



CONGRESSMAN
WALLY HERGER

Representing California's 2nd Congressional District

August 2008

Dear Friends:

Although it is only August, it has been a busy year in our nation's capital. Congress has debated many important issues, including addressing skyrocketing gas prices, bolstering our intelligence capabilities and funding our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. My goal as your federal representative continues to be supporting policies that are in the best interest of Northern California families, farmers, and small businesses.

Here at home, working families are struggling under the incredible burden of record gas prices. Although, regrettably, there is no overnight solution, I believe increasing American-made energy resources is a critical part of a long-term strategy to counter rising gas prices. With America in possession of some of the largest energy reserves in the world, it is time we remove our self-imposed energy embargo so our nation will not be as dependent on foreign oil. Inside, you can read more about my thoughts on how we can provide lasting relief at the pump.

Recently I supported bipartisan legislation to modernize how our nation collects intelligence on terrorist suspects abroad and on our soil. I also voted in favor of continued funding for our brave service men and women fighting overseas. They are doing an extremely difficult job and doing it well. In Iraq, our troops have implemented a successful counter-insurgency plan that has helped reduce violence by over 90 percent in just over a year, creating increased optimism that Iraq can achieve stability and stand as a U.S. ally in the heart of the Middle East. Additionally I supported a bipartisan measure to significantly increase educational "GI" benefits for veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Enclosed, you will find questionnaire results from our March survey. Many of you shared your viewpoints, and I thank each of you for doing so. Thanks to new technology, it's easier than ever for us to connect with one another. I hope you find Tele-town Halls, e-mail updates on issues important to you, and my enhanced Congressional website convenient ways to share your thoughts and stay informed on important activities in Congress.

Wally



Herger meets with veterans of the Iraq War to discuss the expanded educational benefits that will be provided by the new GI Bill.

Visit us on the web: www.house.gov/herger

Securing Our Energy Future

Gas prices have spiraled out of control and Northern Californians are feeling the crunch. Over the last two years the cost of a gallon of gas has nearly doubled. This problem is not unexpected as a result of restrictive laws and misguided policies. Over the years, 85% of our domestic supplies have been placed off limits, making America dependent upon foreign oil. Unfortunately, Congress has yet to take any meaningful steps to lower prices.

I have long supported efforts in the House to ease our dependence on foreign oil by increasing our own domestic supply. We are now importing almost two thirds of our oil from foreign countries—making us twice as dependent on foreign oil as we were just 30 years ago. Domestic exploration has been at a standstill as plentiful resources at home have been kept off limits. Our nation has up to two trillion barrels in energy reserves in Alaska, off our coasts, and in oil shale. These supplies alone amount to an energy source that could power the United States for two centuries at current consumption levels. Importantly, 21st century technology allows U.S. energy producers to recover these resources in an environmentally safe way.

Additionally, as an important and growing part of our energy supply portfolio, I support incentives to increase the development of renewable energy resources. I am in favor of increasing our use of non-polluting nuclear energy as well. Many European nations, including France, utilize nuclear energy for as much as 80% of their energy needs. When it comes to energy, I believe we should be doing 'all of the above.' However, renewable sources currently constitute only seven percent of our total energy supply and it will be years before we can expect new technologies and alternative fuels to support all of our nation's energy needs. Conserving more energy must be part of the solution as well, but standing alone it cannot solve our supply-demand imbalance. For these reasons, I firmly believe we must take steps immediately to increase domestic production of traditional energy sources to strengthen our energy security both now and in the future.

While there is unfortunately no magic solution that will solve our problems overnight, increasing our own supply would help ease the gas crunch over time and make life easier for millions of hardworking American families. The energy crisis has national security implications as well. The longer we remain reliant on foreign countries for the majority of our oil, including the volatile Middle East, the longer we remain at risk to a crippling supply disruption overseas. I will continue to urge Congress to act immediately to increase American energy production and bring lasting relief at the pump.

Herger congratulates U.S. Service Academy appointees Brance Waggoman of Marysville and Spencer Buck of Woodland.

