



# Representative **Tom Petri** **Reports** to The Sixth District

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## ***New Congress' Agenda***

BY REPRESENTATIVE TOM PETRI

*The 109th Congress was gavelled into existence on January 4th and we have many important and seemingly intractable issues to tackle. Naturally, terrorism and Iraq top the list of concerns, but here are some of the leading domestic issues I will be working on this year and the next.*

### **Social Security Reform**

The Social Security system is facing a long-term funding problem, and there is broad agreement that reforms will be necessary as the baby boom generation begins to retire. Unfortunately, there is no agreement on what form any changes should take, and I've found 6th District residents to be skeptical of any adjustments.

Those currently retired or nearing retirement can rest assured that they will be protected. For everybody else, it's better to act sooner rather than later so that necessary adjustments can be made gradually and so that everybody has plenty of time to plan ahead.

I think we should consider various approaches to the Social Security funding problem. I have my own bill which would provide long-term support for Social Security without diverting payroll taxes, cutting benefits or raising the retirement age.

### **Health Care**

One of today's greatest worries is finding quality health care at an affordable price. Congress is pursuing a variety of improvements designed to provide relief. Included in this are President Bush's efforts to limit the cost of the high malpractice insurance rates which many medical specialists have to pay.

I have been working on making it easier for small businesses to pool their insurance purchases in order to benefit from group rates.

### **Tax Reform**

Experts agree that our tax system is horribly convoluted and that fundamental reform could do a lot to help the economy grow. However, it's not clear how various reforms would affect the distribution of benefits and burdens, creating new groups of winners and losers. President Bush has just appointed a nine-member Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform. I look forward to seeing its recommendations.

### **Higher Education Reauthorization**

Congress needs to reauthorize the loan and grant programs for higher education. Many parents feel overwhelmed by tuition increases that are outpacing inflation year after year. As Vice Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce I have been fighting waste and excessive subsidies to banks to increase Pell Grants. Entrenched interests oppose my approach, but the battle continues.

### **Transportation Reauthorization**

Efficient transportation is vital for our economy and quality of life, but the House, Senate and President were unable to come to agreement on funding levels and other matters last Congress when the reauthorization of our transportation program was due. As Chairman of the Highways, Transit and Pipelines Subcommittee, I'm in the thick of the action. We introduced a new reauthorization bill in early

February, and it's on a fast track for consideration.

### **Immigration Reform**

President Bush is calling for immigration reform including a guest worker program, but there is a lot of disagreement over how much and what kind of immigration we should accept for economic, cultural and especially security reasons.

### **Energy**

With \$2 per gallon gas in mind, everybody agrees that the country needs a comprehensive energy policy, but we are having a hard time sorting out the proper balance between traditional energy sources versus new technologies. In the 108th Congress the House approved an energy bill, but nobody from Wisconsin's congressional delegation supported it, partly because it did nothing for Wisconsin's electricity transmission system, the third most congested in the country. In the end, the Senate could not come to agreement with the House on energy legislation.

## ***Inside this Issue . . .***

**Town Meeting Schedule**.....page 2  
**Constituent Questionnaire**.....page 3



# Town Meetings for Congressman Tom Petri — March, 2005

Town Meetings provide opportunities to discuss national issues in a group setting. My latest round of Town Meetings will take place from March 28 through March 31 at 12 locations throughout central Wisconsin. Please come and express your opinions!

## Monday, March 28th

### 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. — BEAVER DAM

Beaver Dam Community Library  
311 North Spring Street, Welsh Meeting Room

### 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. — WATERTOWN

Municipal Building, 106 Jones Street  
Room 2041

### 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. — GREEN LAKE

Caestecker Public Library  
518 Hill Street  
Conference Room

## Tuesday, March 29th

### 11:00 - 12:00 p.m. — ADAMS

Municipal Building, 101 North Main Street  
Council Chambers

### 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. — WAUTOMA

CAPsell Center, 205 East Main Street  
Conference Room B

### 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. — MONTELLO

Marquette County Courthouse, 77 West Park Street  
County Board Room

## Wednesday, March 30th

### 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. — MENASHA

Elisha D. Smith Public Library,  
440 First Street, Company E Room

### 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. — OSHKOSH

City Hall, 215 Church Avenue  
Room 406

### 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. — FOND DU LAC

City-County Government Center  
160 South Macy Street  
Legislative Chambers

## Thursday, March 31st

### 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. — SHEBOYGAN

Mead Public Library, 710 North 8th Street  
Rocca Meeting Room

### 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. — TWO RIVERS

City Hall, 1717 East Park Street  
City Council Chambers

### 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. — CHILTON

City Hall, 42 School Street  
City Council Chambers

## AROUND THE 6TH DISTRICT

▲ In January, at the request of Sen. Herb Kohl, Rep. Green and I, the Coast Guard reversed an earlier decision to stop regulating **highway and railroad bridges** over parts of the Fox and Wolf Rivers. Failure to regulate the bridges could have resulted in bridges being opened less frequently, greatly impeding economic development along the rivers.

▲ On June 30th, the Wisconsin Central railroad filed an application with the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) seeking permission to abandon the **Saukville to Kiel** railroad line which serves the communities of Fredonia, Random Lake, Adell, Waldo, Plymouth and Elkhart Lake. I immediately urged that a way be found to keep the line operating.

At my request, the STB came to Random Lake in August to hold a hearing on the importance of the line to the local economy. Partially as a result, the State of Wisconsin purchased the line in January, and the Wisconsin Southern Railroad took over its management, keeping it functioning.

