

Working Together for a Better America



On May 1, 2002, Stearns and Rep. Patrick Kennedy co-chaired a congressional field hearing for Asthma Awareness Day Capitol Hill.

One of the major public health issues facing this nation is so little acknowledged and so little understood – asthma. Nearly 20 million Americans have asthma and a quarter of these are children. Asthma also disproportionately strikes minorities and its incidence in Florida is increasing across all ages, races, and ethnic groups.

Stearns and Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) co-chair a field to hear from asthma sufferers and their families.



Jerome Bettis of the Pittsburgh Steelers testified at the hearing about his experience with asthma.

Asthma Awareness Day Capitol Hill resulted from the efforts of Allergy & Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics (AANMA); the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology; and interested members of Congress. Its purpose is to increase awareness of asthma and allergies among members of Congress and the public. The key message of this year's event focused on school issues facing children with asthma and asthma care in emergency care settings.



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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M.C.

CONGRESSMAN
CLIFF STEARNS



Serving America's Veterans

The House of Representatives approved a budget resolution for fiscal year 2003 (H.Con.Res. 353) that contains a record \$2.8 billion increase in spending on veterans health care. The budget resolution includes almost all of the recommendations made by the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, including the recommendation that the proposed \$1,500 deductible be replaced, dollar-for-dollar, with new funds.

This budget resolution increases the VA's budget authority for fiscal year 2003 to a record \$56.9 billion, including a 12% increase for health care. The \$2.8 billion increase in discretionary health care spending contained in the budget is double the increase proposed by the Administration.



Accomplishments for Veterans

Increased the amount of educational benefits for veterans. -- H.R. 1291, 21st Century Montgomery GI Bill Enhancement Act. (Signed into law)

Provided much-needed assistance to disabled veterans, surviving spouses, as well as service members preparing to leave the military for civilian life. -- H.R. 801, Veterans' Opportunities Act. (Signed into law)

Provided almost \$1 billion over five years years for programs to aid homeless veterans and help prevent at-risk veterans from becoming homeless. -- H.R. 2716, Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Increased compensation to 2.3 million disabled veterans or their surviving dependents. -- H.R. 2540, Veterans Benefits act. (Signed into law)

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2002 Report to the 6th District of Florida

Look inside for information on these subjects:
Taxes and Growth • Small Business • Defense • Judicial Reforms • Veterans • Asthma

Jurisdiction

- Interstate and foreign commerce, including all trade matters within the jurisdiction of the full committee;
- Regulation of commercial practices (the FTC), including sports-related matters;
- Consumer affairs and consumer protection, including privacy matters generally; consumer product safety and product liability; motor vehicle safety; and,
- Regulation of travel, tourism, and time.

Subcommittee Hearings

H.R. 3321, the American Travel Promotion Act
May 23, 2002

H.R. 2037, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act
-- April 18, 2002

Implementation of the TREAD Act: One Year Later --
February 28, 2002

Are Current Financial Accounting Standards Protecting
Investors -- February 14, 2002

Challenges Facing Amateur Athletics -- February 13, 2002

Electronic Communications Networks in the Wake of
September 11th -- December 19, 2001

Cyber Security: Private-Sector Efforts Addressing Cyber
Threats -- November 15, 2001

Challenges Facing the Federal Trade Commission --
November 7, 2001

The State of the U.S. Tourism Industry -- October 17, 2001

Current Issues Before the Financial Accounting Standards
Board -- July 31, 2001

How Do Businesses Use Customer Information: Is the
Customer's Privacy Protected? -- July 26, 2001

The Potential for Discrimination in Health Insurance Based
on Predictive Genetic Tests -- July 11, 2001

Information Privacy: Industry Best Practices and
Technological Solutions -- June 21, 2001

Ford Motor Company's Recall of Certain Firestone Tires --
June 19, 2001

On-line Fraud and Crime: Are Consumers Safe? --
May 23, 2001

Impediments to Digital Trade -- May 22, 2001

Opinion Surveys: What Consumers Have To Say About
Information Privacy -- May 8, 2001

An Examination of Existing Federal Statutes Addressing
Information Privacy -- April 3, 2001

Airline Mergers and their Effect on American Consumers --
March 21, 2001

The EU Data Protection Directive: Implications for the U.S.
Privacy Debate -- March 8, 2001

Privacy in the Commercial World -- March 1, 2001



Sherron Watkins, Enron whistleblower, answers Stearns during a hearing on the collapse of the energy company.

