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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, it is time again for our weekly wrap-up. I want to start by giving you a glimpse of what happened this weekend. We in the House of Representatives had just returned to our respective Congressional Districts Friday evening, only to learn there was still much more work to do before we can adjourn.

Unfortunately, the United States Senate passed a short-term extension of the payroll tax cut, Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR), and unemployment insurance for just two months. This is abysmal and again evidences the abject lack of leadership emanating from President Barack Obama and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who praised this failure. President Obama and Senator Reid are playing political games while the American people are suffering under their failed economic policies. Please see the Press Release I issued [here](#) after the vote on Saturday in the United States Senate here.

Over in the House of Representatives, we have returned to our Nation's Capital today and are reaffirming the legislation we sent to the U.S. Senate, which provided the American people certainty.

This is my first year in politics and the biggest lesson I learned? There are too many lies, deception, and manipulation going on in Washington, DC. We need to have Statesmen, not Politicians in America. However, politicians find comfort in deceiving the American people for selfish political promotion by hiding the truth. When you combine that with a complicit media, you have a recipe for disaster especially over the past three years.

I shall continue to stand for and promote the truth. There is a simple maxim in the military, "you don't get flak unless you are over the target." I guess I've been right over the target during this past year more than once. I find it curious and discomfiting that a strong voice about maintaining the fundamental values of our Constitutional Republic, America, makes one a target, but these are the times in which we live.

Clip of the Week



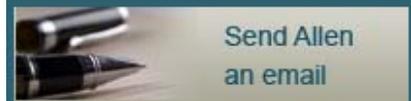
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The upcoming election year will be a true test for our Country.

I just want to say, "Job Well Done" as our last troops exited Iraq this weekend. I must admit, I was not pleased about our final convoy departing in the middle of the night. Regardless of the means by which the retrograde operation was conducted, our men and women in uniform have so much for which they should be proud. As I have stated before, the onus is now upon the Iraqi people to not squander that for which our men and women sacrificed.

This is the final weekly update for 2011. It has been an honor to provide you all my personal insights and perspectives into my service as your Congressional Representative. I pray that you have found this weekly missive useful and informative.

I pray you all enjoy a wonderful and Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year. I hope your favorite football teams find success in the coming college bowl season and NFL playoffs. I look forward to resuming our updates in the New Year.

And know that I shall forever remain...

Steadfast and Loyal,



Legislative Update:

- **Expiring Extensions** — On Tuesday, the House approved H.R. 3630, the Middle Class Tax Relief & Job Creation Act, by a bipartisan vote of 234-193, I VOTED YES. Ten Democrats voted to support this legislation. The bill would provide a fully-offset extension of the current payroll tax rates, a delay in the implementation of the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR - the so-called "Doc Fix"), and an extension of the Unemployment Insurance program. The legislation would provide assistance to Americans suffering in the stagnant economy over the last three years, while ensuring that these policies will not increase the federal deficit or require more borrowing from the Social Security trust fund by freezing pay for Members of Congress and federal workers, reforming the Unemployment Insurance program, reducing subsidies, and getting rid of waste, fraud and abuse in some Washington, D.C. programs. Lastly, the bill would provide new incentives for job creation by extending 100 percent business expensing, removing burdensome EPA regulations and taking action on the bipartisan Keystone XL energy pipeline project.

- **Defense Authorization** — On Wednesday, the House approved the Conference Report on H.R. 1540, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2012, by a bipartisan vote of 283-136, I VOTED YES. There were 93 Democrats who supporter this conference report. The comprehensive bill would authorize the appropriations for the Department of Defense (DoD) and the national security programs of the Department of Energy. This budget authority is intended to enhance national security through the procurement of materiel, the modernization of the Armed Forces, and continued funding for overseas contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill also contains a number of provisions concerning military personnel policy, education and training, military pay and allowances, acquisition policy and management, DoD organization and management, civilian personnel, and matters relating to foreign nations. Importantly, the legislation would strengthen policies and procedures used to detain, interrogate, and prosecute al Qaeda, the Taliban, affiliated groups, and those who substantially support them but would not extend any new authorities to detain U.S. citizens and explicitly exempts U.S. citizens from provisions related to military custody of terrorists. The bill would authorize \$554 billion for the Department of Defense's base budget, \$115.5 billion for overseas contingency operations, and \$11.1 billion for the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration. To comply with the first tier of the Budget Control Act's requirement to cut defense spending, authorized funding was reduced by \$19 billion from the Fiscal Year 2011 NDAA, \$21.8 billion from the House-approved version of the Fiscal Year 2012 NDAA, and \$24.1 billion from President Obama's budget request for Fiscal Year 2012.

