

CONGRESSMAN
**Wally
Herger**

REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON

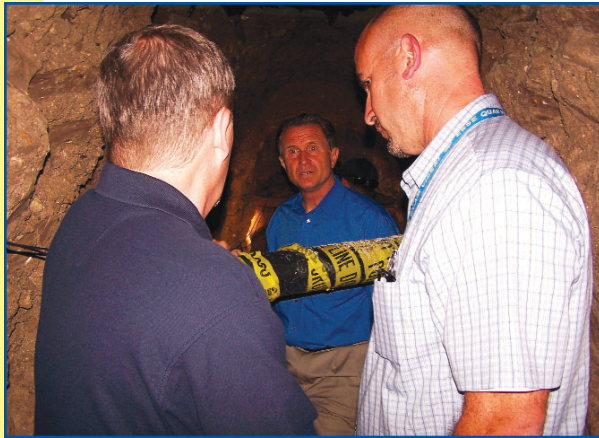
March 2007

Dear Friends:

The 110th Congress presents an important opportunity for lawmakers in Washington to work together on behalf of the American people. Our nation continues to face serious challenges, and healthy discussions regarding the best way to address these issues can be very beneficial.

Our mission in Iraq remains the foremost challenge. Previous strategies for success proved inadequate. As such, our men and women in uniform are now implementing a new comprehensive strategy to secure Iraq and defeat terrorists and other extremists. I believe we must give this plan sufficient opportunity to work.

Notwithstanding frustrations and sacrifices, I firmly believe success in Iraq is critical to America's national security. Iraq will become either an important ally in the war against radical jihadists, or a sanctuary for terrorists and a likely cohort of the dangerous regime in Iran. I will continue to support our troops and their efforts to help secure Iraq. I believe Congress should speak with one voice in support of the men and women of our armed forces.



During his recent trip to the U.S.-Mexico border, Herger tours a previously concealed tunnel through which illegal immigrants smuggled themselves and narcotics. Herger will continue to support legislation to make our borders more secure

Another top priority of mine is border security. Last year, Congress passed important legislation, which I supported, to construct a border fence and beef up border security to help stop the flow of illegal immigrants into our country. We should also provide agriculture access to a lawful temporary worker program.

Inside, I discuss efforts to reauthorize and fund the Secure Rural Schools program, a critical safety net program for counties in Northern California that are negatively affected by falling timber receipts. I also discuss my efforts to pass legislation aimed at punishing those who prey on vulnerable individuals by promoting suicide, and to expand free and fair trade opportunities

for Northern California agriculture and other industries that are important to our economic success.

Enclosed, you will find a schedule for Telephone Town Hall meetings that will occur next month. Also enclosed is the 2007 Questionnaire. Your views are extremely important and help me better represent the interests of Northern California. I hope to hear from you.

Wally

OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR YOUTH

Congressional Art Competition

Attention high school student artists!

The 2007 Congressional Art Competition provides an opportunity to have your artwork displayed publicly at an entrance of the U.S. Capitol for one year. Winning students are invited to attend the exhibit unveiling ceremony in Washington, DC, to be held in June of 2007. **The application deadline is April 27, 2007.** A complete list of all competition requirements can be found at your local high school, or by visiting www.house.gov/herger on the Internet.

Service Academy Applications

As your member of Congress, I have the honor of recommending young men and women for appointment to our nation's service academies. They include the U.S. Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy. These schools provide the unique opportunity to train for a career as an officer in our armed forces. Appointments are available to individuals between 17 and 22 years of age who are residents of our Congressional District. **The application deadline is October 31, 2007.** For more information, please visit www.house.gov/herger on the Internet.

TELE TOWN HALLS:

A Convenient New Way for Us to Stay in Touch

Many of you have probably received a phone call from me during the past year inviting you to join one of my “Tele Town Halls.” This new technology allows you to share your thoughts from the comfort of your home. However, as always, I invite you to contact my office anytime you have a concern or question you’d like to share.

Participation in Tele Town Halls has been extraordinary. In just six forums, which have covered the entire Second Congressional District, nearly 25,000 individuals participated. Indeed, I have encountered many people during my travels in the district who indicated that they had participated. So the technology has been very successful in allowing me to reach so many of you. I want to thank each of you who has joined one of these forums.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, so I plan to conduct more Tele Town Halls this year. Please see the map at right indicating which areas will be called during upcoming forums in April. Regrettably, because of technological glitches and limited access to phone records, some individuals who would like to take part may inadvertently not be called. And I also apologize in advance if some who

would prefer not to participate receive an invitation to do so.

