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**Congressional
Update**

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Dear Friend,

With the 2003 legislative session several months underway, I am pleased to update you on the actions of Congress thus far. If you have any questions regarding the items discussed in this newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me. The addresses and phone numbers for each of my offices are found on the address panel above, along with my web site address and toll-free phone number for constituents not within a local calling area of any of the district offices.

Be sure to clip and save the Town Meeting schedule included inside. Your attendance at one of the meetings is greatly welcomed. Regular feedback from constituents such as you is critical to my effective service in Washington.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude and admiration to our Nation's military personnel, many of whom are serving in harm's way far from home, as well as to their family members who are making tremendous sacrifices here at home. Our citizens are more secure, the world is a safer place, and millions of citizens throughout the world are experiencing the joy of freedom for the first time because of the courageous service of these individuals. Having recently visited with Marines and Navy personnel at Bethesda Naval Medical Center who were wounded in combat in Iraq, I can attest to the unwavering spirit and dedication to duty of our men and women in uniform. Please join me in continuing to keep our Nation's military personnel and their families in our thoughts and prayers. God bless you and God bless America!

**Don't miss the
Town Meeting
schedule inside!**

Sincerely,

Todd Russell Platts

Platts Votes Against Budget Proposal

On April 11, Congress adopted a Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 budget resolution which proposes to reduce taxes by \$1.22 trillion over the next 11 years while increasing the national debt by nearly \$6 trillion. I joined 211 members of the House of Representatives in voting against this proposal.

The budget resolution provides the framework within which Congress subsequently considers tax and spending bills. Although it does not actually enact tax cuts and spending levels into law, the resolution provides a fiscal "road map" for the nation and creates certain procedural advantages and disadvantages to subsequent tax and spending legislation.

In recent years, budget resolutions contained "reconciliation" instructions that allow tax cut legislation to move through the Senate without the threat of a filibuster. Reconciliation protection means that only 51 votes – rather than a 60 vote supermajority – are needed to pass tax legislation in the Senate. The FY 2004 reconciliation instructions are highly unusual. They propose different reconciliation numbers for the House (\$550 billion) and the Senate (\$350 billion). This unusual approach resulted from negotiations between those who want larger tax cuts and those who want smaller cuts. While it is unclear what tax cuts Congress will ultimately pass, the reconciliation instructions pretty much guarantee the passage of tax cuts totaling at least \$350 billion.

I am supportive of tax cuts in the \$350 billion to the \$550 billion range if they target true economic stimulus for all Americans and a more fair tax code. In particular, I believe Congress should accelerate the marginal rate reductions for middle and low income taxpayers and permanently eliminate the death tax and marriage penalty. I do not, however, believe a \$1.22 trillion tax reduction at a time of war and growing deficits is responsible fiscal policy.

The FY 2004 budget resolution proposes to increase the national debt from the current level of \$6.4 trillion to \$12 trillion in FY 2013. This includes borrowing a total of \$2.6 trillion from Social Security. Importantly, these Social Security trust funds will not be used to pay down publicly-held federal government debt. Rather, said funds will be expended on non-Social Security programs. In FY 2004 alone, the national debt ceiling will increase – without even a formal vote of the House – by an unprecedented \$984 billion.

On the spending side, the budget resolution proposes a FY 2004 total of \$2.25 trillion in expenditures, a 4.3% increase over FY 2003. Unfortunately, the budget resolution unrealistically assumes that there will be zero Fiscal Year 2004 expenditures related to the war in Iraq or the stabilization of a new Iraqi government. Such an unrealistic assumption translates to an inaccurate picture of spending demands.

In conclusion, I believe that a nearly \$1 trillion increase in the national debt in one year, and a doubling of the national debt over the next ten years, is an irresponsible fiscal "road map" for our Nation. I am especially concerned that, even in light of this doubling of the national debt and our on-going global war on terrorism and more targeted war in Iraq, the budget resolution proposes a \$1.22 trillion tax cut. As such, I voted against the budget resolution. As subsequent tax and spending legislation is considered, I will continue evaluating such legislation in a very deliberate and responsible manner, with a determined focus on the long-term fiscal integrity of the federal government.



