

STATE OF THE UNION REACTION

In his State of the Union address, the President outlined his top priorities: education; expanding health insurance coverage; immigration reform, including a guest worker program; working toward energy independence; the War on Terror, Iraq, and stability in the Middle East; increasing U.S. military manpower; and disease in Africa.

What are your priorities?

Please rate them in importance from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important).

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| ___ Education | ___ Iraq & Terrorism |
| ___ Health Insurance | ___ Increasing Military |
| ___ Immigration Reform | ___ Disease in Africa |
| ___ Energy Independence | ___ Other: _____ |

ISSUES FORUM—An Opportunity to Make Your Voice Heard

Iraq

Although we removed Saddam Hussein and his regime that supported terrorism, Iraq remains dangerous, unstable, and the violence between religious sects make it difficult to govern. The President is increasing the troop level there to stabilize Baghdad and Anbar Province, where al Qaeda terrorists are active. Some say leave immediately, others want benchmarks to measure progress, and there are calls for more troops.

What are your thoughts on Iraq, the Middle East, and/or the War on Terror?

Illegal Immigration

Estimates of how many people are in our nation illegally reach as high as 12 million. A number of proposals include more border patrol agents, building fences, and employing technologies to detect illegal entry. In addition, a guest-worker program leading to citizenship for those here illegally is another approach being studied.

How should we address illegal immigration?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Create a guest worker program | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Hire more border agents | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Build fences | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Deport those here illegally | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Health Insurance

Nearly 46 million Americans did not have health coverage for all of 2005. Consumers gain coverage by purchasing it on their own, getting it as a work benefit, or through an association. The general public faces higher taxes and higher health care costs to cover the uninsured. In response, there are proposals for national health insurance provided by the government, tax benefits promoting individual and family coverage, and funding for state programs that expand medical coverage.

In making America more healthy, what are your ideas?

Energy Independence

The United States currently imports 60 percent of its oil, much of it from the Middle East. The Department of Energy projects that this figure will increase to 73 percent in 2025. However, the U.S. Geological Survey estimates that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska contains 10 billion barrels of oil. In addition, billions of barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas are available in the waters off of our coasts. Also, America has a large supply of coal, estimated to be 275 billion tons, enough to meet current demand for 250 years. Other energy sources include nuclear, biomass, hydrogen, windpower, solar, and geothermal.

What are your ideas for reducing our energy dependence?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Drill in Alaska | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Expand offshore drilling | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Make better use of coal | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Increase fuel efficiency standards | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Offer incentives for new energy sources | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Increase gasoline taxes | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

The Economy

Our economy continues to grow, creating 7.2 million jobs since August 2003. The national unemployment rate is 4.5 percent, below the average in the previous four decades. It is even lower here in Florida. The Congressional Budget Office projects the budget deficit for 2007 at \$172 billion, down from \$248 billion in 2006. The same projection foresees a budget surplus in 2012. However, many of the tax relief provisions enacted by Congress that helped produce this growth and reduced the budget deficit will expire in 2010.

What are your thoughts on the economy, the federal budget, and taxes?

Other Challenges

We have mentioned only a few of the challenges facing our nation. In addition there are such issues as education, meeting our promises to veterans, congressional reform, trade, and consumer protection. Please share your ideas with me on these or any other issue. I look forward to studying these innovations and sharing them in Congress.

What Other Issues Are Important to You?

Please PRINT and then fill out and mail to:
115 South East 25th Ave. Ocala FL 34471