis, 05/2013

Letter to military academies urging a change in the culture surrounding the sexual assault epidemic, 07/2013 – This letter urged the academies to adopt policies that will prevent sexual assault, protect victims, and fully prosecute perpetrators.

Letter to the VA on Military Sexual Trauma, 12/2013 – This letter urged the VA to improve its training, oversight, transparency, and record keeping in order to end discrimination against military sexual trauma-related PTSD claims. Many survivors seeking compensation for the impact of sexual trauma on their mental health face bureaucratic hurdles and long delays that we argued should be eliminated.

EQUAL PAY AND EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Women shouldn't be a political issue all by themselves, but some lawmakers have chosen to make birth control, equal pay, workplace treatment and more into major political battles. I'm as committed as ever to supporting equal treatment for women, whether it's at home, at the office, in the hospital or anywhere else.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act – This bill contains a number of long overdue updates that have been recommended by law enforcement, religious, legal, education, and service professionals who work with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. I'm proud to be an original cosponsor of this important bill.

Paycheck Fairness Act – This bill is a modest, common-sense solution to the lingering problem of pay inequity. Pay discrimination in the workplace is real. Women are nearly half of the workforce, but still earn only about 77 percent of what men earn.

International Violence Against Women Act – This important legislation creates a comprehensive strategy to combat violence against women and girls abroad through the use and coordination of current resources and efforts. It has been estimated that 1 in 3 women globally will be beaten, raped, mutilated or otherwise abused during their lifetimes. This bill is a serious attempt to prevent much of that abuse through education, training and other measures.

Women's Preventative Health Awareness Campaign Act – This bill provides for the planning and implementation of a national public outreach and education campaign to raise public awareness about women's preventive health services. Unfortunately, women are increasingly forgoing the preventive healthcare they need.

MOMS for the 21st Century Act – This bill creates a national focus on maternity services, expands federal research on best maternity practices, and supports the education of a more culturally diverse interdisciplinary maternity care workforce.

Improving the Juvenile Justice System for Girls Act – This bill amends the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act to include evidence-based, gender-responsive programs. Research clearly shows that gender-aware trauma care and trauma-specific services are the most effective means of preventing juvenile offenses and reducing recidivism.

Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act – This bill focuses on identifying strategies for the primary prevention of breast cancer and identifying methods to prevent breast cancer metastasis. The bill creates a commission comprising the best minds in biomedical research, business, breast cancer advocacy and other disciplines to recommend best practices in breast cancer prevention.

Supporting Working Moms Act – **This bill** promotes breastfeeding by removing common obstacles to breastfeeding and expressing milk in the workplace that many women face. Scientific studies show babies who are breastfed the first six months of life have a greatly reduced risk for acute and chronic disease.

Security and Financial Empowerment Act – **This bill** promotes financial stability and personal security for women and victims of abuse in several ways. Under current law, victims of domestic violence are often forced to choose between their personal safety and their financial security. Abusers often exploit the financial dependence of their victims by stalking or attacking them at their place of employment.

Violence Against Immigrant Women Act – This bill increases protections for battered immigrant women whose immigration status or lack of status makes them particularly vulnerable to crimes of domestic and sexual violence.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, 02/2013 – This bill urges HHS to include contraception as a Women’s Preventive Health service, requiring it to be provided without additional out-of-pocket costs. The passage of Women’s Preventive Health Services as part of the Affordable Care Act nearly three years ago provided an incredible opportunity to extend critical health care services to all women.

LGBT EQUALITY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

It’s long past time for U.S. policies to recognize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans as equal under the law. Their school studies, their relationships, their careers and their family lives have been used as political weapons for far too long. I’m proud to help lead the fight

in Congress to end discrimination and make sure no American suffers or loses an opportunity because of who he or she is.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Employment Non-Discrimination Act – This important bill prohibits discrimination in hiring and employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity by employers with at least 15 employees. Outdated arguments against this sort of equal treatment are slowly losing ground, and I believe some version of ENDA will become law in the near future. Until then, I'm going to remain one of its proudest champions in Congress.

Respect for Marriage Act – This bill repeals the *Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) of 1996* and provides certainty for all married couples with regard to federal obligations and benefits. Before DOMA, the federal government worked cooperatively with the states to ensure the stability and welfare of American families by recognizing couples married under state law as married for federal purposes as well. The federal government has no business discriminating against gay couples or family members.

Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act – This bill ensures that LGBT federal employees have access to the same basic rights and benefits enjoyed by all of our nation's dedicated civil servants.

Family and Medical Leave Inclusion Act – This bill allows an employee to take unpaid leave from work if his or her same-sex spouse or domestic partner has a serious health condition. It also permits employees to take FMLA leave to care for a parent-in-law, adult child, sibling, grandchild or grandparent if that person has a serious health condition.

Social Security Equality Act – This bill extends Social Security benefits – spousal, survivor, and death – to same-sex couples.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Inclusion Act – This bill helps LGBT youth, who are disproportionately represented among the homeless youth population, by amending the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to ensure that young sexual and gender minority Americans receive culturally competent social services.

Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act – This bill ensures that LGBT Federal employees have access to the same basic rights and benefits enjoyed by the rest of our nation's dedicated civil servants.

Freedom from Discrimination in Credit Act – This bill amends the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to prohibit discrimination in the provision of credit based on sexual or gender identity.

Recognize ALL Families During National Adoption Month Resolution – This resolution celebrates the contributions of LGBT adoptive parents and recognizes the current barriers for loving parents who want to start a family.

Stop Harming Our Kids Resolution – This resolution expresses the sense of Congress that efforts by mental health practitioners to change an individual's sexual orientation are dangerous and harmful and should be prohibited from being practiced on minors. Therapy aimed at “curing” or changing a young person’s sexual orientation should not be promoted or attempted.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to the State Department on protecting LGBT individuals internationally, 06/2013 – In recent years, the global community has made major progress in the legal recognition of rights for members of the LGBT population. Unfortunately, as the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012 indicate, criminal penalties, institutional discrimination, and widespread violence against the LGBT community remain far too common in much of the world. This letter urged more U.S. involvement in helping to end that cycle.

Letter to President Obama, 07/2013 – This letter calls on President Obama to quickly and fairly implement the Supreme Court’s ruling in *United States v. Windsor* that struck down Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

Letter of support to the International Olympic Committee declaring Russia’s anti-LGBT laws antithetical to Olympic principles, 10/2013 – This letter outlines why my colleagues and I believe Russia is not honoring the Olympic Charter and asks it to follow the Charter non-discrimination policy.

QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Education is critical to the economic well-being of our country and the future prosperity of our children. We can no longer accept a broken system in which roughly 30 percent of eighth grade students have basic reading and math skills. Since coming to Congress, I have emphasized a strong commitment to making quality education available at all stages of a person's life and career. Investing in our education system is the best thing we can do for our country. I value my membership on the House Education and Workforce Committee as a unique opportunity to help define education policy at the federal level.

The United States has always stood for the principle that all people should be given an equal opportunity to succeed. There is no greater equalizer or gateway to equity than education. Educational equity is a fundamental test of our democracy.

The federal government began strong investments in education in the 1960s, motivated largely by the visible inequities in education across the country. The goal then was to improve access to quality education for the poor and communities of color. This remains one of our greatest federal responsibilities. We must do all we can to improve outcomes in each of these areas.

Early Childhood Education – High-quality early education is one of the most important opportunities we can give our children. A solid early learning foundation helps children succeed in school, helps our nation compete in a global market, and raises the standard of living for all Americans. Today 70 percent of families with children include two working parents or one unmarried working parent. Working parents need access to good early education and child care for their children.

Elementary and Secondary Education – We must fundamentally reform the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by removing many of the harmful elements of the failed No Child Left Behind law. There is broad agreement that the law is outdated and is preventing schools from making the improvements needed to benefit students. Unfortunately, Republicans have mostly offered partisan legislation that does not live up to our nation’s commitment to serve all of our children. An updated ESEA should ensure high-quality education for all children, help schools meet the unique needs of their particular communities, and improve support for middle grades and high schools to prevent dropouts and recover students who have dropped out.

Higher Education and Occupational Training – The rising cost of college tuition is squeezing millions of students and families who rely on affordable public education. We have a fundamental responsibility to ensure that higher education is accessible to every student who wants to pursue it. Nothing is gained by having unmanageable school-related debt. We also have a responsibility to improve access to higher education for people of color and low-income students, who are currently underrepresented at the college and university level. We also need to improve access to workforce and professional training for individuals beyond school age and those already in the workforce. Available programs should run the gamut from adult basic education and language literacy programs to specialized training for high-level skills. Adult basic education and remedial education can help adults and families get basic literacy and education skills to make them self-sufficient and able to find jobs.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

High-quality early education provides an important opportunity for long-term academic success. It is also, unfortunately, an area with glaring economic inequities.

