



# CARTER COURIER

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## LETTER FROM THE CONGRESSMAN

Dear Friends,

I am happy to be spending the next several weeks in Central Texas during the Congressional August recess. This recess away from Washington allows me the opportunity to visit and discuss the issues directly facing the 31st District and our families.

Before adjourning for the recess, Congress worked late into the weekend as liberal and conservative members debated the agriculture and defense spending bills, a Democrat energy package, and amendments to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). The much needed amendments to FISA only came after Republicans and conservative Democrats stuck together and insisted that Speaker Pelosi and the liberal leadership address the pressing issue.

Again, I look forward to the following weeks here at home in Texas. As always, I thank you for the opportunity to defend our conservative values and to represent you in Congress.

Until next week,



## DEMANDING A SECURE HOMELAND

I will never forget the day I decided to run for Congress. It was an early September morning in 2001. I was at a conference in New Mexico with my friend Mike Davis. We were on our way to catch a plane home when every flight in America was grounded due to a terrorist attack on our country. Right then I realized that I needed to be home with my wife and kids, even if that meant driving a car across Texas. Mike and I rented a car and headed East towards Round Rock.

During the long drive, we talked about what we could do to serve our country. Mike told me there was an open congressional seat and that I should run for Congress. I had never thought of running for Congress but something about the idea tugged at me and by the time I got home, I was ready to make the move that would change my life.

Keeping America safe still remains my top priority. After the tragic attacks on 9/11, it became clear that the world had changed in many ways. No longer would the oceans on either side of us or our strong military deterrent be enough to protect innocent Americans going about their everyday lives. Our world is a more dangerous place, where threats now loom in our own backyard.

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National security became the most important issue after 9/11, and it still is today.

Our intelligence community performs a thankless job to snuff out terrorist plots. Many Americans will never know the plans they've thwarted or the lives they've saved as they toil behind the scenes. We owe them our gratitude and prayers, but in addition, we owe them the tools to do their job.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her liberal allies in the House leadership were content to begin the month-long August recess without fixing dangerous loopholes in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978 to bring the bill into the 21st century. Communicating in 1978 was very different than it is today. There were no cell phones, e-mail, or the Internet. This 70's era law has begun to bind the hands of our intelligence community as they try and keep pace with a 21st century al Qaeda. And yet, Speaker Pelosi and her liberal allies were willing to leave town without addressing this dangerous weakness.

Al Qaeda is relentless in its desire to attack America. Al Qaeda doesn't take an "August recess". It is frightening that the Democratic leadership would break for an entire month while this outdated measure sits dormant. Republicans and conservative Democrats were right to force Speaker Pelosi into action. The Director of National Intelligence has repeatedly asked for the tools to conduct surveillance on our enemies that does not involve rotary phones and postal mail.

The law, which passed by a vote of 227-183, modernizes FISA in four important ways: First, the Act permits our intelligence professionals to collect foreign intelligence information on non-Americans in foreign lands without first receiving court approval. Second, the Act provides a role for the FISA Court in reviewing intelligence community surveillance efforts procedures. Third, the Act provides for the FISA Court to direct third parties to assist the intelligence community in its collection efforts. Finally, the Act protects third parties from private lawsuits arising from assistance they provide the government.

President Ronald Reagan ran a famous campaign ad in 1984 which featured a bear walking through the forest, and narrator who said, "For some people the bear is easy to see. Others don't see it at all. Some people say the bear is tame. Others say it's vicious and dangerous. Since no one can really be sure who's right, isn't it smart to be as strong as the bear?" For Republicans and conservatives in Congress, this bear is easy to see, and we must indeed be as strong. But sadly, and dangerously, I fear that Speaker Pelosi and her liberal allies don't see it at all.

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### **HOUSE PROVIDES ASSISTANCE DURING MINNESOTA TRAGEDY**

Before adjourning for the August recess, I voted in favor of a bill to authorize \$250 million for emergency repairs and reconstruction to the Interstate I-35 Bridge located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that collapsed earlier that week.

