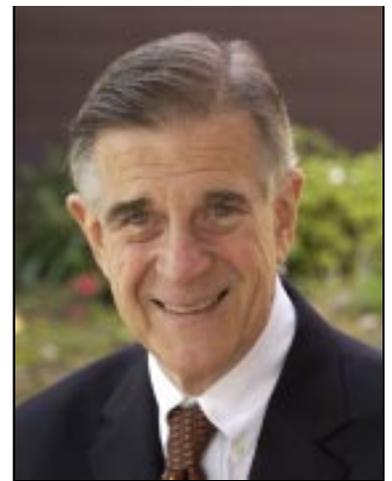


13th District  
108th Congress

UPDATE



WASHINGTON, DC

SEPTEMBER 2003

## JOBS AND GROWTH: A REALITY CHECK

Since January 2001, the President and the majority party in Congress have aggressively pursued a massive tax-cutting agenda for the wealthiest Americans. They've tried to claim these tax cuts are needed to stimulate jobs and economic growth. But, the facts defy such claims. Despite tax cut after tax cut, the nation's joblessness and economic growth have remained the worst since the Great Depression. There is no disputing the facts. It is time to change course and invest in real economic stimulus that helps working families.

### *The Worst Joblessness Since the Great Depression...*

In the past two years, three major tax cuts have been enacted that, without artificial sunsets and including interest costs, will total \$4.3 trillion by 2013. Yet, since these tax cuts were enacted, the unemployment rate has risen to over 6% as 2.5 million jobs have been lost.

This Administration is the first since President Hoover to see a decline in private sector jobs (see chart). Unemployed Americans can't go back to work if jobs are disappearing. So much for tax cuts for the wealthy creating jobs!

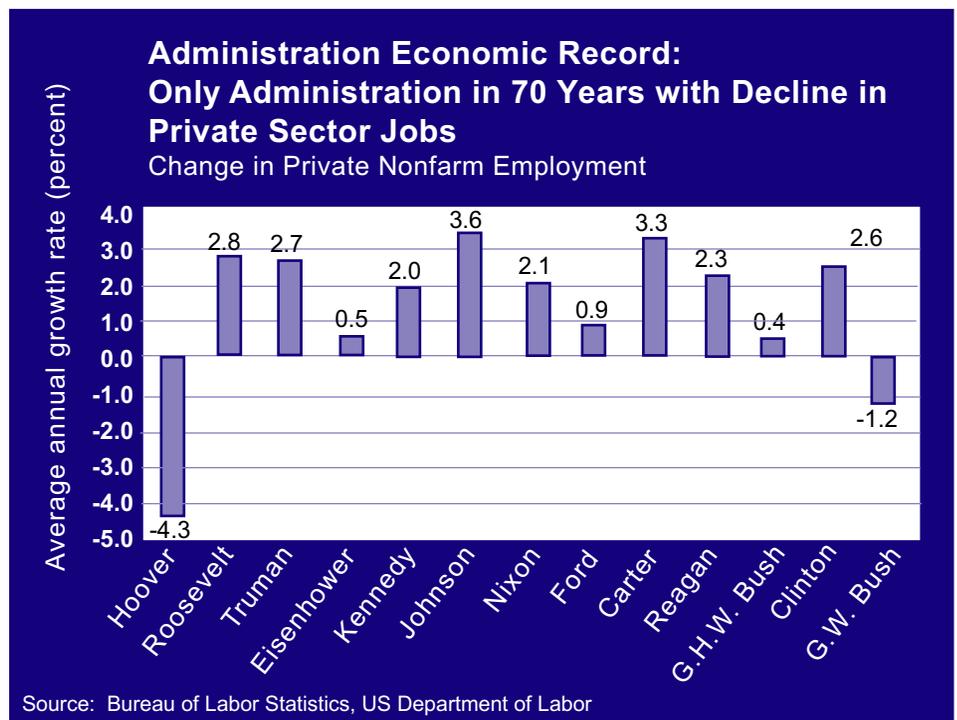
### *The Worst Economic Growth Since the Great Depression...*

The nation's economic growth rate has remained sluggish at 1.6%—the worst rate of growth

since the Depression. Real business investment has dropped more than 10% since the President took office. Meanwhile, consumer confidence has taken a nosedive, falling more than 30% since January. You can't jumpstart the economy without significant business investment

means that over the next several years, more and more of your tax dollars will go to paying down the interest for tax cuts that went to someone else.