The first few years of life are critical for a child’s cognitive development and learning. Many studies have shown long-term benefits for children exposed to high-quality early care and education programs. Children placed in well-run pre-kindergarten programs are less likely to drop out of school, repeat grades, or require special education than their peers not exposed to the same programs. By making early education available to every American child, we can help ensure that our children acquire the fundamental skills they need to succeed in school.

As a member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, I am committed to universal early education programs, family literacy, and support services for preschool.

Legislation I Have Introduced

Families Learning and Understanding English Together (FLUEnT) Act – I introduced the FLUEnT Act to improve family bilingual education support and emphasize English language acquisition. I am a strong supporter of family literacy programs such as Even Start, a program Congress stopped funding despite its economic and educational importance. Making such programs available helps young children develop learning skills early, aids parents in language acquisition and fluency, and promotes parents as teachers of their children.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring and Programs I Support

The Strong Start for America's Children Act of 2013 – This early childhood education proposal is a 10-year initiative to expand and improve early learning opportunities for children up to age five. The bill would fund preschool for four-year-old children from families earning below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and encourage states to spend their own funds to support preschool for young children with family incomes above that level.

Head Start – Head Start has been the premiere early education program in this country for more than 40 years, serving more than 20 million children and families. Its goal is to help children from low-income families reach kindergarten ready to succeed. It provides working families with comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to help their children acquire the critical skills they need to succeed once they enter school. Head Start is a critical part of this country's effort to combat the effects of poverty and give children the opportunity and skills they need to thrive.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Our country faces a dropout crisis. When 25 percent of our students—including almost 40 percent of our black and Hispanic students—fail to graduate high school on time, we know that not all our students are receiving the high-quality education they deserve. One in 5 public school students is Latino. Yet almost half of Hispanic students never receive their high school diplomas. Many students graduate high school without the necessary skills to enter higher education or the workforce. We are failing our children if we do not reverse this dangerous trend immediately.

The No Child Left Behind law, which remains in effect, has hurt schools and school districts all across Southern Arizona. I have had many opportunities to hear from educators and school leaders about the current law. It has been clear for many years that changes are needed.

Tucson city-based schools have different needs than schools in Nogales, Yuma, Ajo or Sells. Our policy should reflect this diversity rather than try to force each school into the same unworkable model. Having said that, educational success everywhere depends on having well-prepared, qualified, and effective teachers, leaders and other support professionals. Programs that train, develop, and support these professions must be integral to elementary and secondary education.

Studies prove that a student's experience in middle school is critical in determining the likelihood that he or she graduates from high school, goes to college, and successfully enters the workforce. Career and college readiness can be significantly improved when students develop successful habits in the upper elementary grades and in middle school. Yet middle school

funding is continually overlooked, leaving many middle schools without the resources their students need. This problem is especially apparent in low-income communities and middle schools with a majority of African American or Latino students, where disparities in resources are especially apparent and dropout rates are disgracefully high.

High schools also need significant support and accountability to help our children succeed. Currently 2,000 low-performing schools – 12 percent of all high schools – generate almost half the nation’s dropouts. While we focus on raising the level of accountability and resources in high schools across the nation, we must place a special emphasis on the schools struggling the most. Every child, no matter where he or she is born or attends school, should be able to graduate high school with the skills to succeed.

It is time to eliminate the harmful aspects of the No Child Left Behind law and transform our commitment to elementary and secondary education to ensure fair accountability, provide local flexibility, and guarantee the support and resources that schools and students need to succeed.

Legislation I Have Introduced

Success in the Middle Act – I introduced the Success in the Middle Act to ensure that federal funds are available to help middle grades develop an academically rigorous curriculum and identify and support struggling students. This will help prepare students for college and career readiness and address the foundations of the dropout crisis at the point when students usually begin to fall behind.

PRIDE Act – In order to address the needs of students in ethnically diverse communities, I introduced the PRIDE Act to expand access to and support for dual-language educational programs. Dual-language educational programs are especially important for children in low-income and ethnically diverse communities. The PRIDE Act supports dual-language programs for children between preschool and fifth grade to ensure that they have the same proficiency as their English-only peers.

Strengthening Kids’ Interest in Learning and Libraries (SKILLS) Act – Sustaining modern school libraries is one of my top priorities. I cosponsor the SKILLS Act because it supplies every library in our nation’s schools with a qualified school librarian, helping our students understand the value of libraries and lifelong learning opportunities.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring and Programs I Support

Safe Schools Improvement Act – This bill helps schools and school districts improve anti-bullying and anti-harassment initiatives. Unsafe schools, including those that feature daily bullying and harassment, are a major contributor to the dropout problem. Reducing bullying and improving students’ sense of safety will increase school attendance and improve the learning environment.

Keeping All Students Safe Act – This bill puts in place minimum safety standards to prevent the inappropriate use of seclusion and restraint in our nation’s schools, which today disproportionately affect students with disabilities and students of color.

Student Support Act – This bill amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to provide matching grants to states so that additional school-based mental health and student service providers may be hired, thereby reducing student-to-provider ratios in elementary and secondary schools.

Graduation Promise Act – The Graduation Promise Act provides support similar to that from the Success in the Middle Act for high school students preparing for careers and college. To address low-performing high schools, the Graduation Promise Act creates a federal-state-local school reform partnership to support improvement in low-performing schools across the country.

Student Non-Discrimination Act – Our schools ought to demonstrate our nation’s values of equality and opportunity. The Student Non-Discrimination Act preserves these values by prohibiting schools from ignoring harassing behavior toward students based on their sexual orientation or gender identity and prohibiting discrimination on the same bases. This bill responds to the alarming increase in teen suicide by ensuring that schools remain a safe, welcoming space for every student to learn.

No Child Left Inside Act – The No Child Left Inside Act places emphasis on environmental education in the classroom curriculum. This legislation encourages teachers to incorporate hands-on field investigations and lessons on environmental issues like global warming and pollution. Teaching children about the environment helps them build a greater appreciation for the world and prepares them for the jobs of the future.

Keep Teachers Teaching Act – This bill allows states and school districts to use Title II federal grants to develop innovative teacher retention programs targeting new teachers, veteran teachers, and other important categories. The greatest strength of our education system is the dedicated group of men and women who teach our children. Yet when it comes to ensuring that teachers have the resources and support they need to remain in the classroom, our nation has fallen woefully short.

Hawkins Centers of Excellence – The Hawkins Centers of Excellence promote and develop teaching professionals at minority-serving institutions. The overall goal is to increase the diversity of the teaching profession and to encourage local teachers to remain in their communities. I worked hard with my colleagues to ensure that this program was passed as part of the most recently passed Higher Education Act. We must ensure that this program is fully funded in the coming year.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING

The jobs of today and tomorrow require some degree of post-secondary education. We have a responsibility to ensure that post-secondary programs and institutions are affordable. Over the past several years, our colleges and universities have been deeply hurt by state budget cuts. I

have worked hard to secure access to loans, Pell Grants and support services for students throughout the district to help offset these losses.

I am also working to develop and fund support for community colleges throughout Southern Arizona, both in the development and construction of programs to help them respond to the needs of the local economy and in providing resources to train and prepare our community for job opportunities. I have worked to help develop and strengthen workforce training programs through adult education. Unfortunately, many of these efforts have been blocked by the elimination of state programs that would allow federal funds to reach Arizona.

Job training is a fundamental part of overall job growth and the long-term economic health of our community. Job training often makes an individual better prepared for employment and creates a more robust workforce to aid employers. Training can take the form of adult basic education, technical education, certification, or updating individual skills to meet the needs of emerging fields.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring and Programs I Support

Post 9/11 GI Bill Payment Restoration Act – Preserving our commitment to our veterans is essential. The Post 9/11 GI Bill Payment Restoration Act ensures that student veterans do not lose their GI Bill money as a result of modifications in the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Pell Grants – Successful job growth requires broad access to high-quality and affordable higher education. I have long supported increased funds for Pell Grants to low-income students. We saved taxpayers billions of dollars last Congress by transforming the student loan system to a direct loan format that saves students and parents money. We need to ensure those funds are used to promote our economic growth through access to education.

Community College Program Development Grants – I am working to help community colleges provide affordable training in emerging fields and accommodate a growing need for post-secondary education in Southern Arizona. Adequate community college funding is part of that effort.

Improving Community College Capacity - I continue to support competitive grants to build community college and business partnerships and to provide funds for renovating and upgrading facilities. Improved facilities and modern classrooms help prepare our workforce for life after school.