*Eagle Scouts – One of the most rewarding duties associated with my official position is the presentation of Certificates of Special Congressional Recognition to Boy Scouts on the occasion of their achieving the rank of Eagle and Girl Scouts when they receive their Gold Award. Three of the most recent Eagle Scouts I recognized are Hanover Troop #110 Scouts **Keith Nelson**, son of **David and Donna Nelson**, **Michael Simmons**, son of **Robert and Claudia Simmons**, and **A.J. Spector**, son of **David and Jennie Spector**. Also pictured are State Senator **Mike Waugh** and Scoutmaster **Tim Stevenson**.*

House Votes to Ban Human Cloning

Although the concept of human cloning may sound like science fiction, a Massachusetts company announced in late 2001 that it had created the world's first human embryonic clones, turning science fiction into science fact. More recently, a group calling itself "Clonaid" claimed to have created an infant clone. While the cloned human embryos survived for only a few hours and the Clonaid claim appears to be a hoax, these events dramatically underscore that society can no longer wait to have a very serious and thoughtful debate about the ethical and moral implications of human cloning.

A consensus seems to have developed about the wisdom – or, more accurately, the lack of wisdom – in human cloning for reproductive purposes. President Bush's Council on Bioethics, consisting of 18 members with a wide variety of backgrounds and viewpoints, has unanimously recommended a ban on reproductive cloning. The President perhaps best explained why such cloning strikes us as so unnatural and wrong: "Life is a creation, not a commodity," he said. "Our children are gifts to be loved and protected, not products to be designed and manufactured."

The core of the debate in Congress, therefore, is how far we should go in banning human cloning. On February 27, 2003, I voted in favor of passing the Human Cloning Prohibition Act (H.R. 534). This legislation would ban all human cloning. H.R. 534 passed the House by a vote of 241-155.

An alternative proposal would make an exception for so-called "therapeutic" cloning. The purpose of therapeutic cloning would be to develop clones for use in medical research, possibly harvesting their stem cells. Stem cell research may very well offer possible cures for those in our community afflicted

with Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and other devastating illnesses and conditions. It is my sincere hope that the benefits of such research will have a far-reaching positive impact on the many people afflicted with these diseases. However, alternatives to using human clones (as well as aborted embryos) to recover stem cells exist. Stem cells can be derived from voluntary adult donors as well as from placentas and umbilical cords.

While I sincerely empathize with those who suffer from the above-referenced diseases, as well as with their families, I do not believe the proper way to pursue medical research is to create life with the purposeful intent of later destroying it. Allowing cloning for therapeutic purposes alone would establish in the law a requirement that a specific class of human beings – that is, clones – *must* be experimented upon and promptly destroyed. This is unacceptable in a civilized society that values human life. Where it will lead cannot be predicted – and should not be risked.

A second concern with only a limited ban on human cloning is the inability to effectively regulate it. Allowing any human cloning experiments to proceed, even if supposedly for only medical research and experimentation, will most certainly result eventually in the implantation of a human clone into a mother's womb. How will society respond? Will it destroy the clone, or treat the clone as a second-class citizen? Once a clone is created and lives in society, can we ever go back?

H.R. 534 is now pending in the Senate. Hopefully, the Senate will consider this critically important legislation in the near future. Waiting even a few more months may very well result in yet more "science fiction" becoming reality.



Gettysburg Address Remembered – Lynne Cheney, Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and wife of Vice President Dick Cheney, was the keynote speaker at the Lincoln Fellowship of Pennsylvania's annual ceremony marking the 139th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Soldier's National Cemetery and President Abraham Lincoln's eloquent address. I was honored to attend the ceremony with Mrs. Cheney, President Lincoln portrayed by James Getty, Gettysburg College Civil War Institute Director Dr. Gabor Boritt, Lincoln Fellowship and Civil War Institute members, and other Dedication Day guests.



Veterans Honored – On Veterans Day last November, I was pleased to join with Mr. Jiapan Chen and Mr. Zehao Zhou, along with their families, in paying tribute to approximately thirty-five American World War II veterans from throughout Central Pennsylvania who served in combat in the China, Burma, and India (CBI) theatre of operations. The fathers of Mr. Chen and Mr. Zhou served alongside the American CBI veterans during the war.

Platts Named Subcommittee Chairman

I am honored to have been recently selected by House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis to serve as the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management. This Subcommittee is broadly charged with overseeing matters relating to the overall efficiency and financial management of executive departments and agencies, governmental accounting measures, financial services, and the Nation's economic growth. In the coming year, the Subcommittee will focus on government-wide efforts to eliminate waste, fraud, and mismanagement.