▲ On February 7th I visited Burger Boat in **Manitowoc** to see the boat maker's expanded facility there. I'm working with the Army Corps of Engineers to protect jobs by providing for proper dredging in the local waterways.



*On February 7th Rep. Petri visited Burger Boat in Manitowoc where he is helping to protect local jobs by working with the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain navigable local waterways.*

# Questionnaire

## What Are Your Views?

- 1.** On balance, are things in America getting better, worse, or staying the same? A. *Better*; B. *Worse*; C. *Same*
- 2.** On balance, are things in Wisconsin getting better, worse, or staying the same? A. *Better*; B. *Worse*; C. *Same*
- 3.** How about for you and your family, especially in matters that can be affected by the government?  
A. *Better*; B. *Worse*; C. *Same*
- 4.** Now that elections have been held in Iraq, do you:  
A. *Favor setting a deadline to bring home our troops; or*  
B. *Believe U.S. troops should remain in Iraq as long as it takes to train Iraqis to provide for their own security?*
- 5.** In his State of the Union address, President Bush made the case that Social Security needs quick action to save the program for future generations. Do you believe that Social Security needs to be fixed now?  
A. *Yes*; B. *No*
- 6.** Do you favor or oppose making personal investments accounts a part of the ultimate solution?  
A. *Favor*; B. *Oppose*
- 7.** During the next two years it is likely that Congress will consider fundamental reform of the federal income tax system. As this debate goes forward, do you favor:  
A. *A flat income tax*; B. *A consumption (sales) tax*;  
C. *Some simplification but no major reform.*
- 8.** After some years of large federal surpluses, deficits have returned and Congress faces pressure to erase the red ink. Which of the following choices best describes your preferred solution to this problem?  
A. *Spending cuts*; B. *Higher taxes*; C. *Both*;  
D. *Deficits aren't a major problem*
- 9.** Some say consumers should be able to purchase cheaper prescription drugs from foreign countries, but the federal government bans the practice, saying that we can't be sure about the safety and effectiveness of those drugs. Which choice do you prefer?  
A. *Allow consumers to buy prescription drugs from foreign countries*;  
B. *Maintain the current ban.*
- 10.** On federal dairy programs, do you think the government needs to do less or more to help dairy farmers, or is it doing just enough?  
A. *More*; B. *Less*; C. *Just Enough*
- 11.** Proponents support drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska to stabilize oil prices and reduce reliance on foreign oil. Opponents of drilling question the amount of oil available and cite the environmentally sensitive aspects of ANWR that could be damaged by drilling. Do you favor or oppose drilling for oil in ANWR?  
A. *Favor*; B. *Oppose*
- 12.** Do you favor or oppose immigration reform that would include a temporary guestworker program and would allow undocumented (illegal) workers currently employed in the U.S. to fill jobs that Americans are unwilling to perform?  
A. *Favor*; B. *Oppose*
- 13.** Do you favor or oppose amending the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as a union between one man and one woman?  
A. *Favor*; B. *Oppose*



### Respondent #1

- 1.**  A  B  C
- 2.**  A  B  C
- 3.**  A  B  C
- 4.**  A  B
- 5.**  A  B
- 6.**  A  B
- 7.**  A  B  C
- 8.**  A  B  C  D
- 9.**  A  B
- 10.**  A  B  C
- 11.**  A  B
- 12.**  A  B
- 13.**  A  B

Please indicate your age range  18-34  35-50  50+

### Respondent #2

- 1.**  A  B  C
- 2.**  A  B  C
- 3.**  A  B  C
- 4.**  A  B
- 5.**  A  B
- 6.**  A  B
- 7.**  A  B  C
- 8.**  A  B  C  D
- 9.**  A  B
- 10.**  A  B  C
- 11.**  A  B
- 12.**  A  B
- 13.**  A  B

Please indicate your age range  18-34  35-50  50+



# Questionnaire, Town Meeting Schedule Inside

# Reports

**Tom Petri**  
Representative

Official Business

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Congress of the United States

Postal Customer  
Sixth Congressional District  
Wisconsin

M.C.  
EGRWSS  
PRSRT STD



## What Are Your Views?

Dear Constituent:

No duty is more important to me as your U.S. Representative than to listen to you and other citizens in our district. Your views, opinions and feelings are of vital concern to me.

Please take a few minutes to answer the important questions on page 3. Clearly, answering questions with a "yes" or "no," or a "favor" or "oppose" is much too simple when dealing with complicated subjects, but that's the kind of choice I'm forced to make every day on the floor of the House when voting on legislation.

Your time and thoughts are deeply appreciated. Thank you.



## Keeping in Touch

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call or write. In addition to the usual "old fashioned" addresses and numbers on page 1, you can contact me by e-mail. Due to the high volume of messages which I have received from all over the country, I am asking everybody from the 6th District to use the form linked to the front page of my Web site found at [www.house.gov/petri/](http://www.house.gov/petri/)

This form filters out "spam" e-mail, which can number in the hundreds or thousands on any given day. When writing by e-mail, please include your name and postal address to guarantee a response.

Also, I have started to produce an e-mail newsletter. If you would like to give it a try, please go to the following Web page: [www.house.gov/petri/subscribe.htm](http://www.house.gov/petri/subscribe.htm)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

Please  
Place  
Stamp  
Here

**Congressman Tom Petri**

2462 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

# Questionnaire Responses