STEM - The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education component of the America COMPETES Act, which became law with my support in 2010, supports America's technological and scientific progress. This support is key to a competitive economy and helps maintain our position as a global economic leader. STEM resources from the American COMPETES Act are vital to our economic future.

TRIO/GEAR UP – The Department of Education's TRIO and Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) programs help first-generation and non-

traditional college students receive the support they need to succeed academically and complete higher education programs. These programs must be strengthened to meet the needs of the next generation of college students.

Protecting Financial Aid for Student and Taxpayers Act – This bill prohibits the use of federal educational assistance funds to advertise, attract prospective students, and other activities the Secretary of Education may find inappropriate. This ensures that dollars meant to go toward education don't end up padding the bottom line.

Promoting Partnership to Transform Opportunities Act – This bill provides funds to allow collaborative efforts among nonprofit organizations with minority-serving institutions to provide support services, job training, and education to individuals.

Fast Track to College Act – This bill creates grants for local educational agencies that partner with institutions of higher education to establish dual enrollment programs, such as high schools that allow students to earn credit simultaneously toward a postsecondary degree or certificate.

Workforce Investment Act – This bill would improve the nation's workforce investment infrastructure, focusing on finding workers jobs and careers through strategic partnerships with employers, community colleges, labor organizations and non-profits.

Student Loan Relief Act – This bill reduces the cost of textbooks at U.S. colleges and universities by expanding the use of free online academic materials.

Native American Indian Education Act – This bill will allow the Secretary of Education to cover the out-of-state tuition costs of Native American students at four-year Native American-serving nontribal institutions of higher education if those schools are required to provide a tuition-free education.

FOREIGN POLICY



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Whether we look just over our own borders or thousands of miles away, we need policies that improve our relationships with other countries and make us stronger as a nation in the world community. We've seen the disastrous human cost of starting wars with no end in sight.

As we work to make the twenty-first century a success story of peace and stability, we don't just need to make better decisions – we need to update our perspective on the rest of the world. Our foreign and immigration policy has to focus right now on two main areas:

Afghanistan Peace and Security – If we want to bring peace to this troubled nation, we need to lend material assistance in building basic infrastructure and help poor communities establish the roads, schools, hospitals and police stations they need. We also need to let local decision-making reassert itself wherever possible. The central government is weak because it has no constituency.

Peace and Security Abroad – The U.S. must send an unequivocal message that we respect the right of all people to protest undemocratic governments and demand accountability from their leaders. It is in the security interest of the United States, as well as a moral imperative, to ensure that peaceful protesters and citizens calling for democracy are not shot, gassed or otherwise attacked with weapons made in America. We need real diplomacy before the shooting starts, and that means cultural and social exchanges and an investment in peace-building. Building up the military to unsustainable levels is not a foreign policy.

AFGHANISTAN PEACE AND SECURITY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I am proud to have urged a quick military exit from Afghanistan from the beginning. It is easy after years of military and civilian casualties and hundreds of billions of dollars we couldn't afford to say we should bring our troops home. It was harder in 2003 to stand up to hawkish rhetoric and ask, "What are we really doing here?"

Thanks to hundreds of years of foreign invasions, Afghans share a deep-seated mistrust of outside military powers and were never eager for us to stay. Our policies and war planning never accounted for this – an expensive blunder we can never make again. The damage to the U.S. economy, and to Afghanistan as a whole, has been tremendous. The nearly \$700 billion cost to our country has been a drag on an entire generation growing up with unnecessarily limited economic prospects.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Responsible End to the War in Afghanistan Act – This bill limits war funding to the safe and orderly withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan.

No More Ghost Money Act – This bill prohibits illegal payments to foreign officials and requires a report on payments made by the CIA to employees, officers, and elected officials of the Government of Afghanistan.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter expressing serious concern about refugee conditions around Kabul, 01/2013 – This letter urged international cooperation to ensure that the immediate humanitarian needs of displaced Afghan citizens living in temporary settlements are met, and to find a durable solution for the men, women, and children living in the settlements.

Letter to President Obama requesting a women's rights support strategy in Afghanistan, 06/2013 – This letter urges the president to work with Congress to develop and implement a plan to support women's rights throughout Afghanistan. Women and girls there still face high levels of violence and significantly fewer legal rights.

PEACE AND SECURITY ABROAD

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

From the ongoing war in Syria to the need for disaster relief around the world to concerns about drone spying overseas, Congress has needed to show leadership it hasn't always shown. My first priority is to make sure our foreign policy reflects on us creditably as a country and as a people – not by making enormous shows of force, but by demonstrating our honesty and goodwill whenever and wherever we can. My legislative agenda reflects the need for us to maintain our global position as an honest broker for peaceful outcomes.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Drones Accountability Act – This bill brings accountability and transparency to the lethal use of drones. It prevents the CIA from operating lethal drones, requires the Pentagon to report to Congress on protections to safeguard civil liberties, human rights, and innocent civilians, calls for a moratorium on the lethal use of drones until Congress has approved sufficient safeguards, and requires the administration to provide legal opinions providing advice on lethal use of force.

Global Food Security Act – Among other features, this bill directs the president to develop a comprehensive multi-agency strategy focused on improving nutrition, strengthening agriculture development by ensuring smallholder farmers' access to inputs and training, and investing in farm-to-market capacity to strengthen local markets.

Assessing Progress in Haiti Act – This bill increases accountability and transparency in the aid process, ensuring that aid dollars go to the people who need help the most.

Business Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act – This bill raises awareness for consumers who want to know where and how their goods are being made. It requires companies to report to the Securities and Exchange Commission what they are doing to rid their supply chains of human slavery and post this information on their websites. Through increased transparency in supply chains, we can help to bring to light the 12.3 million people working in some form of forced labor worldwide.

Refugee Resettlement Reform and Modernization Act – This bill establishes zero-cost reforms to improve the refugee resettlement program. The U.S. has long played a prominent role in assisting with the resettlement of refugees who have been forced to flee their home country because of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, or political affiliation.

Resolution laying out non-military options the United States can pursue in Syria – The Assad regime must be held accountable for human rights violations. I do not believe that an American military response is the best or only way to achieve that outcome. Our policy should focus on working with the United Nations and the international community to facilitate a negotiated political settlement that holds all responsible parties accountable for their actions. This Resolution lays out options such as:

- 1) requiring the Government of Syria to allow unfettered access to humanitarian organizations;

- 2) pressuring all internal and external parties to participate urgently and constructively in the Geneva process and other negotiations and regional arrangements with the League of Arab States and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation;
- 3) seeking to strengthen and coordinate multilateral sanctions targeted against the assets of Assad;
- 4) investigating and prosecuting crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law, including appropriately-timed International Criminal Court referral;
- 5) working with member states of the Chemical Weapons Convention;
- 6) working with the international community to establish a Syrian war crimes tribunal; and
- 7) enabling United States courts to investigate and prosecute crimes against humanity and other crimes under international law committed in Syria.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, 01/2013 – This letter asked Secretary Napolitano to her authority to extend humanitarian parole to the nearly six thousand Syrian nationals with approved immigrant petitions. This would allow Syrians who have been waiting for a visa to reunite with their family members in the U.S. to do so without further delay.

Letter commending USAID for its National Action Plan on Children in Adversity, 02/2013 – The Action Plan is a result of legislation that called for a comprehensive, coordinated, and effective response by the U.S. government to the world's most vulnerable children.

Letter to President Obama urging U.S. diplomatic efforts in Iran, 07/2013 – This letter urged the president to pursue all diplomatic means necessary to ensure that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon. The letter highlights the opportunity presented by Iran's recent presidential election to reinvigorate U.S. efforts to secure a negotiated nuclear agreement.

Letter urging Secretary of State John Kerry to express neutrality in El Salvador's election, 11/2013 – Scheduled for February 2, 2014, the next presidential election in El Salvador will be the first time in the country's history in which Salvadorans living outside of the country will be able to participate by absentee ballot. The fairness of the process and the impartiality of outside powers is essential to cementing the rule of law and the legitimacy of the next elected government.

Letter to Obama on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), 10/2013 – The Trans-Pacific Partnership is a large trade agreement being negotiated right now that will have as big an impact on the U.S. and regional economies as NAFTA. Continued lack of adequate congressional consultation in many areas of the proposed pact is deeply worrisome. The United States cannot afford another trade agreement that replicates the mistakes of the past. We are deeply committed to transforming U.S. trade policy into a tool for creating and retaining family-wage jobs in America, safeguarding the environment, maintaining consumer protection and improving the quality of life throughout the country.