Meanwhile, long-term debt slows economic growth and forces interest rates to rise. So in addition



and consumer spending. So much for tax cuts for the wealthy spurring growth!

### *....As Deficits Hit Record Levels.*

The current federal budget deficit is now \$455 billion and rising. While the wealthiest families get a big tax cut today, middle-to low-income families will pay for it tomorrow. By 2008, the interest alone on our nation's accumulated debt for the average family of four will be \$6,612. That

to paying more taxes for less, you'll also pay more to finance your home, pay for college and afford other major expenses.

The Administration's economic plan hasn't worked. As the ranking Democrat on the Joint Economic Committee, I'm working to change the focus in Washington away from tax cuts for the wealthy and toward investing in efforts to rebuild our economy by improving education, expanding access to health care and protecting jobs at home.



## KEY VOTES

*Below are some of the key votes that Congress has taken this summer. I've selected these votes based on inquiries received about these issues from East Bay residents.*



**VETERANS – HR 2861,** Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill. The bill cut \$1.8 billion from veteran's health care. Passed 316-109. Stark voted NO.



**AFFORDABLE DRUG PRICES – HR 2427,** the Pharmaceutical Market Access Act. The bill allows for reimportation of FDA-approved prescription medications from Canada and Europe where they are sold at more affordable prices. Passed 243-186. Stark voted YES.



**HEAD START – HR 2210,** the Republican Head Start Reauthorization bill. This bill would jeopardize the Federal Head Start program. Passed 217-216. Stark voted NO.



**TRADE –** The House considered free trade agreements with Chile (HR 2738) and Singapore (HR 2739). These agreements neglected to include labor protections, would drive US jobs overseas, and were bad templates for upcoming trade agreements. Chile passed 270-156. Singapore passed 272-155. Stark voted NO on both.



**UNITED NATION'S POPULATION FUND –** The House considered an amendment to the State Department Authorization bill (HR 1950) that allows the President to deny U.S. funding for the United Nations Population Fund. UNFPA is the single largest global source of funding for maternal health and family planning programs around the world. The amendment passed 216-211. Stark voted NO.

## Washington High School Student Serves As Congressional Page

This summer I was honored to welcome Ryan Arthur of Fremont to Washington, DC to serve as a Congressional Page.

Congressional Pages are high school juniors in high academic standing who are nominated by their Member of Congress. Pages are assigned to the House or Senate where they help staff prepare for legislative proceedings and deliver correspondence.

My office was chosen to sponsor a Page for the month of June. Ryan was selected from 25 local students who applied to be nominated from the 13<sup>th</sup> District. He then went through a nationwide competitive application process and was selected to participate in this honorable program.

As a Page, Ryan's goal was to augment what he has learned in school about government by observing firsthand how Congress operates. I am pleased that this experience has encouraged him to continue his interest in public service as a way to serve others.



**Pete Stark takes Ryan Arthur of Fremont to the Capitol to begin his service as a Congressional Page.**

## Stark Outraged at Failure to Extend Child Tax Credit to 1.75 Million Children in California

President Bush and the Republicans in Congress are claiming credit for increasing the child tax credit from \$600 to \$1,000. They are neglecting to mention their refusal to allow this \$400 per child increase to go to lower income families who need financial help the most.

The tax bill signed into law by the President earlier this year does not allow working poor families with incomes between \$10,500-\$26,000 to claim the increased tax credit. Yet families with income above that level and on up to \$110,000 qualify for the full credit increase.

The Republicans' failure to recognize the struggles of low-income families leaves 6.5 million working families with 12 million children ineligible for the increased child tax credit. In California alone, it affects 880,000 families with 1.75 million children.

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# ***Stark To Introduce Legislation Repealing Patriot Act Provisions***

Since Congress hastily passed the USA Patriot Act weeks after September 11th, the Administration has used the law to override basic civil liberties. The legislation was rushed through Congress too hastily for most to assess its dangers. I strongly opposed it.

The FBI is exercising authority under the law to conduct surveillance of libraries, religious services, political rallies, Internet chat rooms, and other activities Americans have a guaranteed right to engage in without unwarranted government intrusion. This is a near return of the activities sanctioned under J. Edgar Hoover's COINTELPRO program.

