

# CARTER COURIER

<http://carter.house.gov>

OCTOBER 3, 2006

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 33

## LETTER FROM THE CONGRESSMAN

Dear Friends,

Last week the House of Representatives was busy finishing business before leaving for October District Work Period. We were able to pass significant bills that address numerous issues of importance to Americans.

We provided support for our national defense by arming our military and intelligence operations with the tools they need to keep America safe. We also made significant progress on border security, enacting strong measures to secure our borders and strictly enforce our immigration laws.

The House also provided the resources and reforms Americans want and need in order to improve education for the future leaders of our nation, our children. Action was also taken to help protect Americans' private property rights by providing them with greater access to federal courts.

I look forward to meeting with individuals and organizations throughout the 31st District over the next several weeks.

Until next week,



## SUPPORTING THOSE WHO BRAVELY SERVED OUR NATION

Service men and women have selflessly sacrificed to defend our freedom since America was founded more than 200 years ago. We owe a debt of gratitude to each and every one of these brave service members. Although we can never fully repay our nation's veterans for their dedication and service, the least we can do is provide them with the support and services they deserve. As a member of the House Appropriations Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, I have continued to support policies that benefit our veterans.

The Veterans Affairs (VA) Department would be unable to provide valuable services to millions of veterans if the department did not receive adequate funding. I am a strong fiscal conservative and continue to fight waste and abuse in the federal government. I do, however, believe that providing funding for our military and veterans is a worthy and necessary expense. To address the needs of the VA, the House increased the VA budget by 18 percent in the 109th Congress.

The House also passed the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act, which will provide a 4.1 percent annual cost-of-living adjustment for veterans' benefits. This bill will benefit nearly three million service-connected veterans and survivors of service-connected veterans.

We remain committed to ensuring that the men and women who have served our country have affordable access to quality health care services. Since 1995, the veterans medical care budget has increased nearly 90 percent.

This year, Veteran's Medical Services will receive its highest funding level in history at \$22.5 billion, \$1.7 billion more than

### CONTENTS

*Veterans*  
1-2

*Second Amendment  
Rights Bill*  
2

*Homeland Security  
Funding Bill*  
2-3

*Abortion Notification Bill*  
3

*Military Commissions Act*  
3

*Defense Appropriations*  
3

*Kid's Page:  
Columbus Day Quiz*  
4

*Coloring Page:  
Christopher Columbus*  
5





last year, to support hospitals, out-patient clinics and nursing homes. Over the last two years, funding support for veteran's medical care has increased by 18 percent-and by 40 percent over the past five years.

Further, I took an active role in making sure all proposed budget cuts for state-run veteran nursing homes were rejected in the Veterans Affairs Subcommittee. I also strongly supported the decision to provide \$85 million to states for grants to acquire or construct extended care facilities.

Mental health care services are critical, especially for those troops returning from combat. \$2.2 billion has been made available for quality mental health care services. This is the first time that funding has been set aside for specialty mental health care for veterans, particularly those returning from combat areas. Congress also required the Veterans Health administration to designate certain specialized medical treatment facilities for mental health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as "Centers of Excellence."

Providing enhancements to housing, health insurance, and employment benefits and services for veterans was also a priority for Congress this year. The Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act, which is now law, expands efforts to educate employers on the value of hiring veterans. It also makes adaptive housing grant funding available to disabled veterans to modify the homes of family members assisting them in order to better accommodate their injuries.

Another area of concern for veterans is preventing identity theft. This week, the House approved legislation to protect the personal information of veterans. The Veterans Identity and Credit Security Act will reorganize the Veterans Affairs (VA) Department's information technology operation and provides the VA a definite course of action to follow should a data breach occur in the future. This bill includes credit protection services and fraud resolution services upon the request of the individual for individuals whose personal information is compromised by the VA. This and similar bills became a priority following reports earlier this year that the information of nearly 26.5 million veterans was stolen from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Although that situation was resolved without harm to any veterans, it is important that we have stricter safeguards in place to keep this from happening again.

