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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. Before I get started on my weekly review, I wanted to take a moment to explain why I do this weekly update. Back when I was serving in the United States Army, at week's end you always had to submit what we called a SITREP (Situation Report) to your next higher Commander. I consider my constituents as if they are "commanders." Therefore, I consider it my duty and obligation to report back to each of you. I hope that you and many others have found these "SITREPs" helpful in giving you a complete window and insight into my weekly activities!

We had our first hearing of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel of the House Armed Services Committee this week and the news is not good. The Obama administration's proposed defense budget calls for military families and retirees to pay sharply more for their healthcare, while leaving unionized civilian defense workers' benefits untouched. As well, we are looking at cutting close to 130,000 uniformed troops, but cutting only 7,000 Department of Defense civilians. In addition, the Obama administration is looking to create a BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) commission to examine changing the military retirement system. If you do the analysis, you find that less than one percent of the American adult population draws a retirement from serving in the United States Military. The idea of taking out the United States economy budget woes on our military is despicable.

### Clip of the Week

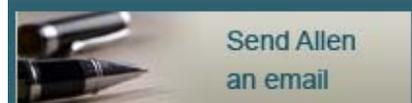


West on Fox: "The Military is here to defend us, not carry our debt"

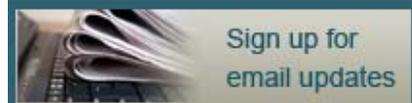
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The most alarming points about the healthcare plan include:

regularly updated information.

- Increases between 30 percent to 78 percent in TRICARE annual premiums for the first year. After that, the plan would impose five-year increases ranging from 94 percent to 345 percent. That's more than **three** times current levels.
- According to Congressional assessments, a retired Army Colonel with a family currently paying \$460/yr for healthcare will pay \$2,048.
- The new plan also hits active duty personnel by increasing co-payments for pharmaceuticals and eliminating incentives for using generic drugs.
- Veterans will also be hit with a new annual fee for the *TRICARE for Life* program, on top of the monthly premiums already being paid. In addition, some benefits will become "means-tested," making them similar to the welfare system than as a benefit for Military service.

The disturbing issue here is that this Administration seemingly believes the fiscal woes of exorbitant debt and deficits can be remedied on the backs of those who have been willing to give their lives for America. The real goal appears to be to try and force Veterans into the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) healthcare exchanges, by forcing them to opt out of TRICARE because it will eventually become unaffordable.

Also on my mind as I'm writing this--- this Administration's willingness to continue to appease and apologize to radical Islamists. When is President Obama going to stand with Israel against this present evil in our time? I, for one, will not be quiet about this issue, until this President makes it abundantly clear his loyalty is with America's one true ally in the Middle East, Israel.

Steadfast and Loyal,



### **Legislative Update**

- Regulations on Academic Institutions — On Tuesday, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 2117, the Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act, by a vote of 303-114, I VOTED YES. 69 Democrats supported this legislation. The bill would repeal two burdensome United States Department of Education regulations on institutions of higher education: (1) the credit hour regulation, which would harm innovative methods of awarding credits; and (2) the state authorization regulation, which could result in higher costs for schools and students.
- Water Usage Rights — On Thursday, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 1837, the San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act by a vote of 245-173, I VOTED YES. 10 Democrats supported this bill. The bill would amend the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA, P.L. 102-575) by adding new purposes to the Act which would require that water dedicated to fish and wildlife be

replaced and provided to the Central Valley Project (CVP) by the end of 2016 and require expedited water transfers between willing sellers. H.R. 1837 would also require the United States Secretary of Interior to strictly adhere to state water rights laws and priorities and to honor water rights senior to those held by the CVP, notwithstanding provisions of the Endangered Species Act. According to CBO estimates, implementing H.R. 1837 would increase offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending) by \$254 million and decrease revenues by \$33 million over the 2013-2022 period. Together, those changes would reduce future budget deficits by \$221 million over the next 10 years.

### **This Coming Week:**

- JOBS Act — The House of Representatives is expected to consider the Jumpstart Our Business Startups (JOBS) Act. This legislation is a compilation of bipartisan House bills that will provide real solutions to encourage job growth by removing regulation impeding small businesses and startups. These bipartisan measures will increase capital formation, spur the growth of startups and small businesses, and pave the way for more small-scale businesses to go public and create more jobs.
- Hydropower Development — The House of Representatives may consider H.R. 2842, the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act. H.R. 2842 would jumpstart hydropower development on Bureau of Reclamation canals and pipelines by reducing unnecessary and duplicative administrative and regulatory costs. The legislation would authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to permit private entities to develop small hydropower units on all irrigation canals and conduits under the agency's jurisdiction. Under current law, the bureau or the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has jurisdiction over hydropower development at such facilities. H.R. 2842 would clarify that the jurisdiction for small hydropower development on all bureau irrigation canals and conduits lies solely with the bureau. In addition, the bill would exempt small conduit hydropower (1.5 megawatts or less) from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, while retaining NEPA application for larger installations.

### **Highlights of the Week:**

- Monday, 27 February. Met with Jan Scruggs and Brigadier General (Ret) Price of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund on the development of a new Vietnam Vets education center which shall also honor Vets of Iraq and Afghanistan. They are seeking pictures of Veterans. See more information [here](#). Participated in the final House Armed Services Committee (HASC) Defense Business Panel, which focused on the obstacles and impediments of conducting private sector business with the Department of Defense. We were honored to have hosted the final offsite roundtable in our Congressional District on 21 February. Met with the President of the National Small Business Association to discuss issues confronting the growth of our small business economy in America.
- Tuesday, 28 February, participated in the House Armed Services Committee hearing on the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization (NDA) request from the United States Air Force. Special surprise was to see my cousin (on my Mom's side), Major General Ed Bolton, who is now serving on the Air Force staff in the Pentagon. Met with Judith Cruz, Executive Director, Treasure Coast Food Bank on her funding priorities. Met with representatives of commercial golden crab fishing reference their concerns about establishing a golden crab fishery here in South Florida. Met with Pamela Carre of the National Senior Corps Association, Impact Broward. I had the pleasure of addressing this organization here in Fort Lauderdale and pledged my support of this program

focused on seniors helping seniors. Attended and spoke at the Sixth Annual Florida American Legion legislative luncheon for the Florida Delegation. Participated in the House Armed Service Subcommittee on Military Personnel hearing on the personnel budget overview. Met with General Fraser, Commander USSOUTHCOM, on current security situation and emerging threats in our Southern Area of Operational Responsibility (AOR).

- Wednesday, 29 February, gave a short address at the Permanent Poverty briefing hosted by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and Rep. Danny Davis (D-Illinois). Met with representatives from the IRS regarding the rampant issue of identity theft and tax return fraud in South Florida. Please see the additional information [here](#). Met with former Black Entertainment Television Founder Bob Johnson and Speaker John Boehner on a tax certificate legislation, which can incentivize investment into minority business growth. Met with members of the National Black Pro-Life Coalition and shall lend my support and voice to their cause, the horrific case of almost genocidal level of abortions in the black community. Participated in the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats hearing on Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2013 Science and Technology programs.

- Thursday, 1 March, met with my former Kansas State ROTC Cadet, now Commander of the US Army Corps of Engineers Nashville District, Lieutenant Colonel James Delapp, to discuss Army Corps issues overall and what he faces in the Tennessee Valley area. Met with representatives of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association and their legislative issues agenda, big one to tackle is online hotel booking tax. Met with Head of Israeli Missile Defense Organization on US-Israel cooperative missile defense initiatives. Met with Florida Bankers Association for a Capitol Hill update, eighteen CEOs in attendance. Met with a United States Army icon, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Julius Becton, on the Military Leadership Diversity Committee, on which he sat, as well as a plethora of other Army-related issues leveraging his wealth of knowledge and experiences. Met with National Association of Public Hospitals and local reps from Broward and Palm Beach Counties. Met with Florida Commander of the Civil Air Patrol on their legislative concerns and funding issues.

- Friday, 2 March, Gave the keynote address at the Faith and Freedom Weekend banquet sponsored by The New Presbyterian Church headed up by dear friend Colonel (R) Chaplain James Carter.

- Saturday, 3 March, invited to the Honda Classic Golf Tournament Military Appreciation pavilion to honor our Veterans.

- Sunday, 4 March, back on the iron horse, riding my motorcycle in the Smiles Charity Bike Ride for the Chris Evert Children's hospital. Addressing the Congregation at Temple Beth Ami on US-Israel relations in a volatile middle east this evening.

- Monday, 5 March, back to Washington DC for weeklong session and will attend the AIPAC Congressional dinner.

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