

The Renzi Report

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Summer 2004

Your Direct Link to the News and Events from our Nation's Capital and Rural Arizona

Dear Fellow Arizonan:

This special summer edition of the Renzi Report contains a new positive economic outlook and a full update on new legislation. I have also included important news about tax code reform, and efforts to implement a comprehensive domestic energy plan.

As always, feel free to tell your family members, friends and neighbors about the Renzi Report. You can sign up to receive this email and find additional information about developments in Congress at my website: <http://www.house.gov/renzi>.

If you have any questions or comments about this e-newsletter or anything else, please e-mail me at rick.renzi@mail.house.gov. I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

I hope you find this Renzi Report informative. Thank you and may God bless America.

Congressman Rick Renzi

If you no longer want to receive this newsletter, please send an email to rick.renzi1@mail.house.gov and type UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject field.

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Quick Facts: By the Numbers

\$140 million +
Total Federal Funding for Rural Arizona

52
Town Hall Meetings

32,000+

Pieces of mail answered
9

Number of Renzi Bills Passed by the House

Renzi, Secretary of Interior Gale Norton meet in Safford

As part of ongoing efforts to “Bring Washington to Rural Arizona,” Congressman Renzi and Secretary Norton met in Safford to tour the forest recovery projects underway in the aftermath of the Nutall Fire, which burned over 29,000 acres on Mt. Graham.



Secretary of Interior Gale Norton and Congressman Rick Renzi tour the Mt. Graham International Observatory outside Safford (AP)

After meetings with local officials and a tour of the fire complex, Renzi and Norton discussed new forest thinning projects on 2,000 acres around Mt. Graham to protect existing homes, sacred Native American sites and telescope buildings.

To read an article from the Eastern Arizona Courier about this visit, [click here](#).

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Rural Arizona Legislative Update

The Petrified Forest National Forest Expansion Act (H.R. 1630)

Introduced by Congressman Renzi, this bill to expand the [Petrified Forest National Park](#) is one step closer to passing the House of Representatives as the [House Resources Committee](#) voted to approve the legislation unanimously.

The future of the Petrified Forest is threatened by looters who are raiding unprotected areas around the Petrified Forest National Park, searching for fossilized wood and desecrating sacred Native American gravesites for valuable pottery, and selling these items on the black market.



The Petrified Forest National Park

H.R. 1630 emphasizes the need for expansion of the park boundaries to protect the valuable natural and cultural resources found in the area. Expanding the Petrified Forest National Park will increase tourism and enhance research opportunities for communities in northern Arizona.

Renzi's bill will now be placed for consideration before the full House of Representatives.

The Samaritan Initiative Act (H.R. 4057)

This Renzi authored legislation to help communities provide adequate housing and support services to chronically homeless people was the center of discussion at a House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity hearing.

This bill is designed to help people who are chronically homeless move from the streets and out of shelters into permanent housing with support services. It is estimated that the chronically homeless comprise roughly ten percent of the homeless population nationwide. These are often individuals who suffer from mental debilitation and substance abuse.

This legislation provides communities with resources to provide bundled services, integrating health care, psychiatric evaluation and substance abuse counseling while simultaneously providing secure and adequate housing to better assist the chronically homeless.

H.R. 4057 was introduced in the House on March 30, 2004 by Congressman Renzi and requires approval from the Financial Services Committee before moving to the House floor for a vote.

Congressional Mailbag

Answers to Your Questions on Important Issues



Congressman Renzi,

What are your plans for decreasing our dependence on foreign oil, developing renewable sources of energy and lowering gas prices? - Casa Grande, Arizona

Higher energy costs are an unnecessary burden that place a drain on families, farms, businesses and our state's overall economy. In order to lessen our dependence on foreign oil we must increase our efforts in the areas of domestic oil production, alternative fuel exploration, conservation and renewable energy.

Dependence on foreign oil has grown from 35 percent during the 1973 OPEC oil embargo to nearly 60 percent today. Given instability in the Middle East, it is now more apparent than ever that it is in our national security's best interest to better develop our own sources of domestic energy.

The issue of gasoline prices is often a volatile one. Crude oil price, production levels, taxes, refining costs and distribution all affect the price of gasoline. Currently, the average price of oil has soared to more than \$35 per barrel because OPEC countries have elected to restrict their oil production.

Taxes, including federal and state excise taxes, also account for a portion of the overall total price of gas in the United States. Federal excise taxes are 18.4 cents per gallon, and Arizona state excise tax is an additional 18 cents per gallon.

It is important for Congress to encourage the construction of domestic oil refineries that can produce more gasoline stateside, reducing transportation costs while creating new jobs for American workers.

While looking to develop new resources for domestic oil production, we must also continue to initiate legislation supporting alternative energy sources. Although other fuel sources do exist today, none of them can be quickly integrated into our economy.

As a member of the Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency caucus, I feel it is important to initiate legislation supporting alternative energy sources. Congress needs to provide a strong foundation for research and development of alternative fuels applications, including federal assistance for hydrogen fuel cell, solar, wind and biomass powered renewable energy sources.