We enjoy our freedom today because of the sacrifices of our veterans. It is our duty as a nation to serve them with the same degree of commitment and loyalty as they have served America. As your Representative, I will continue to do all that I can to ensure our veterans receive the best care and services possible.

---

### **CARTER SUPPORTS BILL TO PROTECT SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS**

I recently voted in favor of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (BATFE) Modernization & Reform Act, which passed the House by a vote of 277-131. I co-sponsored this bill that would impose civil fines for violations of firearms laws and change the procedures BATFE uses to approve applications for firearms licenses and how it prosecutes license violations.

Law abiding citizens have a right to keep and bear arms, and I will remain committed to protecting all Americans' Second Amendment right. The Second Amendment to the Constitution clearly protects the fundamental right of individuals to keep and bear arms for defense, recreation, and collection.

This bill establishes common sense graduated civil penalties for individuals or companies who violate gun laws. It also implements a review process that is fair and consistent.

Current law often punishes firearms dealers for minor recordkeeping errors, such as improperly using abbreviations and filing records in the wrong order. H.R. 5092 rewrites the system of administrative penalties for licensed dealers, manufacturers and importers of firearms. This bill would strengthen BATFE enforcement efforts by allowing fines or license suspensions for less serious violations. H.R. 5092 would still allow license revocation for the kind of serious violations that would block an investigation or put guns in the hands of criminals.

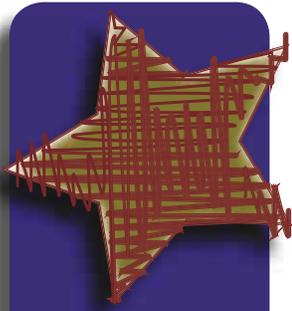
---

### **CARTER VOTES IN FAVOR OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING BILL**

*Provides Significant Spending for Border Security Initiatives*

I strongly supported last week's House passage of the Homeland Security Appropriations Conference Report for Fiscal Year 2007. This bill provides \$34.8 billion for our most critical homeland security needs, including: border and immigration security; nuclear detection; port, cargo, and container security; transportation security; natural disaster preparedness and response; and support to state and local first responders.

Nothing is more critical to the U.S. than efforts to secure our nation. This spending bill funds programs that are vital to keeping our homeland secure from various threats. Border security and immigration reform are urgent homeland security issues, and this bill supports initiatives that will immediately protect our borders.



This bill also supports ongoing homeland security efforts in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, including increased funding for first responders and transportation security. Port security initiatives are also in place to stop threats before they reach American soil.

H.R. 5441 provides \$21.3 billion for border protection and immigration enforcement. This includes \$5.2 billion for the Secure Border Initiative, which will give the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) the technology, personnel, and infrastructure to help prevent terrorists and other criminals from exploiting our borders and immigration system.

Additional border security measures included in the conference agreement are:

- \$2.77 billion for border patrol, adding 1,500 new Border Patrol agents, for a total of 14,800;
- \$1.2 billion for border fencing, vehicle barriers, technology and infrastructure;
- \$1.38 billion for ICE custody operations, adding 6,700 detention beds, for a total of 27,500; and
- \$28.2 million to assist state and local efforts to enforce immigration law.

It is important to note that the construction of new border fencing can begin as soon as the President signs the Homeland Security Appropriations Conference report.

---

### **CARTER PROTECTS MINORS, SUPPORTS PARENTS' RIGHTS**

Last week I supported the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act, which would make it a federal crime to transport a minor across state lines to obtain an abortion in another state in order to avoid a state law requiring parental involvement in a minor's abortion decision. Parental notification regarding a minor's decision to end human life through abortion is appropriate and necessary. This bill will help ensure that parents are involved in their child's abortion decision and will protect the health and physical safety of young girls.

It is ludicrous to allow minors to undergo a potentially dangerous medical procedure without their parents' knowledge, especially considering that parental consent is required for children to play sports or obtain aspirin.

