



Newsletter/Questionnaire

Securing \$100 Million More for BART



Tom and Annette Lantos inaugurate the new Bay Area Rapid transit stop at the airport. Greeting them (left) is Thomas E. Margro, BART's General Manager.

In early September the House of Representatives passed the transportation spending bill for 2004, which provides \$100 million to BART and additional funds for new proposed programs serving San Francisco and the Peninsula.

The BART funding will help cover construction costs for the new Airport Extension. Congressman Tom Lantos secured the federal funds for this high-priority Bay Area project.

The bill also includes \$800,000 for SamTrans and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for their Zero-Emissions bus project, as well as \$500,000 for a new ferry for the proposed route between South San Francisco's Oyster Point and downtown San Francisco.

The federal support for these projects is on top of the usual funding for transportation that each state receives.

Battling the Administration on the Environment

As part of his work to preserve our nation's natural resources, Tom Lantos has introduced legislation to add 5,000 acres of open space in San Mateo County to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).

The bill, H.R. 532, will expand the boundaries of the GGNRA to include the Rancho Corral de Tierra, one of the largest tracts of undeveloped land along the San Mateo Coast that includes Montara Mountain. The area has panoramic views, important watersheds, miles of scenic trails, and an array of plant and animal life, some of which are threatened or endangered.

It is vital to safeguard this part of the coastline because the Administration seeks to block additional wilderness designation for some of our national parks, supports increased logging in the Tongass National Forest, and wants to see increased mineral extraction on public lands. Previous legislation that Tom authored has added several vulnerable areas to the GGNRA, including Sweeney Ridge, the Phleger Estate in Woodside, and Mori Point and other scenic areas in Pacifica.

The Republican majority in Congress continues to reverse 30 years of bipartisan progress on environmental protection. Whether the issue is clean air, clean water, toxic waste, or public land, this Administration pre-

sents constant challenges to environmental protection.

The Administration proposes to open the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to explore for oil. Just as he has steadfastly defended our California coastline, Tom believes it is outrageous to drill for oil in the places that need protection most; he has voted to keep these natural treasures from being jeopardized.

When Congress passed amendments to

the Clean Air Act more than ten years ago to limit harmful air pollution emitted from thousands of power plants, it required any plants that undergo modernization to reduce their emissions. The Administration now proposes to relax these rules and let some of our oldest power plants convert without reducing harmful emissions. Tom Lantos adamantly opposes these rule changes.

Swift Action Saves 250 San Mateo Jobs

Tom Lantos saved 250 jobs at once by successfully fighting efforts to shut down the U.S. Postal Service's Information Technology Center in San Mateo. The Postal Service declared its intention to close the IT Center, but Tom challenged this decision and asked the General Accounting Office (GAO) to investigate the social costs and financial hardships the closure would cause. Convinced by the GAO's report, the Postal Service reversed its decision and announced that it has "no plans to close the facility at this time." Tom later secured a personal commitment from Postmaster General John Potter that he would keep the IT Center open indefinitely.

"I am thrilled that our efforts to keep the

San Mateo Information Technology Center open and save the jobs of its highly-skilled, hard-working employees have paid off," the Congressman said. "The Postmaster General stated clearly that there are no plans to close the facility at this time, or in the future. The workers at the IT Center can now plan for their futures with the confidence that their jobs are secure."

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 3.3 million jobs have been lost over the last two-and-a-half years. And of those lost jobs, 275,000 were in California. The national unemployment rate is 6.1%, in California it is 6.6%. Among the 8.9 million Americans unemployed are 1,157,000 Californians.



Congressman Tom Lantos meets with Rock Star and activist Bono to discuss the passage of H.R. 1289, landmark HIV/AIDS legislation.