Preparing for the Digital TV Transition

On February 17, 2009, over-the-air television broadcasts will transition to digital technology. The purpose of this change is to free up airspace to improve communications equipment for first responders. However, it is important for consumers to understand how the digital transition will affect them and to start preparing for it now.

If you do not subscribe to a cable or satellite service, but instead receive over-the-air broadcasts through a rooftop or set-top antenna, you will need to purchase either a digital television set OR a converter box for your existing TV. Currently the Department of Commerce is providing coupons to cover most of the cost of the converter boxes. You can learn more about the digital transition by visiting the Federal Communications Commission's website at <http://www.dtv.gov>.

Service Academy Appointees



Reports from Washington

2008 Questionnaire Results

(1) Today, people who purchase health insurance on their own receive no tax benefit, unlike those who receive health insurance from their employer. Do you believe there should be an equal tax benefit for every American who has health insurance?

Yes	No	Unsure
87%	4%	9%

(2) The Supreme Court is preparing to hear a case to determine whether the District of Columbia's ban on handguns is constitutional. Do you believe the Second Amendment protects the right of individuals to own firearms?

Yes	No	Unsure
85%	9%	6%

(3) Our current tax system costs Americans tens of millions of dollars in compliance costs each filing season. Would you support doing away with the existing tax code, including the many different tax credits and exclusions (such as the mortgage interest deduction), and replacing it with a simplified, lower flat rate system?

Yes	No	Unsure
65%	12%	23%

(4) Do you support our nation's intensified efforts to encourage Israeli and Palestinian leaders to reach a Middle East peace agreement?

Yes	No	Unsure
68%	17%	15%

(5) Do you believe foreign terrorist suspects should be entitled to U.S. constitutional protections?

Yes	No	Unsure
11%	85%	4%

Congressional Art Contest Winner



Herger meets with Gridley High School student Michael McConnell, the Congressional Art Contest winner for California's 2nd District. McConnell's work will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol for the next year.

Serving You

As your representative in Washington, I have the privilege of offering several services to the citizens of Northern California. These include providing you a tour of the U.S. Capitol, requesting tours of the White House, Library of Congress, and National Cathedral, and assisting you in the purchase of flags flown over the U.S. Capitol. If you would like more information, feel free to visit www.house.gov/herger or contact one of my offices.

FIGHTING WILDFIRES

Where We Are and Where We Go from Here



The lightning-caused fires that erupted in California in June constituted a disaster that wreaked havoc across the North State. I was able to witness firsthand the efforts of our brave firefighters and communities. I toured the Humboldt fire in Butte County on June 15th, the Butte Lightning Complex on June 28th, and the Shasta-Trinity fires on July 2nd. At one point, there were more than 1,700 fires blazing in our State, with a majority of those burning in Northern California.

I contacted President Bush, along with 34 members of the California Congressional Delegation, in support of Governor Schwarzenegger's request for a federal disaster declaration, and I am pleased to report that request was swiftly granted. This emergency declaration opened up essential federal resources needed to save the homes, property, and potentially the lives of our citizens. Significant progress has been made by the unprecedented number of firefighters battling these blazes.

The recent fires across our region serve as a reminder of the need for an aggressive program of active forest management throughout our federal forests. While we can never prevent forest fires, through efforts like those promoted by the Quincy Library Group, a group of local citizens that developed a plan for clearing hazardous forest

overgrowth, we can strategically thin our historically and dangerously dense forests to make them more fire resistant. Doing so would give firefighters a better chance to combat fires before they become large and out of control and threaten our communities and tens of thousands of acres of forest land. The situation in our forests is truly a threat to public safety, and deserves an immediate and extraordinary federal response to facilitate these forest management efforts.

Herger tours the Humboldt Fire with CalFire. Herger held a town hall meeting following his visit and supported Gov. Schwarzenegger in securing a federal disaster declaration.

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Official Business



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MC
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CONGRESSMAN HERGER REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON

