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Congressman Allen West

Representing the 22nd District of Florida

Allen's eNewsletter

Dear Patriot,

Greetings to our constituents, fellow Floridians, and all Americans. Reflecting on the past week, I will tell you that Saturday morning got off to a very emotional and great start. My youngest daughter, Austen, was sworn-in as a United States Navy Sea Cadet, part of the USS Spruance Division in Fort Lauderdale. Our family was there as she placed her left hand on the American flag and took her oath. Could this lead to the first Sailor in the lineage of service in the West family? It will make the Army-Navy game quite personal!

In keeping with this military theme, the past week was really about national security in many different ways. I pray there will be a strong, capable United States Navy and United States Military, for my daughter to join in the future. I am deeply concerned that again our Federal Government is forcing our men and women in uniform to pay the bills for the fiscal irresponsibility of Washington D.C.

Let us not forget that 62 percent of our federal spending is mandatory spending; net interest on the debt, MEDICAID, MEDICARE, and Social Security. Our defense budget, base and overseas operations, makes up only 19.6 percent of the total. Even if we eliminate the entire defense budget, America still runs close to a trillion dollar deficit this year. It will take courageous leaders who will stand up and tell the American people the truth. We must protect and preserve our mandatory spending programs, however they have to be reformed in order to address our deficits and ever increasing debt.

On the heels of the news about harmful cuts to our military -- which will take our Army and Marine force strength down to dangerous levels -- Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, stated we are going to end combat operations in Afghanistan sooner than expected. This is a repeat of the strategy which fails to understand the enemy has a vote. There are only two ways to end a combat operation or war -- you win or you lose. You do not stop in the 4th quarter and tell the referee that you are going to leave the field. And as expected, following Secretary of Defense Panetta's statement about Israel's contemplation of an attack on Iran, America got a threat from Iran's Supreme Leader.

We MUST stop telegraphing weakness.

Clip of the Week

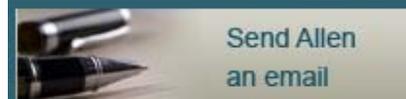


CBS "The Early Show"

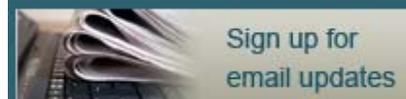
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I spoke to the Reserve Officers Association this week and laid out a national security strategy for the 21st Century Battlefield of "Engage, Deter and Strike." We talked about how we must conduct a global threat assessment in order to develop the requirements and capability to meet any threat for the next 15 years. I also had the distinct privilege of addressing the Arlington Virginia Squadron of the Marine Corps Aviation Association. I built upon the national security strategy and articulated how we must have individuals who understand the tactical level of war serving on Capitol Hill. It is imperative to ensure we have those individuals who can state why we must move away from a Cold War Era forward-deployed military to a power projection force that focuses on strike operations and not nation-building/occupation-style warfare. We discussed how the Marine Corps Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) model is key to understanding how we tailor our forces going forward. Lastly, the Marines and I discussed how we need to create a national military strategy which drives the weapons systems being developed by the defense industrial base. We need more attack and troop transport helicopters and close air support platforms.

What was special about this week was the chance to speak with allies as well. I had a fantastic conversation with Brigadier General Shmaya Avieli who is head of the Israeli Defense Export and Cooperation Department. We must work with our allies in new weapon system development in order to reduce our procurement and research and development timelines. When we can have more common operating platforms with our allies, we can reduce our logistical support chains and costs which is another driver of the Department of Defense spending.

Also this week, I had the honor of speaking to 30 Officers and Interagency workers attending the Canadian Defense College National Security program, their version of the United States military War College. Having served alongside the Canadian Army in Kandahar, Afghanistan, I was able to use anecdotal stories of how we must have better coordination of National and Operational security strategies to ensure our success at the tactical level. Interestingly enough, we are coming-up on the anniversary of the establishment of the 1st Special Services Brigade "Devil's Brigade" which was the joint US-Canadian venture and the precursor to our Special Forces.

The closer for this week of national security and defense-related topics was the deployment ceremony for the US Army Reserve 841st Engineer Battalion. Special hat tip to Miami-Dade College North Campus for hosting the event where I was joined by Florida Governor Rick Scott.