Finding New Ways to End Worldwide HIV/AIDS Pandemic

Rock star and activist Bono thanked Congressman Tom Lantos for helping secure a major victory in the battle against global AIDS with the passage of a bill that he co-authored, the U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act (H.R. 1289), which sped through Congress and was signed into law earlier this year. It authorized \$15 billion over the next five years for prevention and treatment assistance to programs that help HIV/AIDS victims worldwide. The United Nations reports that last year 3.1 million people died of AIDS, and about 610,000 them were children. "This is an urgent problem that affects the stability of families, communities and entire nations around the globe," Congressman Lantos said. "We cannot afford to delay crucial aid to programs that have proven effective in preventing and treating HIV/AIDS in the places that need these programs the most."

Fighting For Pay Equity

Tom Lantos champions the cause for women and men to receive the same pay for the same work. In the current Congress, he has cosponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act, which increases penalties against employers who discriminate on the basis of sex. This legislation will also protect women who report inequities, and it authorizes the Department of Labor to enhance outreach and training programs that work with employers to eliminate pay disparities.

President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963, effectively prohibiting employers from paying different wages to men and women performing the same job. At the time, women earned only 59 cents for every dollar received by men.

Forty years after this landmark legislation, the pay gap remains unjustifiably large. On average, a woman earns 80 cents for work that pays a man a dollar, and this inequity is even greater for women of color. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported in August that the average female worker in San Francisco takes home \$6,011 a year less than her male counterparts.

Tom Lantos also strongly advocates other initiatives to provide men and women the workplace flexibility they need. Ten years ago, he supported for the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which requires employers to provide workers with up to 12 weeks of unpaid and job-protected leave for family medical reasons — to care for a sick parent, for example, or to nurture a newborn child. Today, Tom backs efforts to expand FMLA to let employees take leave for parent-teacher conferences or to attend their children's educational and extracurricular activities. He believes that this would prove an invaluable asset to working families, and he has pledged to fight for its passage.

Closing the Financial Gap for Reservist Families

At a constituent's suggestion, Congressman Tom Lantos recently introduced legislation designed to close the "pay gap" that creates financial hardships for our nation's Reservists and National Guard members when they are placed on active duty.

The Equity for Reservists Pay Act (H.R. 1345) will substantially reduce the discrepancy between civilian and military salaries for Reservists and National Guard members when they are activated for more than thirty days. The bill requires the Federal Government to pay its civilian employees serving in the Reserves the difference between their civilian government salary and the Reserve or National Guard salary. The bill also provides strong incentives for state and local governments to do the same. The National Guard Association and the Reserve Officers Association have endorsed the bill.

In the 12th Congressional district thousands of Reservist and National Guard members could potentially benefit from the bill.

The House Government Reform Committee unanimously approved parts of this bill, but the House Republican leadership has so far refused to give bill a chance to come before the House of Representatives for a vote. Tom Lantos has vowed to continue to fight for its passage in Congress on behalf of the thousands of military Reservists, National Guard members, and their families suffering from pay inequity at a time when they already are making sacrifices on our country's behalf.

"Your bill provides a range of solutions to the problem that has long plagued reservists. . . . We are pleased at your vision in introducing it and we stand ready to assist in any way we can."

— **Reserve Officers Association of the United States**



"We applaud your efforts to ensure that those serving abroad will have the comfort of knowing that their families will not face financial hardship."

— **International Association of Firefighters**

Questionnaire

The Peninsula and San Francisco enjoy many assets — natural beauty, first-rate schools, innovative businesses, and a legacy of progressive values and technological leadership — but none is more valuable than the diversity of its people. The array of perspectives in our communities enriches our culture, our neighborhoods, and, of course, our politics.

I would like to learn more about your views on important policy issues. Congress faces a wide range of challenges in the months ahead, many of which are reflected in the survey below. I hope you will take a few minutes to answer these questions. More space is provided for you to share your opinions with me.

The easiest way to complete this survey is to log on to my website at www.house.gov/lantos and record your answers online. If you prefer, please cut out the survey, fold it so the address panel shows, and return it to my California office. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me.