Letter to USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah supporting promoting health care as a core human right, 12/2013 – This letter asked the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to place particular focus on supporting adolescent girls, who face unique challenges in accessing reproductive and sexual health information and care.

Letter to UN Ambassador Samantha Power on cholera in Haiti, 12/2013 – This letter urged the U.S. Mission in Haiti to intensify its efforts to get the United Nations to accept responsibility for its role in creating the cholera outbreak in Haiti and to remedy the situation in a timely and comprehensive manner.

Letter to secretaries Kerry and Hagel on protecting women and children in the Philippines, 12/2013 – This letter was sent amidst typhoon relief and recovery efforts. In many post-disaster situations, violence against women and children rises dramatically. We stressed the need for specialized protection of women and girls in the wake of the impact of Super Typhoon Haiyan.

Letter to Secretary Hagel and Administrator Shah, 12/2013 – This letter urged support for the people in the hardest-hit areas of the Philippines through airdrops of humanitarian supplies after Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda. Airdrops have previously delivered millions of food packages in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Haiti, and Pakistan.

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Congress has a responsibility to promote a clean and healthy environment. Unfortunately, 2013 under the Republican majority in the House of Representatives was more about holding the line than advancing new protections. In the face of constant anti-environment votes offered by the conservative majority, I stuck by the principles that brought me to Congress and voted for a sustainable future for Arizona and the entire country.

In my role as the top Democrat on the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulations, I've had the honor of helping to set policy and manage the millions of acres of federal lands and waters that make up the American landscape. I've spent the past year especially focusing on improving access to public lands, especially for underserved communities. My work on the environment can be broken down into four broad categories:

Enhancing America's Public Lands – One of my top priorities is making sure American taxpayers are able to enjoy the land held in the public trust and ensuring they get fair value for the resources private companies extract from that land.

Preserving Arizona – One of my greatest responsibilities is promoting the responsible stewardship of the environment and natural resources throughout our state.

Climate Change and Renewable Energy – We have to provide good economic conditions for investment in renewable energy and take other steps to end our dependence on fossil fuels.

Clean Air and Water – If we want to leave a livable world behind for our children, we have to provide clean air, clean water and a clean environment for all Americans.

ENHANCING AMERICA'S PUBLIC LANDS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I continue to press Congress for the funding necessary to maintain and improve our public lands. In 2013 I signed letters to key policymakers that called for funding for important conservation initiatives and for adequate funds for the nation's wildlife refuges, among other projects.

Beyond funding conservation efforts, we have to make sure American taxpayers get fair value for resources extracted from public lands. Billions of dollars in resources are removed from publicly owned land in the United States each year, but little of that money goes to the public treasury. Because of the antiquated Mining Law of 1872, taxpayers receive no federal royalties on the value of "hardrock" minerals, including gold and copper, extracted from the thousands of mines operating on land owned by the U.S. government.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

National Heritage Area Act of 2013 – This bill, introduced by Rep. Charlie Dent (R-Pa.), establishes a coherently managed system of National Heritage Areas around the country. The National Heritage Area program is one of the Department of the Interior's most cost-effective initiatives, relying on a public-private partnership. In addition to creating jobs, NHAs generate valuable revenue for local governments and sustain communities through heritage tourism.

Oil Pollution Research and Development Program Authorization Act – This bill will update the authorized level of funding for oil spill response research and development and strengthen federal interagency coordination. As long as we continue to extract, use, or transport oil there will be some risk of oil spills along our shores. This bill will help us be better prepared.

Safe Hydration is an American Right in Energy Development (SHARED) Act – This bill says that if you're going to frack, you need to report to the public the impacts of that activity on water quality. It requires drilling companies to test water sources within a half-mile radius of a hydraulic fracturing site (or a mile, if no site is available within a half-mile). The results of that testing would be made available to the public through a new and regularly updated database.

Community Parks Revitalization Act – This bill authorizes federal matching grants to help communities develop or redevelop needed park and recreation infrastructure. It provides an opportunity for the federal government to stimulate local economic development, help fix our crumbling infrastructure, and promote better public health.

Yosemite National Park Boundary Expansion Act – This bill adds approximately 1,600 acres of forest to Yosemite National Park. The inclusion of these lands within Yosemite will be critical to saving money for local communities and preserving the integrity of one of our nation's most celebrated places.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to the State Department on the Portland-Montreal Pipeline, 02/2013 – The existing pipeline, which runs between Portland, Maine, and Montreal via New Hampshire and Vermont, is decades old and designed to carry traditional crude oil. This letter was sent in response to a plan to repurpose the pipeline to carry tar sands instead. Transportation of heavier and more acidic tar sands crude poses a much higher risk of spills and other pipeline problems. This letter called on the administration to require a new presidential permit and full Environmental Impact Statement before the plan is allowed to move forward.

Letter urging Interior Secretary Sally Jewell to improve the traceability of fracking fluid, 07/2013 – Where fracking fluid ends up and whether it reaches water supplies are key questions for human health and the environment. There may be a cheap and dependable way to answer those questions: unique identification tracers. Mixing a very small amount of inert tracer with fracking fluid before use means it can be tested for afterward to find where the other fluids ended up. This will make it easier to protect aquifers, wells, reservoirs, streams, and lakes.

Letter to the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service on the Tongass National Forest, 09/2013 – This letter urged federal officials to refocus limited agency resources on a quick transition plan away from logging old growth in the Tongass National Forest and to support a more sustainable economy based on long-term forest management of second-growth forests, watershed restoration, fishing, tourism, and recreation.

Letter to Secretary Jewell on a potential lease sale in the Chukchi Sea, 11/2013 – This letter urged the Department of the Interior (DOI) to forgo new oil leasing in the Arctic Ocean until improved safety regulations and environmental protections are in place. DOI's 2012-2017 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program includes three Arctic lease sales. In 2012, Shell's attempts to drill in the Arctic were characterized by numerous problems and highlighted the difficulties associated with operating in a harsh and unpredictable Arctic environment.

CONSERVING ARIZONA

Legislation I Have Introduced

Great Bend of the Gila National Monument Establishment Act – This bill will establish federal protection for cultural and historical areas considered sacred by many tribes in Arizona and the Southwest. I have been working closely with local stakeholders and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to establish a national monument recognizing some of the most sensitive and historically important Native American sites in the country yet to receive any federal designation. The proposed monument would protect rock art currently subject to graffiti and would boost culturally based tourism throughout Southern Arizona.

Arizona Sonoran Desert Heritage Act – This bill creates two new national conservation areas in Arizona to protect the environmental and historical integrity of the Sonoran Desert. These areas would be managed as part of the National Landscape Conservation System, which I was proud to

establish as a permanent feature of the Department of the Interior several years ago through legislation.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

End Polluter Welfare Act – This bill eliminates all oil, coal, and natural gas production subsidies. The measure would do away with more than \$110 billion in planned federal tax breaks, financial assistance, royalty relief, direct federal research and development, and many loopholes that benefit the fossil fuel industry. We cannot afford to give away taxpayer money to the established, highly profitable fossil fuel industry. The five largest oil companies in the U.S. earned roughly \$1 trillion in profits over the past decade. From 2002 to 2008, the federal government gave the fossil fuel industry more than \$72 billion in subsidies. That’s a waste.

Climate Change Health Protection and Promotion Act – This bill helps prepare health care professionals for the effects of climate change by enabling enhanced disease surveillance, research, communications, education, and training programs. It also requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to create a federal strategic action plan for preparing for and responding to the public health effects of climate change.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to Obama commending the Climate Action Plan, 07/2013 – People around the country and around the world are feeling the effects of climate change. The White House climate plan is a good step in the right direction.

Letter urging the EPA to finalize its Tier 3 Motor Vehicle Emission and Fuel Standards, 12/2013 – Cleaner gasoline and vehicle standards will dramatically improve public health by reducing nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, and other harmful pollutants and well-established causes of ozone pollution and particle pollution.

CLEAN AIR AND WATER

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Closing Loopholes and Ending Arbitrary and Needless Evasion of Regulations Act – This bill forces oil and gas companies and geothermal to play by the same rules as other industries. Under current federal law, oil and gas companies do not have to test their waste to see if it is toxic. This loophole leaves the public with no way of knowing what is being disposed of and how it is being treated. The bill makes sure oil and gas companies comply with existing standards and oversight.

Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act – This bill creates an EPA competitive matching grant program to help water, wastewater, and stormwater agencies undertake projects to adapt their infrastructure for future climate change impacts.

Create Clean Energy Manufacturing Jobs in America Act – This bill requires that clean energy goods and equipment used in projects purchased or paid for with federal dollars contain 85 percent American-made content. The bill also sets an 85 percent American content requirement for companies that use the Investment Tax Credit and the Production Tax Credit.

IMMIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The United States is a proud nation of immigrants. Like the generations who came before, the most recent newcomers want what all Americans want: to raise strong families, build safe communities, live their lives freely and seek new and better opportunities for their children.

Beginning in 2012, thanks to an executive order signed by President Obama, certain DREAM Act-eligible students (the children of undocumented parents who arrived here when they were very young) have been granted “deferred action” – protection from deportation – and many have been issued work permits. As of September 2013, more than 588,000 children and youth had applied for deferred action and more than 567,000 applications were approved. While deferred

action is a fair and appropriate short-term approach, it does not eliminate the need for a more thorough and permanent policy fix.

In June 2013 the U.S. Senate passed the most sweeping overhaul of U.S immigration laws in a generation. The bill, which Speaker of the House John Boehner refuses to hold a vote on, clears the way for millions of undocumented residents to pursue citizenship and attracts workers from all over the world. It also devotes an excessive amount of money and manpower to further militarizing the U.S.-Mexico border.

Our goal must be to create an immigration system that serves our economic, security and humanitarian interests. Such a system must combine border and workplace enforcement with practical reforms that promote economic growth, protect workers and reunite family members. We have to establish a realistic program that requires undocumented immigrants to register with the government and creates legal immigration channels that are flexible and curtail future undocumented immigration.

Federal immigration policy has suffered from some of the same mistakes that drew us into unwinnable wars abroad. Rather than appreciating the reasons people come here and promoting the unification of immigrant families already living in the United States, too many lawmakers have taken an “attack first” approach that has hurt our state and national economies and undermined the legitimate labor force across the country. Pointless state-level crackdowns are no substitute for real leadership.

In June 2012, the Supreme Court largely struck down SB 1070, Arizona’s unconstitutional law that many recognized as an extremist attempt to undermine our core values. We need Congressional leadership and a national fix, not freelancing ideologues who make things worse for political reasons. After years of failure and grandstanding, momentum is building for a better long-term solution.

Events I Hosted in 2013

Ad-Hoc Hearing on “Lines That Divide US: Failure to Preserve Family Unity in the Context of Immigration Enforcement at the Border” – This important hearing focused on research and evidence that suggest that current deportation practices coupled with inadequate accountability and oversight undermine the Department of Homeland Security’s commitment to preserve the unity of families. The hearing called for humane immigration practices that do not harm families either during or after the immigration enforcement and repatriation process. You can see the related report at <http://www.jesuit.org/2013/02/14/new-study-sheds-light-on-mistreatment-of-migrants-crossing-the-u-s-mexico-border/>.

Ad-Hoc Hearings in Nogales, Ariz., and in Brownsville and El Paso, Texas, on “Redefining Border Security to Include Humanitarian and Economic Security In Comprehensive Immigration Reform” – I held these hearings with my colleagues from Texas to bring attention to the voices of border communities that have been left out of the immigration reform debate. The hearing focused on the need for immigration reform that protects human rights and ends the humanitarian crisis of migrant deaths, while expanding the definition of border security to

include economic prosperity, modernizing ports of entry, and bolstering trade with Mexico, which supports 6 million American jobs.

Legislation I Have Introduced or Co-Sponsored

Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity (CIR ASAP) Act – I introduced CIR ASAP to create a common sense, progressive standard for reform and offer a model to point to as Congress continues the debate over comprehensively improving our immigration system. This legislation closely mirrors a bill House Democrats filed in 2009 that attracted 104 cosponsors. My bill provides a reasonable path to citizenship for the undocumented, a sensible cutoff date, and level-headed border improvements.

Reuniting Families Act – This bill reduces family immigration visa backlogs and promotes the humane and timely reunification of immigrant families. Family members often wait too long to be reunited with their spouses, children, and other loved ones overseas.

The Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act – This bill passed the House last Congress by a resounding bipartisan margin of 389 to 15. The legislation eliminates per-country percentage caps for employment-based visas, and increases the 7 percent cap on family-based visas to 15 percent.

The Restoring Protection to Victims of Persecution Act – This bill amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the arbitrary filing deadline that prevents refugees from having their applications for asylum adjudicated on the merits. Under current law, asylum applicants must demonstrate that the application for asylum has been filed within one year. Victims of persecution cannot always get adequate legal advice and assistance immediately upon entering a new country. My bill makes their lives easier as they pursue justice and try to improve their social and professional circumstances.

Foster Children Opportunity Act – This bill protects abused and neglected immigrant children by requiring that foster youth are screened for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) and other relief options and provided assistance in obtaining the appropriate status. It also provides technical assistance to child welfare agencies, judges, attorneys and other legal workers so they know how to help immigrant youth navigate a confusing system.

Letters I Sent, Signed or Received

Letter to Senate Leadership and the "Gang of Eight," 03/08/2013 – At the time, the Senate immigration proposal was rumored to eliminate family visa preferences for siblings and married adult children. My colleagues and I sent this letter prior to the introduction of the bill to stress the importance of protecting family unity, which is a top priority for me.

Letter urging DHS to respect the rights of undocumented parents, 03/2013 – This letter urged DHS to finalize and implement new guidance that ensures that the best interests of children are prioritized when their parents are detained or deported.

Letter to House and Senate Leadership asking that comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) ensures the protection of due process rights, civil rights and civil liberties, 03/2013 – This letter specifically asked that CIR include basic due process rights, such as requiring that those detained by immigration authorities have a fair hearing before a judge and access to counsel. My colleagues and I asked that CIR enforcement measures explicitly reject racial, religious and ethnic profiling and that all agencies involved in enforcement act transparently to the greatest possible extent.

Letter to Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Rep. John Carter and Ranking Member Rep. David E. Price, 04/2013 – This letter asked the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security to allocate \$10,000,000 in discretionary funding to immigrant integration and citizenship programs within U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The letter also asked the Subcommittee to adopt report language to reflect the importance of making naturalization services accessible and affordable for legal permanent residents.

Letter to House leadership urging respect for the compromise between the agricultural industry and labor reached in the Senate immigration bill, 05/2013 – After countless hours of negotiations and compromises from both sides, the Senate proposal provided the agriculture industry with the workforce stability it has long requested and ensured that farmworkers are treated with dignity. Our letter urged the House to follow the same path.

Letter to Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi, 09/2013 – This letter requested that any immigration reform legislation moved to the House floor include robust protections for U.S. and foreign workers, or that at a minimum Members of Congress would be given the chance to address labor issues by offering amendments to a draft bill.

Letter to U.S Customs and Border Protection, 11/25/2013 – This letter, co-signed by 21 of my House colleagues, to the Acting Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) requested a meeting to discuss the agency's use of force policies. The letter came shortly after CBP elected not to implement key conduct reforms recommended by the Police Executive Research Forum. The widely respected law enforcement policy organization had urged the agency to restrict the use of deadly force in situations involving rock throwers and people in vehicles.

Letter to President Obama, 12/05/2013 – Before the end of the year, I sent a letter along with 27 other Members of Congress to President Obama calling for a pause in deportations of residents who would be eligible for an earned pathway to citizenship under pending immigration reform proposals. You can read the letter in full at <http://1.usa.gov/1eTxVRe>.

Letter to Homeland Security Acting Secretary Rand Beers, 12/16/13 – Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-Calif.) and I, along with 37 other Members of Congress, sent a letter to then-acting Secretary of Homeland Security Rand Beers requesting a meeting to discuss the need to address dangerous deportation practices, the significant recent increase in migrant deaths, and severely inadequate short-term custody conditions. We hoped such a meeting will allow an opportunity to

discuss ways in which the agency can address these issues. The letter, available at <http://1.usa.gov/1gC37Z2>, outlines our major concerns.

Important Policy Changes That I Support

DHS Recognizes Same-Sex Marriages for Immigration Purposes – After years of resistance, the Department of Homeland Security moved amazingly fast in recognizing same-sex marriages for immigration purposes after the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Windsor* (2013) striking down Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act.

Federal Court Rules Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio and His Deputies Illegally Racially Profiled Latinos – After a trial in summer 2012, the [District Court in May 2013](#) ruled that Sheriff Joe Arpaio of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MSCO) engaged in a pattern and practice of racial profiling in immigration enforcement activities in violation of the U.S. Constitution and entered a permanent injunction barring future profiling of Latinos by the MSCO. The court [later issued a supplemental order](#) calling for a monitor, bias training, and other MSCO policy changes. This decision is a major step in putting an end to the culture of fear created by Sheriff Arpaio's illegal management style.