The bill, which is now awaiting the President's signature, also requires abortion providers in interstate abortions to provide notification of the minor's decision to the minor's parents or legal guardian 24 hours before the abortion is performed. Each of these federal crimes will carry penalties of a \$100,000 fine, or one year of jail, or both.

---

### **CARTER VOTES IN FAVOR OF BILL TO PROSECUTE TERRORISTS, PROTECT AMERICAN TROOPS UNDER NEW JUDICIAL SYSTEM**

I voted in favor of the Military Commissions Act, which creates a new judicial system to prosecute terrorists captured in the ongoing Global War on Terrorism, while also protecting American troops and intelligence agents fighting terrorists.

This legislation will guarantee that terrorists who attack our nation and its citizens will be brought to justice swiftly.

The Military Commissions Act allows American troops to continue the fight against terrorists, while establishing a fair and legal process to try enemy combatants in the ongoing war on terrorism. Further, this bill guarantees that classified and sensitive information will not make it to the hands of the terrorists who are intent on destroying the American way of life.

The Military Commissions Act is the result of negotiations among the White House, Senate, and House of Representatives. The bill will effectively and fairly prosecute terrorists, while also protecting American troops and intelligence agents fighting the Global War on Terror. The measure fully conforms with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, as well as all applicable U.S. laws and international treaty obligations.

---

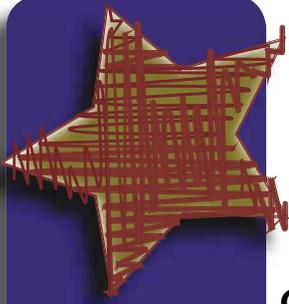
### **CARTER SUPPORTS DEFENSE SPENDING BILL**

I am honored to represent the largest military installation in the world, Fort Hood, and thousands of our brave soldiers and their families. Ensuring that our troops receive the resources they need to defend our nation and win the war on terror remains a top priority of mine.

I recently voted in favor of the conference report on H.R. 5631, the Department of Defense Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2007. This \$447.6 billion bill provides critical funding for defense priorities, including troop protection, operation and maintenance, research and development, and emergency wartime appropriations.

This bill will help protect our service men and women by providing funding for important troop protection needs like new improvised explosive device countermeasures. This legislation also provides our committed and brave service men and women with a well-deserved pay raise.

Specifically, this bill includes: \$70 billion in supplemental war funding; a 2.2 percent military pay raise; \$1.9 billion for new improvised explosive device countermeasures to protect our troops on the ground; Almost \$23 billion to ensure Army and Marine Corps troops are fully equipped with updated and refurbished equipment; and \$1.5 billion for the Chemical and Biological Defense Program.



# Kids' Page

## COLUMBUS DAY QUIZ

*On October 9th, the U.S. will celebrate Columbus Day. This day commemorates Christopher Columbus's landing in the New World (at San Salvador island, also known as Watling Island, today part of the British Bahamas) on October 12, 1492.*

**Unscramble these words that have to do with Columbus Day.**

1. **ssihp** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **hcritpsoehr ocumblsu** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **atsna aamir** \_\_\_\_\_

4. **nspia** \_\_\_\_\_

5. **itnap** \_\_\_\_\_

6. **irsloa** \_\_\_\_\_

7. **nocae** \_\_\_\_\_

8. **eruto** \_\_\_\_\_

9. **lgdo** \_\_\_\_\_

10. **eiscsp** \_\_\_\_\_

# Coloring Page



On August 3, 1492, Columbus and ninety men set sail on the Santa Maria along with two other ships, the Nina and the Pinta.

The voyage was hard and many men were sick and tired. On October 11, at ten o'clock at night, Columbus saw a light. The Pinta sailed ahead and reported that they had reached land. Since Columbus thought they had reached India, they expected to see people that were Indian. Even when they found out that they were not in Asia, they were happy to have found a new place that they could trade with. Columbus named the area where they landed "San Salvador", and claimed the area for Spain. Columbus continued to explore the New World and made several other voyages.