- **Fiscal Year 2012 Consolidated and Continuing Appropriations** — On Friday, the House approved the Conference Report on H.R. 2055, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Appropriations Act of 2012, by a bipartisan vote of 296-121, I VOTED YES. There were 149 Democrats who supported this legislation. The legislation would provide a total of \$914.9 billion in non-emergency discretionary budget authority for the nine appropriations bills, including \$518.1 billion for Defense, \$32 billion for Energy & Water, \$21.5 billion for Financial Services, \$39.6 billion for Homeland Security, \$29.2 billion for Interior & Environment, \$156.3 billion for Labor/HHS/Education, \$4.3 billion for Legislative Branch, \$71.7 billion for Military/Veterans, and \$42.1 for State/Foreign Operations. The bill, when combined with the three appropriations bills already enacted (H.R. 2112), would provide a total of \$1.043 trillion in non-emergency,

discretionary appropriations. Total non-emergency funding for Fiscal Year 2012 is within the discretionary spending caps established in the Budget Control Act (S. 365). Total Fiscal Year 2012 funding represents a \$6 billion decrease from Fiscal Year 2011 non-emergency funding for these agencies. In addition to regular appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Conference Report would provide \$115.1 billion in funds for overseas contingency operations (OCO) and other ongoing operations related to the global war on terrorism. The bill would also maintain a number of pro-life provisions such as the Hyde amendment, conscience protections, a reduction of \$2 million to Title X, and would cut UNFPA funding by \$5 million. The final Conference Report is the same as the consolidated funding bill filed earlier this week (H.R. 3671) with two exceptions: 1) The Conference Report would remove language that would have changed travel and remittances restrictions related to Cuba (section 634) and language clarifying the Department of Treasury's "cash in advance" rule regarding certain U.S. exports to Cuba (section 632); and 2) The Conference Report would allow the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to transfer \$10 million in funding between the agency's Information Technology account and its Salaries and Expenses account.

- **Disaster Relief Appropriations** — Also on Friday, the House approved H.R. 3672, the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2012, by a vote of 351-67, I VOTED YES. This bill received bipartisan support with 182 Democrats supporting the bill. The bill would provide emergency disaster relief funding for Fiscal Year 2012 which would be offset with a 1.83 percent across-the-board reduction in regular discretionary appropriations, provided for in accompanying legislation (H. Con. Res. 94). According to CBO, the bill would provide \$8.6 billion in emergency disaster relief for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Army Corps of Engineers and the Social Security Administration for their efforts to combat waste, fraud and abuse. The bill would provide \$6.4 billion for the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). This includes funding for fire assistance, emergency declarations, major disasters, surge operations, and disaster readiness support. The bill would also include \$1.7 billion in funding for disaster recovery assistance through the Army Corps of Engineers. Finally, the bill would provide no more than \$483 million to the Social Security Administration for continuing disability reviews to reduce waste, fraud and abuse. Funding under the bill is in keeping with emergency disaster funding limits established by the Budget Control Act (BCA)(S. 365). Under the BCA, adjustments to discretionary spending limits are allowed for "emergency" appropriations, disaster funding, appropriations to reduce waste and abuse in Social Security disability and health care funding, and appropriations for the global war on terrorism. The bill limits the definition of the term "emergency" spending as unanticipated funding provided for "the prevention or mitigation of, or response to, loss of life or property, or a threat to national security." In addition, the BCA allows Members the opportunity during the legislative process to offset the spending with other cuts.

Highlights of the Week:

- Monday, 12 December, Met with Fuad Hussein (Chief of Staff to President Masoud Barzani), Falah Bakir (Head of Kurdistan Regional Government Department of Foreign Relations), Ashti Hawrami (Minister of Natural Resources, Kurdistan Regional Government), and Qubad Talabani (Kurdistan Regional Government representative to United States) to discuss Iraq after the United States troops withdrawal and concerns with current Iraqi government under Prime Minister al-Maliki. Please see the Press Release I issued after my meeting [here](#).

- Tuesday, 13 December, Attended Congressional Black Caucus meeting with top African-American CEOs to discuss private sector initiatives.

- Wednesday, 14 December, Happy Birthday to my wife of 22 years, Angela! Attended a breakfast with guest speaker David Keene, President of the National Rifle Association.

- Thursday, 15 December, met with former 2-20th FA, 4th Infantry Division Officer, Captain Adam Ropelewski, who is completing his Congressional fellowship with United States Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), participated in a Small Business Committee subcommittee hearing on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations on the President's Healthcare Medical Loss Ratio Rule --we are seeing the unintended consequences of this regulation -- met with Wounded Warrior SSG Bill Costello and his wife Jennifer, our Congressional office gave them a personal U.S. Capitol tour, participated in a House Armed Services Committee press conference on alternative solutions to defense sequestration.

- Friday, 16 December, taped a video for Military Day in Tallahassee on 10 January 2012.

- Saturday, 17 December, flew back to the Congressional District, addressed the Palm Beach Roundtable.

- Sunday, 18 December, Rode my motorcycle in a funeral procession and attended the farewell ceremony for Veteran and friend, Frank "Pipes" Cook.

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