USCIS Issues a Memorandum on the Parole of Military Family Members – On November 15, 2013, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued a memorandum stating that, generally, it would be an appropriate exercise of discretion to grant “parole in place” to the spouses, children, and parents of active duty military personnel, reserve members, and veterans who are already physically present in the U.S. without inspection or admission. This effectively allows undocumented immigrants who are closely related to military personnel to stay in the country, providing family stability and preventing needless, destructive deportations.

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Arizona's 3rd Congressional District, is home to four sovereign tribal nations. Representing the interests of Native Americans in Southern Arizona is a major part of my job. As the relationship between the federal government and tribal nations across the country continues to evolve, it is critical to respect tribal sovereignty and engage in nation-to-nation dialogue before major federal decisions are made with lasting consequences for Native American communities.

Arizona is full of natural wonders held sacred by Native American communities, and our federal policies need to reflect that. Uranium mining near the Grand Canyon and copper mining throughout Southern Arizona are opposed by most tribal nations in these regions. The Navajo, Hopi, Hualapai and other tribal governments have banned uranium mining and processing on their lands. Each is aware of the risks to water supplies and public health posed by hardrock

mining, including the ongoing development of the Rosemont mine in the Santa Rita Mountains and the proposed Resolution Copper mine near Superior. Resolution Copper – a subsidiary of two international mining giants with troubling human rights records – seeks to build a mine adjacent to Oak Flat and Apache Leap, sites of particular cultural and religious importance to several area tribes. These projects continue to face significant tribal and popular opposition, and I have remained a proud opponent of these attempted giveaways from the beginning.

I prefer development that protects the interests of Native Americans and all Arizonans. My representation of Native American interests is guided by the following principals:

- **Sovereignty** – First and foremost, tribal nations must be recognized as sovereign entities and treated with the dignity that status deserves.
- **Consultation** – All federal actions that impact Native American land require accountable and appropriate consultation.
- **Trust Responsibility** – It is the fiduciary obligation on the part of the United States to protect tribal treaty rights, lands, assets, and resources, as well as a duty to carry out the mandates of federal law with respect to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages.
- **Level Playing Field** – Federal law must ensure that tribal communities have equal access to government programs and services.
- **Conservation** – We need to protect tribal cultural, religious and historical resources.

Legislation I Have Introduced

RESPECT Act – This bill prescribes procedures for effective Federal-tribal consultation when Federal agencies are planning activities that will have tribal impacts. President Clinton set forth a policy mandating executive agency consultation with tribes in Executive Order 13175. President Bush reaffirmed the Federal commitment to this policy in a 2004 memorandum, as did President Obama in 2009. However, Federal agencies have too often decided on a course of action and “consulted” with affected tribes by notifying those tribes of the agency decision. The RESPECT Act fills gaps in Executive Order 13175 by codifying standard consultation procedures, and by providing judicial recourse for tribes when agencies violate their consultation obligation.

Native American Suicide Prevention Act – This bill requires that any state or state sponsored organization make a reasonable effort to consult with Native American Indian Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian organizations in the crafting of and implementation of their suicide intervention and prevention strategies. This common-sense legislation would cost nothing and would not add to the deficit in any way. By simply providing tribal governments and health organizations a greater voice in the suicide prevention process, we will begin to see more effective interventions that can lower the suicide rate, and save lives both on and off the reservation.

Fair Allocation of Internal Revenue Credit for Renewable Electricity Distribution by Indian Tribes Act (FAIR CREDIT) Act – Under current federal law, if a tribal government seeks to enter into a joint venture partnership with external business partners for any renewable energy project taking place on tribal lands, the tribe cannot take advantage of the production tax credit

for renewable resources as a private landowner could, nor can it transfer its portion of the credit to its taxable partners. This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Indian Tribal governments to transfer the credit for energy produced from renewable resources to an individual with an ownership interest in a joint venture with the tribe. Renewable energy projects on tribal lands have the potential to bring much-needed economic development as well as improvement in the quality of life for many Native people.

Pascua Yaqui Tribe Trust Land Act – This bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to take two 10-acre parcels into trust for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona. Both parcels would be utilized for economic development as part of a golf course that is currently under construction.

Tohono O'odham Citizenship Act – This bill renders all enrolled members of the Tohono O'odham Nation citizens of the United States as of the date of their enrollment and to recognize the valid membership credential of the Tohono O'odham Nation as the legal equivalent of a certificate of citizenship or a State-issued birth certificate for all Federal purposes.

Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act – This bill stops the Internal Revenue Service from imposing federal income taxes on benefits tribal members receive from a wide range of tribal government programs and services, such as education scholarships, funds to attend and participate in cultural events, housing benefits, bereavement stipends, and many others.

Legislation I am Cosponsoring

Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act – This law was originally authorized in 2006 (PL 109-394) and expired in 2012. It was designed to help Native American communities preserve their traditional languages. Language preservation is a vital component of broader efforts to preserve the nuances of Native American cultural traditions that are often lost in translation. Expanding fluency in Native languages helps tribal communities preserve their cultural traditions and ensures that these languages will continue to provide meaning and values to future generations. Reauthorization of the law would allow the existing program to continue for five more years.

Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act – American Indians and Alaska Natives currently have a life expectancy of 4.1 years less than the American population at large and are 1.4 times more likely to die as a result of pneumonia or flu or during child birth. This bill amends the tax code to help health professionals who receive awards from Indian Health Service Health Professions programs by making those awards exempt from federal income tax as a way of encouraging and incentivizing their hard work.

“Clean” Carcieri fix (H.R. 666) – This bill restores the status quo prior to the decision and clarifies the Secretary’s authority to place land into trust for all tribes, regardless of the date of their federal recognition. This will bring certainty to Indian tribes throughout the United States.

Stand Against Violence and Empower (SAVE) Native Women Act – This bill empowers tribal governments to effectively respond to and prosecute domestic violence committed by non-Indians on tribal reservations. The bill also provides resources to help reduce the incidence of

violent crimes against Native American women and support survivors of abuse.

Non-Disparagement of Native American Persons or Peoples in Trademark Registration Act – This important bill clarifies certain protections provided by the Trademark Act of 1946 (Lanham Act), which prohibits registration of trademarks that use disparaging terms like “redskin.”

Native American Indian Education Act – This bill ensures that Federal funding is provided to support and sustain the long-standing Federal mandate requiring certain colleges and states, to waive in certain circumstances, tuition charges for Native American Indian students they admit to an undergraduate college program, including the waiver of tuition charges for Indian students who are not residents of the State in which the college is located.

Indian Health Service Advanced Appropriations Act – This bill allows Congress to fund the Indian Health Service (IHS) on the same advance appropriations schedule used for Veterans Administration (VA) medical accounts, securing its ability to effectively budget, recruit and deliver healthcare services, and construct and maintain facilities.

Letters I Have Signed

Letter to President Obama, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Speaker of the House John Boehner, 02/2013 – This letter expressed opposition to any funding cuts for Native American programs in any final budget agreement related to sequestration – 02/2013

Letter to the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, 02/2013 – This letter expressed serious concerns about the growing backlog of schools in need of replacement in the Bureau of Indian Education system administered by the Department of the Interior, and to request that the Subcommittee develop a funding plan to address this backlog.

Multiple letters to Washington Redskins owner Dan Snyder and NFL commissioner Roger Goodell urging a change to the team’s name, 05/2013

Letter to Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, Director of Indian Health Service (IHS), 11/2013 – This letter urged her to reopen solicitations for the successful joint venture program, through which tribes agree to build and renovate health facilities and HIS offers to fund and staff them.

Letter to House Ways and Means Chairman Camp and Ranking Member Levin, 12/2013 – This letter encouraged House lawmakers considering a reformation of the tax code to include measures that benefit American Indian tribes across the United States and that foster economic development in Indian Country.

2013

Working for You



MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK BETTER FOR YOU: HELP WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES

OVERVIEW

My job is to help constituents get the services and benefits they earn from the federal government and to attract federal economic assistance for Southern Arizona. Highlights of this year's federal grants to Southern Arizona include the following.

Grant agency	Amount
HHS	\$110,823,605
USDA	\$2,099,399
DOL	\$2,170,512
NEH	\$5,809
NEA	\$58,900
Transportation	\$865,070
Education	\$9,227,673
HUD	\$9,636,433
Energy	\$1,000,000
DOJ	\$248,819
VA SSVF	\$2,207,466
	\$136,136,220

When it comes to casework, whether it's a passport, a late Social Security check, a missed Medicare payment, an immigration paperwork request, a mortgage modification, or any other business with a federal agency, my staff and I are ready to assist. Everyone living in the Third Congressional District is entitled to as much help as we can provide. Call my Tucson office any time at (520) 622-6788, my Avondale office at (623) 536-3388 or my Somerton office at (928) 343-7933 for more information.