The Patriot Act has the power not only to strip basic rights, but also perpetuate a culture of suspicion. It is an outrage that foreign surveillance powers are being used against US citizens, that Arab and Muslim Americans are being singled out, and that legal residents are being illegally detained without due process of the law. These government actions, and the labeling of US citizens as "enemy combatants" without just cause, is eerily reminiscent of the tragic Japanese-American internment during World War II.

It is time the Administration's efforts to limit fundamental freedoms and divide Americans between "us" and "them" were put to a stop. That is why I am co-authoring legislation, the "Benjamin Franklin True Patriot Act", that will repeal all provisions of the Patriot Act that violate civil liberties and the rights of immigrants.

This sweeping repeal would strip provisions of the law allowing unlawful surveillance, sneak and peek searches, secret phone and wire-tapping and the detainment of immigrants and legal residents without due process of the law. The legislation is based on the fundamental principle articulated by Benjamin Franklin that "Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little safety, deserve neither liberty or safety."

This legislation builds on other efforts I have been working for, including successfully blocking funding in a House bill for the Justice Department's monitoring of attorney-client conversations. I am also cosponsoring legisla-

tion requiring the Justice Department to report to Congress on the activities it is undertaking under Patriot Act.

I will work to repeal the Patriot Act and pledge to strongly oppose any further attacks on our

*It is time the Administration's efforts to undermine fundamental freedoms and divide Americans between "us" and "them" were put to a stop.*

civil liberties. We must restore the rights the framers of our Constitution had in mind. As a model for democracy to many countries, the United States must set an example for upholding the tenets of fairness, freedom and openness upon which our country was founded.

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## ***Child Tax Credit, continued.***

*They are neglecting to mention their refusal to allow this \$400 per child increase to go to lower income families who need financial help the most..*

This doesn't have to be the case. The U.S. Senate overwhelmingly passed a bill on June 5, 2003, to make lower income families eligible for the increased child tax credit. House Democrats have brought forth a dozen motions to force the House to consider the Senate bill. The President has even spoken in support of doing so. But, House Leaders refuse to act.

The first of the rebate checks for the child tax credit were mailed on July 25, 2003. None of the neediest families will receive a check unless House Leaders will allow consideration of this bipartisan, widely-backed legislation to fix the existing inequity.

I'll keep working with Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and others in the House to urge the Majority party to right this wrong. It simply makes no sense to exclude our lowest income families from this benefit.

# Stark Stands Up for National Parks, Wilderness and Open Space

Like most Californians, I care deeply about the future of our environment. Preserving our national parks, wilderness areas and open space is a priority. But, the President and majority party in Congress are seeking to overturn rules that ensure responsible stewardship of our public lands.



This summer, I opposed a House-passed version of a bill appropriating funds to the Interior Department for the coming year. In addition to a score of damaging provisions, this legislation short-changes our national parks. It provides inadequate funding to deal with a growing maintenance backlog of rundown facilities, campgrounds, and trails.

The House-passed bill also fails to protect 58 million acres of America's wilderness by undermining the so-called Roadless Rule that prohibits harmful development on pristine lands. As

passed, the bill incorporates an Administration-backed provision to allow certain states to override this important protection and could lead to the logging of two of America's last great stretches of wilderness—Alaska's Tongass and Chugach forests.

On a more positive note, I supported a successful amendment stripping provisions from the bill allowing local and state authorities to claim rights of way for building roads through national parks and other sensitive areas protected by federal law.

In Congress, I am working to uphold the environmental legacy we share and have a responsibility to protect for future generations. Fortunately, this harmful interior appropriations bill isn't law yet. The Senate has yet to pass their own version of the legislation. Then, differences will have to be worked out between the two bills. I'll keep working with like-minded colleagues and environmental advocates to improve the final version of this bill so that our environmental treasures are protected—not further threatened.

## **PETE'S TOWN MEETINGS** **Saturday, September 13, 2003**

### **UNION CITY**

**9:00-10:00 a.m.**

Ruggieri Senior Center  
33397 Alvarado Niles Rd.

### **HAYWARD**

**10:30-11:30 a.m.**

City Council Chambers  
777 B Street

### **ALAMEDA**

**Noon - 1:00 pm**

City Council Chambers  
2263 Santa Clara Ave.

*Let me hear your views.*

*Doors open 10 minutes before meetings start.*

**Congressman Pete Stark**  
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