

U.S. Rep. Alexander: Everybody is excited

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WASHINGTON — Fifth District U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander looked out the second floor window of the Republican Club overlooking the Metro subway exit on Monday and marveled at the throngs flooding out of the station.

“I’ve never seen so many people pouring into the city,” said Alexander, R-Quitman. “Look at the lines at the Cannon Building (congressional offices) stretching all the way to the Capitol. And this is just Monday. Wait until tomorrow.”

Alexander, despite finding himself in the Republican minority, said the excitement generated by President-elect Barack Obama is undeniable.

“I think everybody’s excited, and everybody will be willing to help the new administration as much as possible.”

Alexander, as well as Louisiana U.S. Sens. Mary Landrieu, a Democrat, and David Vitter, Republican, were scrambling to meet the requests of constituents who converged on Washington for the inauguration.

“(Tuesday) is going to be unbelievable, even more so out on the National Mall, where people aren’t going to have tickets,” said Alexander, who distributed most of the inauguration tickets in his district last week. “It’s going to be watched by more people, both here and on television, than any other event in the world.”

Vitter, who provided inau-

guration tickets to students from Neville High School and Lee Junior High in Monroe, greeted the teenagers with their passes at the Senate Russell Building on Monday morning.

“Welcome to Washington to see this important history being made,” Vitter told the students. “It’s a special time and occasion for all sorts of reasons. There will be plenty of time for policy debates. The next couple of days are for a celebration of our country.”

Landrieu conducted a press conference to celebrate New Orleans native Ruby Bridges, who was one of four black girls to integrate the New Orleans school system in 1960.

“I’m just so excited,” said Bridges, who as a 6-year-old was immortalized in the Norman

Rockwell painting “The Problem We All Live With.”

“It sort of makes me feel like all of the sacrifices so many people made were not made in vain,” Bridges said.

Alexander said Tuesday’s inauguration, like those that came before it, will be unique to the world.

“The neatest thing about it to me is that it all works,” Alexander said. “(Obama) will take over, and Bush will leave and people will do just what they’re supposed to do.”

“The whole world revolves around this city, but you look out that window and see all kinds of regular Americans walking around with their families on the steps of the Capitol. It’s still the people’s place.”