The Subcommittee's responsibilities include overseeing the implementation of President Bush's Management Agenda which seeks to improve the federal government's financial accountability and transparency. The Subcommittee recently held a series of hearings on "Governing with Accountability" where we began to examine efforts underway to tie federal agencies' performance to funding levels. Hopefully, as a result of the Subcommittee's oversight efforts, taxpayer funds will be spent in the same manner as our personal funds – that is, in the most efficient and responsible manner possible.

Congress Enacts Wartime Supplemental

On April 12, the House and Senate passed an emergency spending bill (**H.R. 1559**) to fund the projected costs of Operation Iraqi Freedom and to further address enhanced homeland security efforts and the on-going war on global terrorism. President Bush signed this legislation into law on April 16. **H.R. 1559** appropriated the following sums:

- \$62.5 billion to pay for the costs of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the global war on terrorism, including the costs of munitions, fuel, mobilization of the reserves and National Guard, and combat pay;
- \$2.5 billion for stabilization efforts and humanitarian relief in Iraq;

- \$2.2 billion for “first responders,” such as firefighters, police, and emergency health professionals;
- \$1.5 billion to enhance port security, the screening of baggage and passengers at airports, and border enforcement activities;
- \$50 million to fund programs aimed at securing and destroying weapons of mass destruction (WMD);
- \$100 million for veteran’s medical care; and,
- \$162 million for bio-terrorism and public health activities, including funding for smallpox vaccination programs and research on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).



United Defense Plays Critical Role in War Effort – As the tremendous success of our military efforts in Iraq were broadcast daily throughout the country, workers at the **United Defense** plant in York County were rightly proud of the role they played in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Bradley Fighting Vehicles, M109 Paladins, and Hercules Tank Recovery Vehicles were regularly seen in the center of the action. All were manufactured by United Defense. It was a United Defense Hercules that pulled down the statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad. In recognition of the critical role that its vehicles played in Iraq and have long played in our Nation’s military efforts, I was pleased to recently join U.S. Senator **Arlen Specter** in visiting with hundreds of United Defense employees at the York Plant, including **Stephen Neff** (left), President of United Steelworkers of America Local 7687, and **Tom Rabaut** (right), President and CEO of United Defense.



Visiting the Troops – In February, I had the privilege of visiting members of the **Pennsylvania National Guard 28th Infantry Division** stationed in Tuzla, Bosnia as part of a multi-national stabilization force. The Guard troops, including many from the 19th District (pictured above), returned home in March following their completion of a seven-month deployment. With National Guard and Reserve troops playing ever-increasing roles in meeting the national security challenges of our Nation, we need to be especially grateful for the service of these individuals and their families, along with their civilian employers here at home. My February trip also included several days in Israel during which time my five House colleagues and I met with top Israeli government leaders, including Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and then Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act Moving Through Congress

As we have witnessed in countless ways in the on-going war on terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom, our Nation is blessed with the most dedicated, courageous, and well-trained military in the world. As our men and women in uniform go into harm’s way, it is critically important that we do right by them and their families. Accordingly, I was proud to join my House colleagues in voting to pass the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act. This legislation seeks to appropriately recognize the tremendous sacrifices that our military personnel and their families make on behalf of all Americans.

Importantly, the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act would:

- Exempt from federal taxes the full \$6,000 death gratuity paid to the survivors of members of the armed forces killed in the line of duty. Currently, only the first \$3,000 of this gratuity is tax exempt;
- Make it easier for military personnel to qualify for the capital gains tax exclusion for the sale of a home; and

- Provide National Guard and Reserve members – increasingly relied upon to meet our military’s needs – a deduction for travel expenses related to their service. Specifically, Guard and Reserve personnel could deduct up to \$1,500 for the costs of overnight transportation, meals, and lodging when traveling more than 100 miles to fulfill National Guard or Reserve duties.

Other provisions in this legislation would: exempt from taxation certain homeowner and child care assistance provided to members of the military; allow penalty-free withdrawals from education savings accounts to help pay for the cost of attending a military academy; and help to preserve the tax-exempt status of certain veteran’s organizations. Since the Senate has passed a different version of the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act, a House-Senate Conference Committee must resolve these differences prior to Congress sending this legislation to President Bush for enactment into law.