In 2013 we closed more than 600 cases with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs, national banks and mortgage services, and many other agencies. A breakdown by agency and county of origin is available on the next page.

SAVING YOU MONEY

My office saved Southern Arizonans more than \$6.6 million this year by recovering funds, getting checks released, preventing foreclosures and helping with agencies. This includes Social Security Administration disability claims, claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs, tax credit applications with the Internal Revenue Service, and mortgage loan modifications savings.

DOE	\$169.00
DOL	\$2,629.00
DOS	\$65.00
DOTR	\$1,366.22
Housing	\$5,663,410.00
GPO	\$2,161.25
HHS	\$35,000.00
IRS	\$77,408.45
OPM	\$71,659.96
SSA	\$141,938.38
USCIS	\$14,130.00
USDA	\$50,000.00
VA	<u>\$540,850.35</u>
Total	<u>\$6,600,787.61</u>

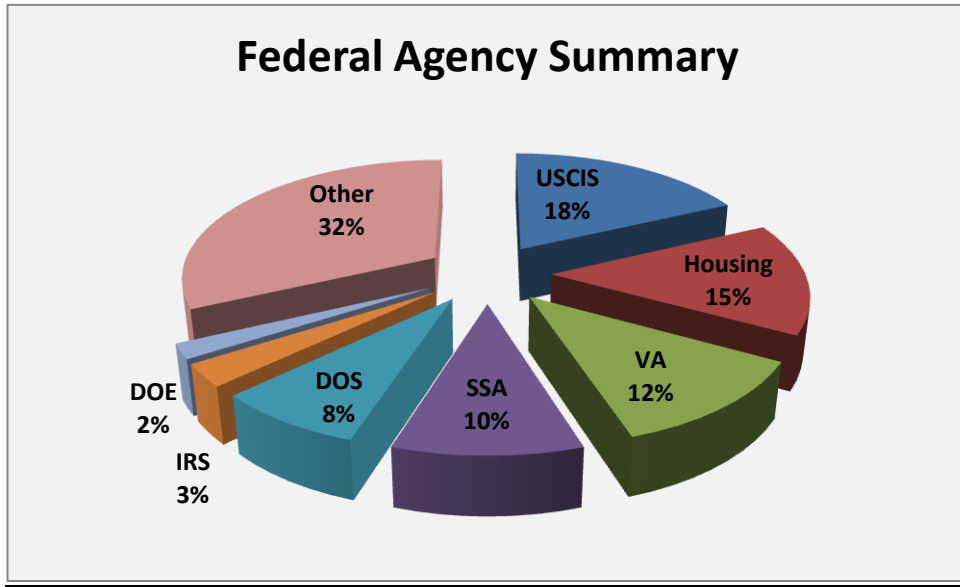
COMMUNICATING

WITH CONSTITUENTS

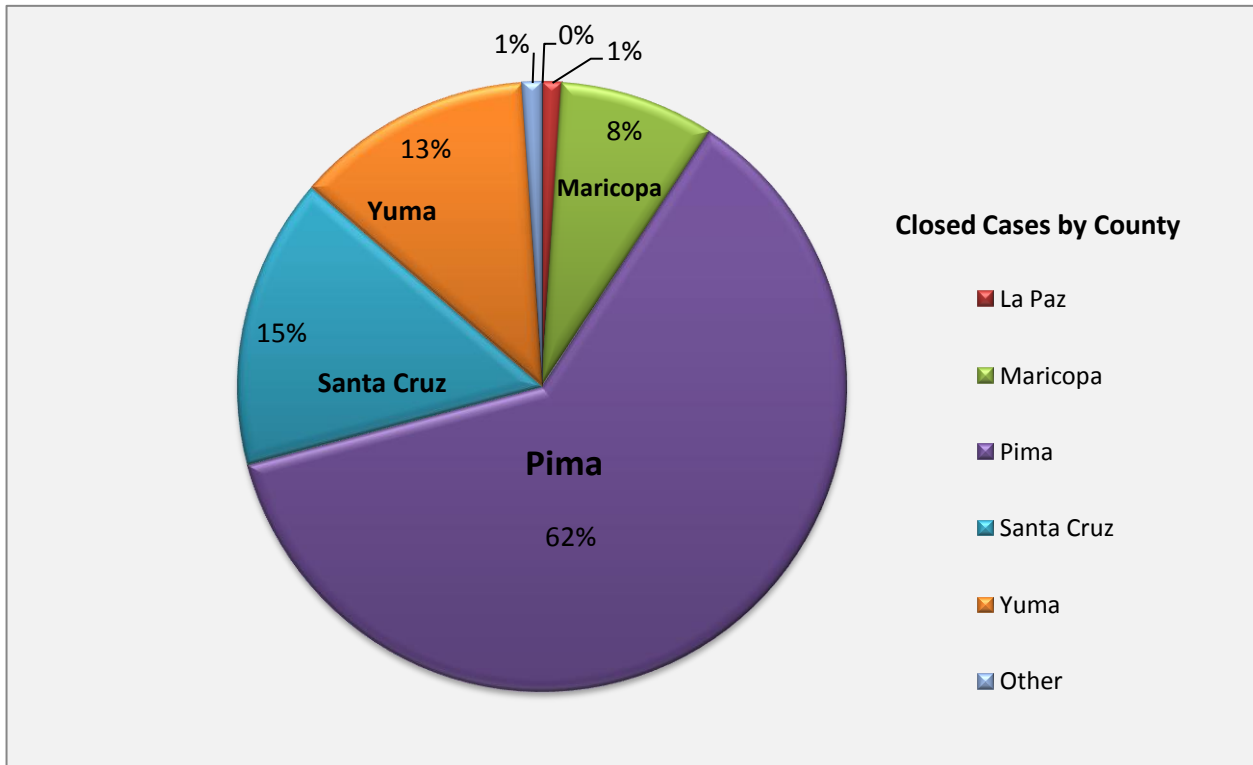
This year we responded to more than 37,000 constituent e-mails and close to 4,000 casework-related pieces of correspondence – questions, requests for information, thanks, criticism and everything else you sent us.

Month	CASEWORK Letters and EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE
January	352
February	381
March	432
April	311
May	223
June	380
July	275
August	370
September	282
October	401
November	256
December	321
Total	3984

COMPLETED CASEWORK REQUESTS BY FEDERAL AGENCY



COMPLETED CASEWORK REQUESTS BY COUNTY OF ORIGIN



CONSTITUENT SERVICE SUCCESS STORIES

When we're able to help, that means a check gets sent on time, a wrongful foreclosure is prevented, a family is reunited or a veteran gets long overdue recognition for service. Ahead, you'll see some very gracious thank-you notes and success stories we've been able to share this year from constituents who thought they'd hit a brick wall until they called our office. The individuals named have agreed to share their stories.

Housing / Foreclosure

Kimberly requested assistance on rescinding the sale of his home. The sale date fell in the middle of mortgage modification proceedings. She had already been approved for hardest-hit funds established by the Obama administration to help homeowners avoid foreclosure in areas facing steep home price declines and unemployment. The bank had previously refused to rescind the home sale. After we contacted the mortgage investor agency, they conducted an investigation, the foreclosure was rescinded and the previous modification offer was honored. She graciously shared this note of thanks with our office.

After two years, my mortgagor finally completed my mortgage loan modification. Despite all my timely payments, the bank continually threatened foreclosure. For six months following the modification of my loan, the bank refused to credit my payments correctly, the records continued to show that I was in arrears in my payments, which I was not. After attempting to straighten this out with the bank and continually being ignored, I called your office again for help. Within a week, your office was able to get the bank to properly credit my payments and reverse all late charges. I feel an enormous debt of gratitude for your extremely competent, respectful and compassionate staff.