Men and women from our local area, and other states as far away as Georgia and Alabama, are deploying to Afghanistan's RC-North. They represent all that is best about America and are the true one percent who ensure the other 99 percent live in a land of liberty and freedom. We must guarantee they have proper ROE (Rules of Engagement) to enable them to engage the enemy on the battlefield.

The lesson learned for all of us is that the world is still a very dangerous neighborhood. We cannot pretend to believe that targeting our military will relieve our fiscal woes. We must listen to our allies and find the means by which we can cooperatively grow stronger and confront the growing adversaries who wish to promote their hegemonic dominance.

At each opportunity to speak, I challenge more of our uniformed men and women to "ruck up" in a suit and tie and seek out offices to run in their communities. Capitol Hill I can attest is in need of true warriors and those who have a conviction and commitment for our Constitutional Republic.

Steadfast and Loyal,



Legislative Update: The House got back to full legislative work this past week:

- **CLASS Repeal** — Wednesday, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 1173, the Fiscal Responsibility and Retirement Security Act of 2012 by a vote of 267-159, I VOTED YES. Twenty-eight Democrats supported this legislation. The bill would repeal Title VIII of the Democrats' government takeover of healthcare law, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which established the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Program—a national, voluntary long-term care insurance program for purchasing community living assistance services and supports.

- **Pro-Growth Budgeting** — Thursday, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 3582, the Pro-Growth Budgeting Act of 2012 by a vote of 242-179, I VOTED YES. Four Democrats supported this legislation. The bill would require the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to prepare a supplemental estimate of the macroeconomic impact of any major bills

reported by a House or Senate committee. Under H.R. 3582, a “major bill” would be defined as legislation with any one-year estimated budgetary effect of more than one-fourth of one percent (0.25%) of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in that year.

- **Baseline Reform** — Friday, the House approved H.R. 3578, the Baseline Reform Act of 2012 by vote of 235-177, I VOTED YES. Four Democrats supported this legislation. The bill would remove the automatic annual inflation adjustment from CBO’s discretionary baseline spending projections, thereby removing the baseline assumption that discretionary spending will increase each year.

- **FAA Authorization (Conference Report)** — Friday, the House approved the Conference Report on H.R. 658, the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 by a vote of 248-169, I VOTED YES. Twenty-four Democrats supported this legislation. The Conference Report would reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) operations and programs for four years, from Fiscal Year 2012 through Fiscal Year 2015. The legislation would provide a total authorization of \$63.4 billion over the four year period, including \$50 billion in discretionary authorizations and \$13.4 billion in contract authority through the Airport Improvement Programs (AIP).

Highlights of the Week:

- Tuesday, 31 January, cast my vote and conducted several media interviews on the Florida GOP Presidential primary.
- Wednesday, 1 February, addressed the Reserve Officers Association Conference, met with Kristina Hebert of the Marine Industry Association of South Florida who attended the Small Business Committee full hearing on “The State of American Small Businesses.” Met with Brigadier General Shmaya Avieli, head of the Directorate for Israeli Defense Export and Cooperation.
- Thursday, 2 February, met with representatives from the Greater Miami Jewish Federation. Taped an interview with CBS News investigative reporter on the two month payroll tax increase fees on government sponsored enterprises (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) loan guarantees. Video [here](#). Linked up with Iraq combat buddy SGM(R) George Gurrola and escorted him to House chamber and gave a Capitol tour after evening votes. Addressed the Marine Corps Aviation Association.
- Friday, 3 February, conducted an after action review and gave guidance for next Conservative Black forum. Addressed Officers from the Canadian Forces College National Security program. Met with Cindy Chafian Executive Director of “The Mommy Lobby” who asked me to be on her Board of Advisors which I proudly accepted.
- Saturday, 4 February, addressed the Soldiers and Families of the 841st Engineer Battalion at their deployment ceremony. Attended the wedding party for Mr. Bill and Mrs. Sharon Petraglia Jr. The Petraglia Family are just wonderful and have always been there for me, God bless and long life to this new American family.
- Sunday, 5 February, attended the World War II Chaplain’s Memorial Ceremony in Boynton Beach to commemorate the memory of the Four Chaplains who sacrificed their lives during the sinking of the US troop transport Dorchester on 2 February, 1943.
- Monday, 6 February, flew back to Washington DC, recorded video address for Combat Veterans for Congress. Participated in the HASC panel on Business Challenges within the Defense Industry.

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