Prescription Assistance

Ever-increasing prescription drug costs continue to result in financial hardship for countless Americans. Various legislative proposals are currently before Congress seeking to rein in these costs and to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. I fully support these efforts.

While Congress considers these legislative proposals, it is important to know my office can help you to connect with certain pharmaceutical companies that offer assistance to people who are having trouble paying for necessary prescription medications.

While the assistance programs offered by these companies are not a comprehensive solution to the prescription drug issue, they do offer an option for assistance. For assistance, please contact my Legislative Assistant Buck Swisher via our toll-free telephone number at 1-877-902-1919.

AMBER Alert Child Protection Measure Adopted

On Thursday, March 27, the House of Representatives voted 410-14 for the Child Abduction Prevention Act (H.R. 1104, S. 151). This legislation is a comprehensive child protection and family safety package which will toughen penalties for child abductors, create a nationwide AMBER Alert system, and prevent future abductions.

Specifically, the provisions of H.R. 1104 mandate:

- A 20-year minimum prison sentence for abducting children under 18.
- Up to lifetime supervision of child abductors and sex offenders.
- Life imprisonment for repeat offenders.

- Eliminating statutes of limitations on child abduction and sex offense cases.
- Denial of pre-trial release for those who rape or kidnap children.
- Doubling the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's authorization to \$20 million per year.

Importantly, H.R. 1104 also follows-up on an October 2002 Presidential directive by officially establishing a national AMBER Alert communications network to facilitate recovery of abducted children. H.R. 1104 was passed by the Senate on April 10 and is now before the President for his signature.



Health Clinic Dedicated – With the completion of a three-year, \$15 million expansion project, the **Dunham U.S. Army Health Clinic** at Carlisle Barracks officially re-opened in November with double the square footage and much enhanced technology to ensure quality healthcare for thousands of active and retired military personnel. I was honored to participate (center) in the official ribbon-cutting with **Colonels Gordon Miller, Charles Fiala, Major General Kevin Kiley and Colonel Craig Madden.**



Returning to the Classroom – As a House Education Committee member, I continue to regularly visit with students and teachers in schools throughout the 19th District. Earlier this year, I spoke with students at **York Seventh-Day Adventist Church School** about my duties and responsibilities as a Congressman.

House Passes Medical Liability Reforms to Protect Quality and Access to Care

On March 13, the House of Representatives passed the **Help Efficient, Accessible, Low-cost, Timely Health Care (HEALTH) Act (H.R.5)** by a vote of 229-196. **The HEALTH Act** provides a common-sense approach to reining in soaring medical liability costs while protecting patients with legitimate personal injury claims. I voted in favor of H.R.5. **The HEALTH Act** is now before the Senate for consideration. Similar legislation stalled in the Senate last Session.

The spiraling costs of liability insurance premiums and the costs of litigation and settlements are often passed on to patients. That puts health care out of reach for too many Americans. In addition, liability expenses force some physicians to retire early or stop providing care. Many healthcare providers who manage to keep their doors open begin ordering extra tests and using procedures that limit the risk to them without necessarily benefiting patients.

The HEALTH Act provides the following reforms:

- **Speedy Resolution of Claims:** Limits the time in which someone may file a health-care liability action to three years after the date of injury, with some exceptions, to ensure that claims are brought before evidence is destroyed and while witnesses' memories are fresh.
- **Fair Accountability:** Weighs the degree of fault so that someone with 1 percent of the blame is not forced to pay 100 percent of the damages. This provision eliminates the

incentive to look for deep pockets, making one party unfairly responsible for another's negligence.

- **Maximum Patient Recovery:** Empowers courts to maximize patients' awards by capping attorney contingent fees. Under **the HEALTH Act**, contingent fees cannot exceed 40% of the first \$50,000 recovered, 33% of the next \$50,000, 25% of the next \$500,000, and 15% of any amount over \$600,000.
- **Full Compensation for Patient Injuries:** Allows patients to recover unlimited out-of-pocket economic damages, such as medical expenses and loss of future earnings.
- **Reasonable Limits on Punitive, Non-Economic Damages To Make the Punishment Fit the Offense:** Limits non-economic damages that cannot be easily quantified (pain and suffering) to \$250,000, but allows punitive damages to be twice the amount of economic damages awarded or \$250,000 whichever is **greater**. The average jury award today is \$3.5 million, up more than 70 percent since 1995.
- **Flexibility for States that Already Have Damage Caps:** Respects the authority of states – including Pennsylvania – to enact more stringent or lenient damage caps than those provided in **the HEALTH Act**.