Accomplishments of the 107th Congress



Tax Fairness and Economic Growth

Across-the-board income tax rate reductions. -- Included in H.R. 1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Reformed the unfair marriage penalty tax. -- Included in H.R. 1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Repealed the immoral death tax. -- Included in H.R. 1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Doubled the Child Tax Credit from \$500 to \$1,000. -- Included in H.R.1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Increased the Adoption Tax Credit to \$10,000. -- Included in H.R.1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Enacted legislation to extend unemployment benefits, reduce taxes to spur business investment in new equipment and machines, and provide tax relief for the World Trade Center area. -- H.R. 3090, Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002. (Signed into law)



Protecting and Strengthening Retirement Security

Increased IRA contribution limit to \$5,000. -- Included in H.R. 1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Increased 401(k) contribution limit to \$15,000. -- Included in H.R. 1836, Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. (Signed into law)

Passed the Keeping the Social Security Promise Initiative, which expresses the sense of the Congress that Social Security reform legislation should guarantee current-law benefits to current and future retirees, without raising taxes. -- H.Con.Res. 282. (House passed)

Expanded workers' access to professional investment advice. -- H.R. 2269, Retirement Security Advice Act. (House passed)



Small Business

Overtaken burdensome ergonomics regulations. -- S.J.Res 6, Ergonomics Regulations Resolution. (Signed into law)

Passed the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act to facilitate compliance by small businesses with certain Federal paperwork requirements. -- H.R. 327. (House passed)

Eased the burden small businesses face in complying with federal regulations. -- H.R. 203, National Small Business Regulatory Assistance Act of 2001. (House passed)

Promoted entrepreneurship. -- H.R. 2666, Vocational and Technical Entrepreneurship Development Act. (House passed)

Defense

Provided the largest military pay raise since 1982. -- H.R. 2586, FY02 National Defense Authorization Act. (Signed into law)

Increased military housing allowances by covering 89 percent of housing costs instead of requiring out-of-pocket costs for members of the military. -- H.R. 2586, FY02 National Defense Authorization Act. (Signed into law)

Provided \$8 billion in support of the President's ballistic missile defense interceptor to protect Americans from the threat of nuclear attack from abroad. -- H.R. 2586, FY02 National Defense Authorization Act. (Signed into law)



Crime and Judicial Reforms

Amended the federal criminal code to require life in prison for repeat child molesters. -- H.R. 2146, Two Strikes and You're Out Child Protection. (House passed)

Enhanced federal penalties for violence against pregnant women. -- H.R. 503, Unborn Victims of Violence Act. (House passed)

Dear Friends:

Last year started with great promise. The projected budget surpluses then exceeded \$5.6 trillion over the next 10 years, including a Social Security surplus of \$2.5 trillion. This meant that we could continue to pay down the federal debt, strengthen Social Security, modernize Medicare with a prescription drug plan, and provide needed tax relief to all Americans.

However, over one year ago our economy started to slump. This economic downturn was exacerbated by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In addition to providing relief for these attacks, we launched a War on Terrorism and significantly increased resources committed to homeland security.

The challenges of the economic slump, the war on global terrorism, and enhancing public security demanded more federal spending while government revenues decreased. Yet since the events of last September, the United States has achieved major successes on the battlefield and in reinvigorating the economy.

Our military ousted the brutal Taliban regime in Afghanistan that provided a haven for terrorists, and our forces continue to seek out and destroy remaining Taliban and terrorist forces. On the domestic front, we are providing more resources for law-enforcement and intelligence agencies, enhancing our border protection, and improving aviation security.

As for the economy, the U.S. Commerce Department reports that our economy grew by 1.7 percent in the last three months of 2001, after a 1.3 percent decline over the previous three months. This quick recovery is due in part to the tax cuts enacted last May that put \$36 billion directly into consumers' hands.

The course is clear; continue the war on terrorism, strengthen homeland security, and put the federal government back on the road to budget surpluses.

This report outlines the accomplishments of the 107th Congress and provides information on the other major issues we are working on in Washington. I hope you find it helpful.

Sincerely,


Cliff Stearns