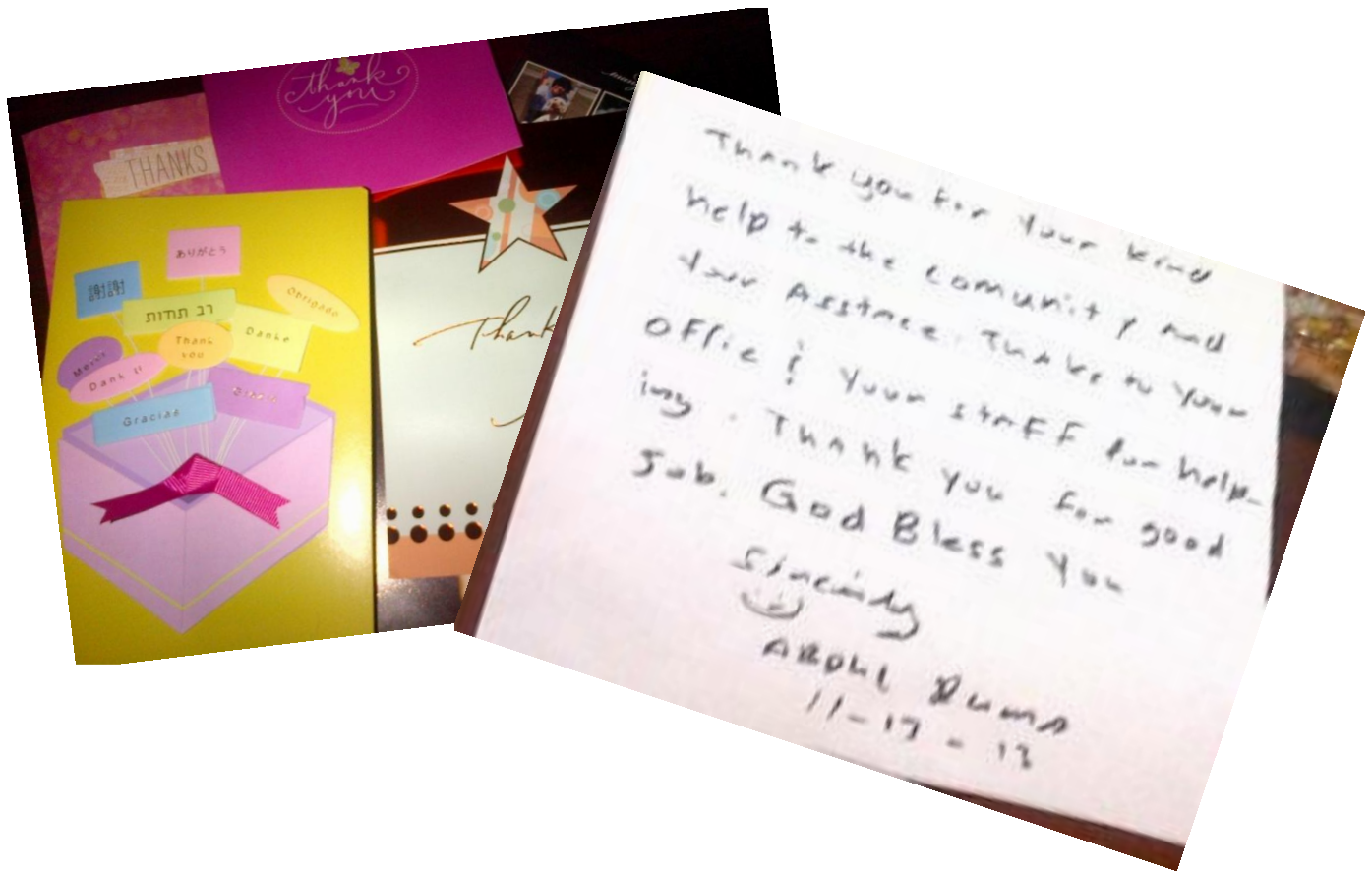
*Best Regards,
Kimberly*

Social Security Administration

Mr. Richard R came in seeking assistance after being denied for Social Security Disability benefits shortly after his work injury. As the household's only source of income, Richard was in danger of losing his home. He appealed the Social Security Administration's decision. My office contacted the Social Security Administration and after informing them Richard was in danger of losing his home, they reviewed his case. After careful review, the Administration approved his claim; he was awarded \$2,921 in back pay and \$1,022 each month thereafter.

U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services

Samuel contacted my office after receiving notification from the U.S. Embassy in Cameroon that immigrant visas for his children would likely be denied. My office reviewed the evidence presented to the Embassy and believed the intent to deny was an error. We worked with U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services to reaffirm the petitions for Samuel's children, for which he very kindly thanked our office with the note below.



Department of State (Veteran)

Evelyn had been receiving \$499 a month in VA compensation; family members believed she was eligible for full benefits with special compensation. After my office contacted the VA Pension Management Center, the compensation amount was corrected. Evelyn is now receiving the correct amount of more than \$1,000 a month and was able to collect \$2,925 in retroactive pay. Evelyn is in a nursing home facility – this benefit goes to help pay for her care. Family members had been paying for her care out-of-pocket for more than two years.



Ms. Montserrat’s spouse passed away in April 2012. She applied for survivor benefits and waited more than a year. Our office contacted the Department of Veterans Affairs and learned the family needed to submit additional information. One month after finalizing the application, my constituent began receiving monthly benefits and retroactive monies owed. Ms. Montserrat’s daughter sent us this very thoughtful note:

“I wanted to give you huge thanks for helping my mom receive her benefits. You were a great help and I’m very appreciative for you doing so. Again, thank you so very much!”

Donald contacted our office after the Department of Veterans Affairs withheld his benefits and informed him that he would be required to pay back benefits previously disbursed. After contacting the VA, my office was able to provide supporting documents and Donald’s payments were reinstated. After final review, the VA determined that he was owed an additional \$19,062 for the amount withheld in error. Donald’s spouse sent us this message:

“Once again, due to your help, my husband received his full VA Benefits check. We deeply appreciate your on-going assistance in this tangled web of paperwork.”

STAFF OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA

The majority of my staff is based not in Washington, D.C., but across Southern Arizona, and each staff member is constantly engaged in the public life of the Third Congressional District. When I'm not in Tucson, Yuma or the West Valley, my dedicated staff is on hand to give remarks, represent my office, coordinate public events, or otherwise try to help the people I represent. Below you can see some highlights of how my Tucson staff worked with constituents in 2013.

Small Business

Attended ribbon cutting ceremonies for new or expanding small businesses, advocated for business training for the South Side Business Coalition, coordinated a small business forum with emphasis on the Affordable Health Care Act and SBS services, supported local business forums, met with Nogales Community Development, invited the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce to my border immigration ad hoc hearing, attended a Chandler border conference on economic development, attended the Port of Tucson opening, and attended the monthly Fresh Produce Association meeting.

Immigration

Personally updated the Arizona-Sonora Coalition, Pima County Interfaith Council, and various other civic organizations on the prospects for immigration reform. Attended a third-party anti-SB 1070 press conference, the US-Mexico Border environment conference (BECC), the May First Coalition march and an immigration mass at St John's. Coordinated a border Ad Hoc Hearing on Immigration in Nogales and local efforts for the national "Nuns on the Bus" tour for immigration reform. Participated in the Arizona Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Immigration Panel.

Budget

Coordinated an anti-sequestration press conference with the Mayor of Tucson, distributed English- and Spanish-language copies of the Congressional Progressive Caucus People's Budget, and attended anti-sequestration rallies with the American Federation of Government Employees in Tucson, Yuma, and Avondale.

Education

Discussed minority recruitment with the University of Arizona College of Agriculture. Coordinated screenings of informational immigration films at Pueblo, Desert View, and Sunnyside High Schools. Provided congressional recognition for academic excellence to Amphi, Sunnyside, Rio Rico, Nogales, and Pueblo high schools and to Wakefield, Desert Crest Shadows, Calabasas and Coatimundi middle schools. Attended graduation at Las Artes Youth Art Program. Met and welcomed the new Pima College chancellor. Attended a Pinnacle Charter High School

open house. Participated in discussions with the Department of Education at an event at the El Pueblo Neighborhood Center. Spoke at a City of Tucson re-entry forum for former convicts.

Civil Rights

Spoke about Cesar Chavez at Catalina & Cholla high schools, White, Wakefield and Doolen middle schools and the University of Arizona. Attended and spoke at the vigil for Trayvon Martin. Participated in the local 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. Spoke at the annual Labor Day Picnic. Distributed community awards at the Juneteenth Tucson event.

Health Care

Coordinated a bilingual Affordable Health Care Act with the South Side Business Coalition. Attended the El Rio Clinic groundbreaking. Participated in Native American Wellness Day in Tucson.

Community Support

Spoke at the Santa Cruz County library anniversary event, Primavera's 30th annual event, and a rally with local labor organizations to save Tucson's Udall Post Office distribution center. Attended the Bus Rider's Union Rally, the Santa Cruz Little League award presentation and a Barrio Anita meeting for neighborhood reinvestment. Distributed recognition awards at the Salute to the Centenarians.

Environment

Spoke at a climate change conference. Facilitated a meeting with local and national environmental organizations regarding immigration reform.

Veterans

Attended Southern Arizona's 85th anniversary celebration. Welcomed Pearl Harbor/*USS Arizona* survivor Lauren Bruner to Tucson.