What happened in Minnesota is a tragedy, and my heart goes out to the families of the victims who have experienced great loss and pain during this time. I also want to thank those firefighters, policemen, rescue workers and volunteers who have exhibited extraordinary heroism.

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### **FUNDING FOR GEORGETOWN'S DRUG FREE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

This week I announced that The Georgetown Project has been awarded \$85,000 as part of the Drug Free Communities Support Program within the Office of National Drug Control Policy. I am pleased to hear that these funds have been awarded to The Georgetown Project which plays a vital role in our community. It is paramount that we continue to fight the negative forces facing our children, and this funding will help accomplish that mission.

The Drug Free Communities Support Program provides grants of up to \$100,000 to community coalitions that mobilize their communities to prevent youth alcohol, tobacco, illicit drug, and inhalant abuse. The program acts as a catalyst for increased citizen participation in efforts to reduce substance use among youth and it provides drug-free community coalitions with much needed funds to carry out their important missions.



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**THE STATE OF CENTRAL TEXAS IS GOOD.  
THE THIRD ANNUAL "STATE OF THE DISTRICT" ADDRESS**

This week I delivered the third annual State of the District Address in Leander, Texas. During the address, I spoke to a group of public officials and community leaders about the state of the 31st Congressional District and policy in Washington D.C. that affects Central Texas.

I am here to tell you that the state of the 31st Congressional District is good. Our booming region serves as the crossroads for technology, agriculture, education and economic development. When you start looking at the America of the future, you can look at Central Texas and see a perfect example of what is to come for the rest of our country. And the best thing about our area is that in the midst of rapid growth and change, we are still the same common sense Texans with the good morals and values that we have always been.

Although Central Texas has an ever-growing strong economy, our challenge will be to maintain the way of life we have grown up to love. We must continue to have a strong sense of community where we look after one another. We must continue to strive for a healthy environment with clean air and water for the next generations of Central Texans. We must still continue with the same work ethic and diligence that we are known for. And most importantly, we must still stay deeply rooted in the Texas values that make the people of this area so genuine.

Among the topics discussed were the War on Terror, immigration, higher taxes, Medicare and the economy. I stressed that I am willing to work alongside conservative Democrats to form good policy that will benefit Central Texas and our nation as a whole.

Many of my colleagues in Washington think the best way to run this country is to expand the federal government. I say that bigger government is the problem. We should work to secure our nation's borders, keep taxes low and keep our economy growing. And we should support those brave men and women who are fighting to ensure that the next generations of Americans have the same freedom that we enjoy today. As your Congressman, and as a Central Texan, I will continue to push for sound policy that reflects the common sense principles of our great state.

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**USCIS LAUNCHES TOLL-FREE MILITARY HELP LINE**

Members of the U.S. military and their families stationed around the world are now able to call U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for help with immigration services and benefits using a dedicated, toll-free telephone help line, 1-877-CIS-4MIL (1-877-247-4645).

"Thousands of immigrant Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines have made extraordinary sacrifices for America," said USCIS Director Emilio Gonzalez. "As such, at USCIS, we are committed to exhausting every effort to ensure that the application process for immigrant service members is convenient, quick and secure. These brave men and women, and their families, deserve this service, and we are proud to assist."

USCIS customer service center specialists are available to assist callers Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (CST). Callers will receive assistance will:

- Tracking their application for naturalization (Form N-400);
- Notifying USCIS of a new mailing address or duty station;
- Checking the status of an application or petition;
- Bringing a spouse, fiancé(e) or adopted child to the United States;
- Obtaining posthumous citizenship for a deceased member of the Armed Services; and
- Submitting an application for expedited processing.

Service members and their families stationed in the United States or overseas may access the help line using the toll-free number, through their base telephone operator or using the Defense Switched Network (DSN). After hours callers will receive an e-mail address that they can use to contact USCIS for assistance. Operators will ask members of the general public to call our main customer service line: 1-800-375-5283.

In addition to the help line, USCIS has developed a web page, <http://www.uscis.gov/military> that contains information and links to services specifically for the military and their families.

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