



CARTER COURIER

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LETTER FROM THE CONGRESSMAN

Dear Friends,

I had a wonderful week celebrating July 4th in the district. I was proud to attend Belton's July 4th parade, and to also spend time at Fort Hood with our servicemen and women. It has been a busy week in Congress but conservatives won some important victories for our Central Texas values.

Next week, the House will be discussing several important pieces of legislation including two annual spending bills that provide funding for energy and water projects, and another bill that will fund the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Departments. As these bills are discussed, it will be my goal to ensure that vital funding is made available while working to instill fiscal discipline in our government.

As always, I thank all of you in the 31st District for the opportunity to serve you in Congress and look forward to the work that lies ahead in the coming days.

Until next week,



IMMIGRATION REFORM: THE TIME IS NOW

Last week the United States Senate effectively stopped the infamous Ted Kennedy immigration bill by a vote of 46-53. This bill would have granted blanket amnesty to millions of illegal and undocumented aliens while doing nothing to secure our borders or protect American citizens from the threat of terrorism. While this was a Senate bill, and I serve in the House, I repeatedly expressed my deep concerns with the Democrats' plan for immigration reform. In fact, the House Republicans passed a resolution in our conference meeting opposing the Senate bill just days before it was finally stopped.

The defeat of the Senate immigration bill is a victory for those who want real change in our immigration system and real security along our borders - but defeating this poorly crafted legislation was only half the battle. Now is the time for Congress to stop playing politics and debate real reform. This issue is bigger than sound bytes and campaign commercials - this is a national security issue. Too many of my colleagues - mostly Republicans, but a few Democrats as well - are determined to see change in the way folks immigrate to America and how we ensure homeland security.

No matter how you slice it, the many overlapping facets of immi-

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gration reform cannot begin without first securing the border and enforcing the laws already on the books. Not addressing the source of the problem makes all other efforts pointless.

I am afraid the Democratic-led Congress is now poised to use the failed Senate bill as an excuse to do nothing while more illegal aliens cross our borders. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democrat leaders have suggested that they will not approach the issue of immigration unless the Senate does so first. This makes absolutely no sense. When you see a hole in your roof, do you wait for someone else to get the tools? This is passing the political buck at its worst.

This Democratic Congress can boast of few achievements since taking power seven months ago. And yet on the one issue where the American people demand action, the Democrats show no will to address this crisis. There are many proposed solutions for immigration reform, but all members of Congress can agree that we must protect our borders and document those already within our nation. The urgency of the situation should be the starting point and the reason for bringing all parties to the table. But conservative, security-minded members of Congress are still waiting for the invitation. Right now the status quo may serve the interests of Speaker Pelosi and her Party, but every day we delay increases our national security risk.

I am determined that in the coming months pressure from Republicans and conservative Democrats can force House leadership to address this issue. At some point, we must pass a comprehensive immigration plan, but the first step is securing the border, enforcing the laws already on the books, and devising a way to document those already in America. The price for failing to act will be dire for our long-term security, social service systems, and the rule of law.

President Ronald Reagan, referencing the shining city on the hill in his farewell address to the nation, said, "And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here." I share the belief that many come to America pursuing the American Dream. We must deal with these individuals with compassion and fairness. But if we cannot protect our own citizens by securing the border, then how can we ever protect those coming here legally in pursuit of a better life? And as an elected district judge for over 20 years, I must insist that we enforce our laws. We must not grant amnesty to individuals who have broken our laws.

The rule of law is a powerful principle which should mean something to all Americans – present and future. Now is the time to act, and in a manner that will ensure peace and security for future generations. I stand ready to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and I will continue to push for swift action and tough immigration reform.

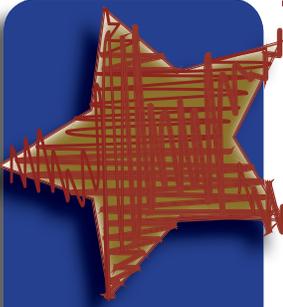
INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FOR KILLEEN

I was pleased to announce that the City of Killeen has received approval from the House Appropriations Committee for a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The funding, awarded under EPA's State and Tribal Assistance Grants program, is to be used for water and sewer infrastructure in Killeen. The full committee bill will now move to the House floor for final passage.

LISTEN TO MY WEEKLY RADIO ADDRESS

Please click on the link below to listen to my most recent weekly radio address that was sent to local radio and television stations. This week's seven and a half minute address discusses the Congressional appropriations process.

<http://carter.house.gov/multimedia/>



ASSISTANCE FOR COUNTIES AFFECTED BY STORMS

This week I announced that the State of Texas major disaster declaration was amended to designate Archer, Bell, Burnet, Eastland, Hood, Parker, Starr, Victoria, Webb, Wichita, and Williamson Counties as eligible for Individual Assistance.

This is the first step in helping to cleanup the mess caused by the recent storms which ravaged Central Texas. While it will take time to restore normalcy to those who have experienced damage to their homes and businesses, I am happy that FEMA is responding to the urgency of this situation and will provide a means of assistance. My thoughts and prayers continue to be with those affected by this flooding.

Individuals may register for assistance by calling: 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or online by visiting: www.fema.gov. Individuals applying for assistance should have the following ready:

- Social Security number
- Current and pre-disaster address
- A contact telephone number
- Insurance information
- Total household annual income
- A routing and account number from your bank (only necessary if you want to have disaster assistance funds transferred directly into your bank account)
- A description of your losses that were caused by the disaster

OPPOSING THE SO-CALLED "STUDENT AID" BILL

This week I voted against H.R. 2699, a bill that the Democrats are calling the "College Cost Reduction Act," although it does little to help students and forces working families to subsidize student loan debts of Members of Congress and lobbyists.

One of the top concerns facing families today is the rising cost of higher education. This Democrat bill fails to help low-income students because less than one third of the savings are directed to the Pell Grant program. In fact, most of the so-called 'student aid' in this bill won't help a single college student. Instead, it forces working families to subsidize individuals who have already graduated with a college degree. A Central Texas family deciding whether they can afford to send a high school senior to college won't see any additional help- but they will be forced to subsidize loan forgiveness for Members of Congress and lobbyists.

Of the \$18 billion spent on higher education, less than one third goes towards the Pell Grant Program. The other \$13 billion goes towards nine costly new entitlement programs, benefits for those who have already graduated from college and new programs aimed at institutions, rather than students.

REMEMBERING LADY BIRD JOHNSON

I join the citizens of Texas, the American people, and friends and admirers from all over the world in extending my sincere condolences to the family of Mrs. Lady Bird Johnson.

Lady Bird Johnson was a charming, gracious First Lady who was a great asset to her family and her husband, President Lyndon Johnson. She loved the beauty of our country and promoted the conservation and beautification of our open spaces, our highways and our parks.

As my family travels the Texas Highways each Spring and enjoys the glorious Blue Bonnets and Indian Paintbrushes, I often tell my children that we have Lady Bird Johnson to thank for preservation of these flowers of Texas. That is truly a wonderful legacy.