The HEALTH Act seeks to protect the right of wrongly injured individuals to be fairly and fully compensated while restoring some common sense to our litigation system.

Homeland Security Department Up and Running

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, President Bush and Congress agreed that we could better protect our citizens against threats here at home by merging 22 separate government agencies into one coordinated department. Legislation establishing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was signed into law by President Bush on November 25, 2002. On January 24, 2003, former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge was sworn in as the Department's first Secretary.

How the Department of Homeland Security is Organized

The agencies which became part of DHS are housed in the four major directorates delineated below. Additionally, the Secret Service and Coast Guard are wholly located in DHS, reporting directly to Secretary Ridge.

The **Border and Transportation Security** directorate brings border and transportation entities under one roof, including the: Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services; U.S. Customs Service; Federal Protective Service; Transportation Security Administration; Office for Domestic Preparedness; and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

The **Emergency Preparedness and Response** directorate oversees domestic disaster preparedness training and coordinates government disaster response. It brings together the: Strategic National Stockpile and the National Disaster Medical System; Federal Emergency Management Agency; Nuclear Incident Response Team; Domestic Energy Support Teams; and National Domestic Preparedness Office.

The **Science and Technology** directorate seeks to utilize all scientific and technological advantages as part of the homeland security effort.

The **Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection** directorate analyzes intelligence information involving threats to homeland security from other agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau

of Investigations, and National Security Agency. This directorate also evaluates vulnerabilities in the nation's infrastructure.

Be Prepared and Stay Informed

One of the primary mandates of DHS is to educate the public about how to be prepared in case of a national emergency – including a possible terrorist attack. Some of these precautions, such as assembling a supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency. The following DHS recommendations are the starting point in developing a plan for yourself and your loved ones to be prepared for unexpected emergencies.

1) Assemble an Emergency Kit

All of us should be able to survive comfortably on our own for at least a three-day period. Each person will need: a change of clothes; sleeping bags; and food and water. One gallon of water per person per day is recommended. Canned and dried foods should also be stored for emergency use. An emergency kit should include basic supplies – a flashlight, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, prescription medicines and toilet articles. Duct tape and heavy-duty plastic garbage bags can be used to seal windows and doors. Make sure all household members know where the kit is kept. You should also consider maintaining an emergency kit at work and in your car.

2) Make a Family Plan

Your family may not be together at home when an attack occurs. Make sure everyone knows contact numbers and how to get in touch. It may be wise to identify an out-of-state friend or relative as a central point of contact. Keep emergency numbers by the phone. Select a "safe-room" at home, ideally an interior room above ground with few windows or doors.

3) Learn More About Readiness

Planning helps. If your family knows what to expect, they will be calmer in the aftermath of a terrorist event. For example, you should find out where to turn for instructions, such as local broadcasting networks. Local authorities will broadcast information as quickly as possible concerning the nature of the emergency and what you should do next.

There are also other ways to plan ahead. Take a first aid or CPR class. Review your insurance policies to reduce the economic impact of a potential disaster. Make accommodations for elderly family members, neighbors, or others with special needs. To learn more about developing a plan for your loved ones, log on to the Department of Homeland Security's emergency preparedness site at www.ready.gov or call, toll-free, 1-800-BE-READY (237-3239).



Bio-Terrorism Exercise – In February, several House colleagues and I joined Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture James Moseley, and various other civilian and military leaders for a mock bio-terrorism exercise at the National Defense University in Washington. Simulating a terrorist attack on our Nation's agricultural community, the exercise proved extremely beneficial in further delineating our strengths and weaknesses in guarding against and preparing to respond to such attacks.



Town Meetings Scheduled

Feedback from 19th district residents is critical to my effective service in Congress. I am thus pleased to announce the next series of Town Meetings planned throughout the district. I hope you will be able to join me at one of the meetings.

Tues., May 27

York County
York Suburban High School
 1800 Hollywood Dr.
 York
 7:15 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.

