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Seniors Newsletter



44TH DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA • SUMMER 2008
CONGRESSMAN KEN CALVERT

Dear Friends,

The incredibly high price of gasoline, which is now averaging above \$4.60 per gallon in our area, hurts individuals on fixed incomes the hardest. The dramatic rise in the price of gasoline is largely a result of world-wide tight supply and increased demand. Currently, the price of oil makes up more than 70% of the cost of a gallon of gasoline. The most meaningful step we can take to decrease prices is to increase oil supplies here domestically through enhanced exploration of American resources.

Estimates show that offshore exploration would yield **86 billion barrels of oil**, not to mention vast quantities of natural gas. Over the past few decades, advances in exploration technology and increased regulatory precautions have made it possible to conduct exploration offshore that is out of the line of sight, protects the environment, and prevents oil spills. Another area that has proven reserves of oil is the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) the estimate of technically recoverable oil in ANWR is **10.4 billion barrels** – all of which is now economically recoverable. Energy exploration would be limited to just 2,000 acres of ANWR's 20 million acres, which is equivalent to 0.01% of the land (it is the equivalent of a postage stamp on a football field).

I believe U.S. energy policy should include a variety of technologies and sources to reduce our dependence on oil. In the long term it means developing alternative sources such as hydrogen fuel cell technology, nuclear energy, and solar and wind technology in combination with conservation efforts. Decreasing oil imports will improve the U.S. trade deficit and reduce the need to rely on undemocratic countries in unstable regions. Additionally, every dollar spent on domestically produced oil goes into the American economy -- creating jobs, growth, and tax generation, which is preferable to having foreign countries reap these benefits.

On the reverse side of this newsletter, there are important updates on prescription drugs, rebate checks, and information on the upcoming switch to digital television.

Sincerely,



KEN CALVERT
Member of Congress

P.S. Please sign up for urgent updates that impact Seniors via email through my website at www.calvert.house.gov.

*You May Be Missing
Out on Your Stimulus
Package Rebate Check,
See reverse for More
Information*



Support the Troops

www.americasupportsyou.mil

Contact Representative Ken Calvert at one of the following addresses or through his website www.calvert.house.gov:

WASHINGTON, DC
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-1986
Fax: (202) 225-2004

RIVERSIDE COUNTY
3400 Central Ave., Ste. 200
Riverside, CA 92506
Phone: (951) 784-4300
Fax: (951) 784-5255

ORANGE COUNTY
26111 Antonio Pkwy, Ste 300
Las Flores, CA 92688
Phone: (949) 888-8498
Fax: (949) 888-8524

Prescription Drugs and Medicare Part D—How Much Is Covered?

The Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Act, which created Medicare Part D, was signed into law with my support and provides seniors with the ability to save up to 70% of the costs they would have otherwise incurred if Part D did not exist. The prescription drug plan includes a \$35 monthly premium and a \$250 annual deductible. The plan covers 75% of the first \$2,250 spent on medication. After \$3,600 of out-of-pocket expenses (including the premium and deductible costs), the plan will cover 95% of prescription drug costs.

For seniors who find themselves surpassing the initial \$2,250 in annual prescription drug costs, there is help available to bridge the out of pocket expenses. For those with an annual income below \$13,900, there is no gap in drug coverage. For seniors with an annual income between \$13,900 and \$15,400 part of the premiums and co-payments may be covered. To see if you qualify for this Limited Income Subsidy please call 1-800-772-1213 or visit the website: www.ssa.gov/prescriptionhelp.

You may also delay or avoid reaching the coverage gap by taking steps to lower your prescription drug costs. This includes requesting cheaper generic drugs whenever possible and using your Medicare drug plan card for prescriptions even after you enter the gap, this will allow you to save money by utilizing discounted rates. For more information on ways to lower your prescription drug costs, please call 1-800-772-1213 or visit www.medicare.gov/bridging-the-gap.asp.

Additionally, some Medicare Part D plans provide coverage for prescription drug costs that fall into the gap, usually with higher premiums or co-pays or both. For information on these “Medigap” plans, please call 1-800-772-1213 or visit www.medicare.gov/medigap.

A Big Change To Your TV— Be Prepared

On February 17, 2009, the old analog broadcasting standard will be replaced by digital television broadcasting (DTV). Televisions that receive free over-the-air television signals through antennas (rabbit ears) with analog tuners will not be able to receive these digital signals. TVs purchased prior to 1998, or prior to 2004 for big-screen and projection TVs, most likely do not have a digital tuner.

You can switch to DTV by either: purchasing a DTV Converter Box estimated to cost \$50 – 75 (you may apply for up to two \$40 coupons per household); purchasing a TV set with a digital tuner; or continue to use your analog TV set by subscribing to a cable, satellite or other paid television service which will not be adversely impacted by the DTV transition.

To learn more about the transition or to find out if you are eligible for the \$40 coupon, visit www.dtv2009.gov or call 1-888-388-2009.



REP. CALVERT meets with seniors at the San Clemente Senior Center to discuss Medicare and Social Security.

ALERT! Did You Know You Can Register to Vote Up to 15 Days Before An Election?

NEXT ELECTION: November 4, 2008 General Election LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE IS OCTOBER 20, 2008

Where do I obtain a form to register? Your local post office, library, Department of Motor Vehicles, city and county offices, call 800-773-VOTE or visit www.voteinfo.net. Mail your form to register to vote! The postage is pre-paid. Just drop it in any mailbox. Also, you may visit the appropriate web-site below to register to vote in your county:

Riverside County

www.election.co.riverside.ca.us or (951) 486-7200

Orange County

www.ocvote.com or (714) 567-7600

Your Rebate May Be Waiting For You!

According to the IRS, there are approximately 8,500 seniors and veterans in the 44th Congressional District who may be eligible to receive a rebate check but have yet to file their 2007 tax return.

If you haven't filed a 2007 return yet, it's not too late! For both Orange County and Riverside County, local agents stand by ready to assist you to file your return and collect your rebate:

IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center

801 Civic Center Drive W.

Santa Ana, CA 92701

(714) 347-9204

Monday-Friday - 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.