Sincerely,



1. President Bush has recommended a financial package of \$20.3 billion for the reconstruction of Iraq. As an alternative, Tom Lantos has proposed that these funds should be provided not as a grant, but rather as a loan against future oil revenues. Do you support or oppose this plan?

Support

Oppose

No opinion

2. Which statement best fits your views on President Bush's recently enacted \$350 billion tax cut plan?
- (1) I oppose it. We should invest more money in homeland security, education, and other social needs.
 - (2) I support parts of it. We need tax relief to spur economic growth, but the President's approach is too costly.
 - (3) I strongly support the President's tax cut plan.
 - (4) I don't have strong views on tax cuts.
3. Which statement best fits your views on abortion?
- (1) I strongly believe abortion should be legal under all circumstances.
 - (2) There should be some limits on abortion, such as parental consent for girls under 18.
 - (3) Abortion should be illegal except to save the life of the mother.
 - (4) I strongly believe abortion should be illegal under all circumstances.
 - (5) I don't have strong views on abortion.
4. Which statement best fits your views on the Administration's plans for oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)?
- (1) Drilling for oil should be prohibited in ANWR.
 - (2) The government should allow drilling in ANWR, but only in carefully controlled circumstances.
 - (3) The government should strongly encourage drilling in ANWR.
 - (4) I don't have strong views on ANWR.
5. Which statement best fits your views on gun control?
- (1) I strongly believe we need tough new controls on guns.
 - (2) Let's just enforce the gun laws we have.
 - (3) Let's repeal some existing gun laws (such as the ban on assault weapons ban or waiting periods for gun purchase).
 - (4) I don't have strong views on gun control.

Please use this space to mention any additional thoughts about issues that are important to you:

If you would like to receive timely updates from me on important legislative issues please provide your e-mail address and return this form. The confidentiality of your communications with me are protected by the Privacy Act, and your e-mail address will not be shared with others.

E-mail address _____

*The United States Capitol Historical Society publishes the spectacular **We The People** calendar featuring photographs of the U.S. Capitol and a variety of important historical dates. A limited number of these calendars are available.*



If you would like one, please check this box and provide your mailing address on back.

Please print your name and address clearly

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PLACE
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Congressman Tom Lantos
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Protecting and Supporting Seniors

Congressman Tom Lantos believes that the White House must keep its promise to America's seniors to strengthen, not jeopardize, Social Security and Medicare. This is one of his foremost priorities.

Tom Lantos strongly opposes various plans to privatize Social Security. In 2001, a commission appointed by President Bush proposed reforms that could convince people to invest part of their Social Security funds in the stock market. Independent analysts have criticized these proposals as costly and risky.

By contrast, Tom Lantos has co-sponsored legislation to increase Social Security cost of living allowances (COLAs), to make the benefits go farther and to be certain that benefits keep pace with inflation in our ever-changing economy.

Eight years ago, Tom Lantos fought former House Speaker Newt Gingrich's efforts to slash hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare; today, he backs efforts to provide an affordable prescription drug benefit for all seniors. The Republican legislation recently passed by Congress, which he opposed, would result in substantial out-of-pocket cost increases and would force older Americans into HMOs. Legislation Tom supports would guarantee fixed premiums and broader coverage. He will work to ensure that any Medicare reforms are in the best interest of Bay Area seniors.



Tom Lantos comforts Maggie Carey, whose 16-year-old son was killed in a work-related accident.

Preventing the Exploitation of Young Workers

Congressman Tom Lantos has just introduced a bill bringing much-needed reform to U.S. child labor law. The Youth Worker Protection Act (H.R. 3193) is meant to strengthen legal protections for young workers while placing common-sense restrictions on the type of work available to them. It

would also limit the hours during the school year that teens can be required to work. Joining Tom for the announcement of the legislation was Maggie Carey, whose son Adam died at age 16 in a work-related accident. News of the legislation, along with this photo, appeared in USA Today.

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