Wed., May 28

Cumberland County
West Shore Senior Center
 122 Geary St.
 New Cumberland
 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Wed., May 28

Adams County
Gettysburg Middle School
 37 Lefever St.
 Gettysburg
 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Thurs., May 29

York County
Penn Township Municipal Building
 20 Wayne Ave.
 Hanover
 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Thurs., May 29

Cumberland County
Mechanicsburg Middle School
 1750 S. Market St.
 Mechanicsburg
 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

House Votes to Uphold the Pledge of Allegiance

In June 2002, a three-judge panel of the United States 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in *Newdow vs. United States Congress* that the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was unconstitutional because of its reference to God and therefore could not be recited in public schools. Regrettably, on February 28, 2003, the full 9th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the three-judge panel's decision.

In response to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeal's ruling, the House and Senate passed similar resolutions expressing the sense of the Congress that the court's ruling in *Newdow vs. United States Congress* is inconsistent with the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First Amendment and should be overturned. On March 20, I proudly joined 399 of my House colleagues in voting to pass House Resolution 132 to reaffirm the integrity and tradition of our Nation's Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Flag of the United States of America is a symbol of the unity of the states which make up our great Nation and a testament to the countless Americans throughout our Nation's history who have given their lives to defend our Nation and

the principles for which it stands. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag is a patriotic act that unites our citizens and provides an opportunity to reflect on the unparalleled blessings that we enjoy as American citizens.

Specifically, House Resolution 132 expresses the belief of the House of Representatives that:

- The phrase "one Nation under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag reflects that religious faith was central to our Founding Fathers and to the founding of our Nation;
- Reciting the Pledge, including the "one Nation under God" portion is a patriotic act, not an act or statement of religious faith or belief;
- "One Nation under God" should remain in the Pledge and the practice of voluntarily reciting the pledge in public school classrooms should be encouraged by the policies of Congress, the various States, municipalities, and public school officials; and
- The Elk Grove Unified School District in Elk Grove, California, should be commended for its continued support of the Pledge.



Local Business Honored – *York Wallcoverings*, America's oldest and largest wallcoverings manufacturer, recently received the U.S. Department of Commerce Export Achievement Award. I was delighted to join **Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Trade Development Linda Conlin** in presenting this award to **Carl Vizzi**, President and Owner of York Wallcoverings. Established in 1895, York Wallcoverings employs more than three hundred employees, exports residential and commercial wallcoverings to more than forty countries, and produced more than ten million rolls of wallcoverings in 2002.



Memorial Dedicated – *Red Land High School* is home to a newly dedicated Military Service Memorial. Established by the school's Class of 1968, the memorial pays tribute to American service personnel for their patriotic service to our Nation. Attendees at the dedication ceremony included **Colonel Michael H. Zang**, Principal at Red Mill Elementary School (second from left), State Representative **Bruce Smith** (left), Class of 1968 members (L-R) **Karen Fritz, Barb Moran, Gary Lehman, Kim Milakovic, James Oxley, Terry Coffman, David Stoltz, John Rados, Wilbur Jones, and me.**

Comprehensive Energy Bill Passes the House

The House of Representatives passed a balanced, comprehensive energy bill (H.R. 6) by a vote of 247-175 on April 11. Similar to legislation passed by the House last session, H.R. 6 focuses on conservation, research on alternative energy sources, and the responsible development of domestic energy resources. I voted in favor of H.R. 6.

Affordable and reliable energy is critical to both the Nation's economy and its security. H.R. 6 would help to lessen the demand for overall energy supplies and decrease America's dependence on foreign oil in several ways. H.R. 6 provides:

- Tax incentives for conservation, including the construction of energy efficient homes;
- Tax credits for the development and use of alternative fuel sources like solar, wind, and biomass;
- Grants for research on the development of hydrogen fuel cell cars;
- Funding for programs to weatherize low-income homes, improve the energy efficiency of public buildings, and help

local governments acquire alternative fuel vehicles;

- Directions for the Energy Department to develop energy efficiency standards for appliances; and,
- Enhanced deductions and credits for the development of traditional energy resources and infrastructure.

The House-passed bill contains a provision allowing for oil and natural gas exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). Importantly, no more than 2,000 acres of ANWR's 19.6 million acres could be used for activities related to the exploration. This equates to no more than one one-hundredth of one percent (0.000102) of ANWR's surface acreage being disturbed by drilling-related activities.

Unfortunately, the House and Senate could not come to an agreement on an energy bill last session. Hopefully, the Senate will pass its own energy bill this year and a reasonable compromise can be agreed upon by the House and Senate in a timely manner. Our Nation's economic and national security demands such action.