My goal is to offer the opportunity to everyone who wants to participate. I hope you can join these in-home conversations.



Key for Tele Town Hall Map

Light Blue – April 23 around 7:00 p.m. PT

Blue – April 24 around 7:00 p.m. PT

Dark Blue – April 30 around 7:00 p.m. PT

Secure Rural Schools Program

Almost 100 years ago President Teddy Roosevelt signed into law a compact with the people of rural counties, promising that 25 percent of proceeds generated from forest management projects would go to forested counties to fund vital local services, such as public education and road maintenance.

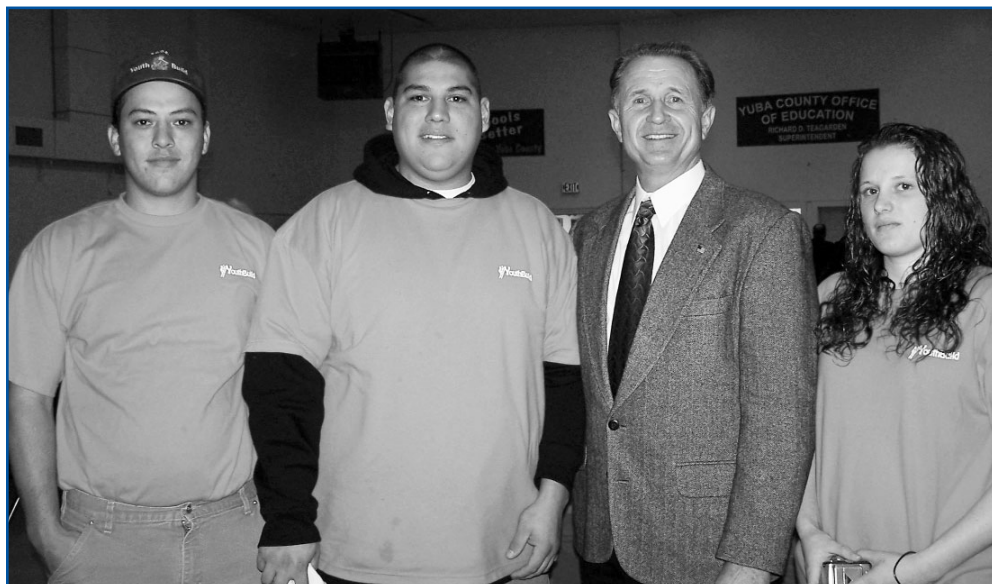
This “promise” recognized the financial burden that large federal landholdings place on rural communities. In our Congressional District, the federal government owns about fifty percent of total acreage. In some counties in the northern part of the district, it owns over seventy percent. Privately owned land generates tax revenue to help fund

local services, but the federal government is not obligated to pay local taxes.

For decades, the federal government’s promise worked well for our area. Since the early 1990s, however, a patchwork of well-intentioned but poorly implemented laws and legal suits by opposition groups have caused forest management—and the revenue it generates—to decline dramatically. As such, in 2000, I worked to help pass the “Secure Rural Schools” program, which was designed to temporarily stabilize federal payments to rural counties until forest management projects and revenue generated by them returned to more stable levels.

This law is now expired and in need of renewal. Because management projects still cannot proceed efficiently, forest payments remain at historically low levels. Unless the law is renewed, many essential programs will soon experience major budget shortfalls. For example, Siskiyou County would experience about a 50 percent reduction in funding for transportation projects.

I’m doing everything I can to extend the Secure Rural Schools program. We have our work cut out for us. Budget rules require new spending to be offset by reductions elsewhere or by increasing taxes. But I believe the federal government is obligated to fulfill its promise. It’s a critical program, and it must be extended.



Herger commends (from left to right) Michael Okamura, Daniel Fraijo, and Stephanie Green, participants of the Yuba County Youthbuild program who spent the past year helping to rebuild homes torn by Hurricane Katrina. Youthbuild is a federal-private partnership through which certain young adults can enhance their education while also acquiring training that they use to help build houses for lower-income individuals.



2007 Questionnaire—Offer Your Voice!

Please mark your responses, cut out this page and fold so return address on other side faces outward.