Ultimately, we must make America less dependent on foreign oil. It is not only a matter of energy security, but more importantly, a matter of national security. Through exploration, innovation and conservation, we can grow our economy, create jobs and make our nation stronger than it is today.

- Congressman Rick Renzi

To write a letter to Congressman Renzi send your mail to 418 Cannon HOB, Washington D.C. 20515 or send your letter via email to rick.renzi@mail.house.gov

Tax Simplification – Simpler, Smarter Taxes

The overly complex U.S. Tax Code is more than a burden to working families; it's a drain on our economy in terms of efficiency and productivity. American taxpayers spend over three billion hours each year filling out tax forms, keeping records and complying with a confusing U.S. Tax Code. The cost to the U.S. economy of complying with the Tax Code is a staggering \$85 billion annually. Simplifying the Tax Code is a commitment to a less intrusive government, better businesses and stronger families.



Taxes are difficult enough to pay without the headache of forms, filing and frustration, and I strongly support legislation that encourages our economy's recent progress by relieving families and small businesses of burdensome Tax Code compliance. H.R. 4841, *The Tax Simplification for Americans Act*, gives 1.1 million Americans increased access to the time-saving 1040A and 1040EZ forms, ends the IRS's confusing use of inconsistent definitions regarding a taxpayer's age, clarifies the "Head of Household" language on forms to reduce errors in filing status and eliminates a number of outdated and unnecessary provisions in the Tax Code.

Passed unanimously by the House, the *Tax Simplification for Americans Act* now moves to the Senate for consideration. However, our work to reform the Tax Code has just begun, and it remains important for Congress to continue to look for creative approaches to lessen the tax compliance burden for every American.

Toward this aim, I am a cosponsor of H.R. 3215, a bill to establish a Tax Reform Action Commission to make specific recommendations to Congress for the reform of our internal revenue laws. The purpose of this bill is to examine new alternatives to our existing Tax Code to produce a system that is simple, efficient and fair and equitable to all Americans. Included for consideration by this Commission are proposals to replace our current Tax Code with that of a Flat tax, a National Sales tax, or a Value Added tax.

From the Headlines...

Congressman calls \$100 million for rez just first step

The Gallup Independent

<http://www.gallupindependent.com/071904firststep.html>

Multi-purpose center gets approval

The Eloy Enterprise

http://www.paysonroundup.com/section/frontpage_lead/story/15528

A man of his word

National Mortgage News

<http://www.nationalmortgagenews.com/nmn/onroad.htm>

Renzi wants to keep serving rural Arizona

The Prescott Daily Courier

<http://www.communitypapers.com/DAILYCOURIER/viewsearchresults.asp?infoid=130406745&moduleid=19576315¤t>



POSTIVE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Tax Relief for Small Business = New Jobs for Americans

In recent testimony before Congressman Renzi and the House Financial Services Committee, Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan gave an upbeat assessment of the U.S. economy for the remainder of 2004, confirming that tax relief policies are boosting the economy, creating jobs and strengthening American families. *For a complete transcript of Chairman Greenspan's testimony, follow this link: http://www.federalreserve.gov/boa_rddocs/HH/2004/July/testimony.htm*

U.S. Economy Experiencing “Self-Sustaining” Growth

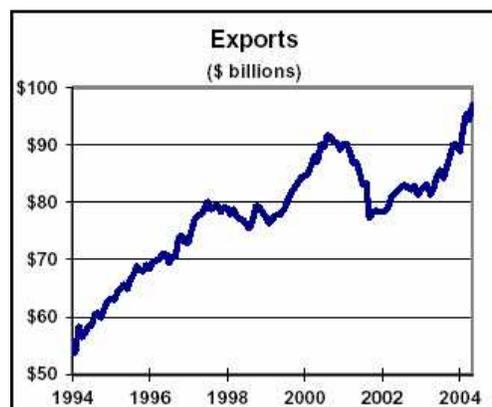
Chairman Greenspan reported to Congress that economic evidence suggests “increasing support to the view that the expansion is self-sustaining,” which means that the economy is taking on a life of its own, growing without the need for government intervention.

The Chairman continued: “[e]conomic developments in the U.S. have generally been quite favorable. Not only has economic activity quickened, but the expansion has become more broad-based and has produced more notable gains in employment.”



Source: The Conference Board

He further noted that “conditions in the labor market are improving.” Over the past six months, the economy has added an average of 200,000 jobs per month – up “sharply,” Chairman Greenspan noted.



Source: Census Bureau

This “expanding employment should provide a lift” to consumer spending, he said. “With households in generally good financial shape and interest rates still relatively low, he said, the situation ‘bodes well for consumer spending.’”

Job creation was up in 46 of the 50 states in the last year, and the unemployment rate was down in all regions and in 47 of the 50 states (Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)).

Exports have increased 15.5 percent in the last year to a record level. The economic strengthening of our overseas trading partners has helped fuel the increase in exports.

“America is enjoying a jobs boom, with 1.4 million new jobs over nine straight months of payroll growth, but the real story lies in a much broader understanding of the new economy: The modern workplace is empowering individuals to work for themselves, enjoy flexible hours, and pursue dreams rather than survival, all while shattering the traditional definitions of employment.”

Tim Kane Ph.D, The Heritage Foundation Center for Data Analysis