Domestic Policies

- (1)** Should Congress make permanent the substantial tax relief on personal and investment income passed since 2001? (This tax relief is set to expire in 2010, which would cause tax rates to return to their previous higher levels.)
- (2)** Would you support immigration reform that enhances border security and creates a temporary legal worker program similar to the past Bracero Program, while also creating a path for illegal immigrants currently working in the U.S. to “earn citizenship” by paying back taxes, passing a criminal background check, working for six years, and learning English?
- (3)** Should Congress expand No Child Left Behind, a federal education law, to provide greater parental choice to enable students from lower-income families who are attending chronically failing public schools to attend private or religious schools?
- (4)** Since 1994, the U.S. has implemented Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with thirteen countries, reducing unfair trade barriers. Trade with these countries accounts for over forty percent of U.S. exports, even though these nations make up a small percentage of the world’s economy. Do you believe we should continue to pursue free and fair trade agreements?

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS: _____

International Relations

- (1)** Would you support efforts in Congress to restrict or condition funding for our troops in Iraq, making it impossible for them to implement the President’s new security plan?
- (2)** Would you support tougher economic sanctions against Iran if it refuses to dismantle its nuclear program?
- (3)** A recent United Nations report on climate change has renewed calls by some for the U.S. to enter into a global treaty (the “Kyoto Protocol”) that would require a significant reduction in the use of fossil energy and result in added costs to consumers. Do you support U.S. entry into this U.N. treaty?

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS: _____

Constituent #1			Constituent #2		
Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
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Suzanne Gonzales Suicide Prevention Act

On March 23, 2003, Mike Gonzales of Red Bluff, located in Tehama County, received a call from his 19-year-old daughter, Suzanne. She told him, “I love you, Dad. I’ll see you soon.” Hours later, she was dead.

While attending college thousands of miles from home, Suzy had become a victim of an online discussion group that promotes suicide as a personal choice. Members of the group encouraged Suzy to commit suicide and gave her step-by-step instructions on how to do it. The website has been linked to over a dozen other deaths.

Prosecutors told the Gonzales family that there was no law under which the group’s members could be charged. Although many states have laws prohibiting

assistance to suicide, the individuals responsible for Suzy’s death could be residents of any state.

People suffering from depression need help and treatment, not exploitation by twisted individuals who present suicide as a “civil right.” Suicide is irreversible, and those who facilitate it should be held responsible. As such, I have introduced H.R. 940, the Suzanne Gonzales Suicide Prevention Act, which would make it a federal crime to use the Internet to help an individual commit suicide. The legislation is narrowly tailored to avoid infringing on freedom of speech or state laws. I believe it is time for Congress to take a stand on this matter.

Enacting legislation is always difficult. But with the assistance of Suzy’s family and suicide prevention advocacy groups, I’m hopeful we’ll build sufficient support to pass this bill.



Herger joins Mike and Mary Gonzales, parents of the late Suzy Gonzales, at the Red Bluff Courthouse. The event brought attention to the growing problem of Internet discussion groups that promote suicide as a cure for depression, and built support for legislation sponsored by Herger that would make it a federal crime to use the Internet to help an individual commit suicide

Congressman Wally Herger
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Place
Stamp
Here

Free and Fair Trade is Good for Northern California

At the start of the 110th Congress, I was selected to serve as the "Ranking Member" of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade. Though I have always been actively involved in trade issues, this new position allows me to have more of a leadership role on an issue so important to our Northern California economy.

In our agriculture-rich area, we depend on foreign markets to reach the 95 percent of consumers living outside the U.S. For this reason, it's critical that producers and growers have greater potential to export their goods. New markets for our goods also help companies grow markets and create new jobs. Meanwhile, imports help our manufacturers stay competitive by reducing production costs. And they help California's families by providing more choices at lower prices, increasing your purchasing power.

Free trade can be beneficial, but it must be fair. Unfortunately, many countries have established tremendous barriers to trade. I recently heard from a constituent concerned that Europe is not playing by the rules, and is blocking

sales to the region. And he is right. Several countries have similar uneven playing fields.

Free trade agreements (FTAs) are accords signed by two or more countries that help remove trade barriers, such as high tariffs. FTAs benefit our economy because they open international markets to U.S. goods and services. The agreements we've signed thus far are doing just that, pushing U.S. exports in 2006 to a record high. In fact, 42 percent of our exports went to markets in our 13 FTA countries, even though these nations make up a small percentage of the world's economy. Northern California agriculture and other industries that rely heavily on consumers abroad now have greater opportunities to trade.

As we continue our pursuit for free and fair trade with other countries, it's important that we view both the impacts and benefits to our whole economy - workers and employers, producers and consumers. Our ultimate goal is to keep American workers and families productive, prosperous, and competitive in the 21st Century.

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Herger speaks with a business owner in Burney about the importance of continuing the small business tax relief of the past six years, including a provision he sponsored that helps small businesses expand by allowing them to write-off new investment more quickly.



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