
Congressman Greg Walden's Oregon Congressional Connection

Your Direct Link to the News and Events in the Nation's Capital

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

Dear Fellow Oregonian:

With the Oregon primary season behind us, the House rules permit me to resume sending out my weekly e-newsletter. In early August I'll have to stop once again until the November elections are behind us.

In this week's Oregon Congressional Connection I've included some of the news from Capitol Hill and around Oregon that's taken place since I last emailed you, as well as information on the House floor schedule for the coming week. You'll also find the schedule for House committee hearings and an update on the Klamath Basin water crisis. As always, you can find additional information about developments in Congress on my web site at www.walden.house.gov, which I've just updated.

If you have any questions or comments about this e-newsletter or anything else taking place in Congress and our nation's capital, please e-mail me at greg.walden@mail.house.gov. My staff and I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

I hope you find this week's Oregon Congressional Connection informative. Thank you.

God Bless America.

Congressman Greg Walden

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Klamath Basin Update

Since the last issue of the Oregon Congressional Connection, a great deal has taken place in Washington, D.C. with respect to the water crisis in the Klamath Basin.

On May 13, President Bush signed into law the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (H.R. 2646), known as the 2002 Farm Bill. Significant funding for the Klamath Basin was contained in the Farm Bill to pay for long-identified water quality and water quantity improvement projects. I have always stressed that the purpose of the Farm Bill is to help American agriculture, and for that reason I fought hard to ensure that the bill would include funding to maintain the health of the agriculture economy in the Klamath Basin.

I worked closely with House Farm Bill negotiators to get \$50 million in direct funding in the Farm Bill earmarked for the Klamath Basin. This adds a significant tool to our toolbox as we work to develop long-term solutions to the water crisis. The funding will be provided under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) section of the bill and will be directed to farmers and ranchers to help pay for long identified projects to improve water quality and quantity in the Basin.

We were also successful in including language in the final version of the Farm Bill to study fish passage issues at Chiloquin Dam, which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has estimated blocks 95 percent of the spawning habitat of the shortnose and Lost River sucker fish. The Farm Bill provision is identical to legislation I introduced last year in the House, which was drafted in consultation with the Klamath Tribes and the Modoc Point Irrigation District. My Chiloquin Dam bill passed unanimously in the House on October 30, 2001, but has not been scheduled for any action in the Senate.

Including the Chiloquin Dam provision in the Farm Bill will help ensure the recovery of the sucker fish by improving access to their native habitat, which will ultimately make more water available for agriculture. When the Chairman of the National Academy of Sciences panel testified before my colleagues and I on the House Resources Committee on this issue in March, he indicated that the suckers would be lined up to breed if it weren't for the Chiloquin Dam. That's why we need to conduct a comprehensive study of this problem so we can take the appropriate steps to ensure the passage of the suckers.

The Farm Bill also contains an additional \$600 million for water conservation projects nationwide, much of which will be available for the Klamath Basin. I strongly urged the House conferees to include language in the bill recommending that the federal

government give priority in the distribution of these funds to projects in the Basin. Fortunately, as the President and his Cabinet have established, the farmers and ranchers of the Klamath Basin have the support of this administration, and I'll work hard to ensure that this money is well spent.

Toward that end, on Wednesday, May 1, I had the opportunity to question Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman about the Klamath Basin during her testimony before the House Committee on Resources. I asked Secretary Veneman what the farmers and ranchers of the Klamath Basin could expect from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in terms of its commitment to funding water quality and quantity improvement projects. Secretary Veneman responded that helping to solve the crisis in the Basin remained at the top of her priority list and that under her watch USDA would make the financial commitment needed to address many of the ongoing problems in the Basin. I fully intend to keep the pressure on the federal government, including the folks at USDA and the Department of the Interior, to make the necessary federal investment to ensure a viable, sustainable agriculture economy in the Basin well into the future.

Even before the devastating shut-off of irrigation water to the farmers and ranchers in the Basin, no legislative issue has been a higher priority for me. Though we've had some good news in recent weeks, I won't stop focusing on this issue until a long-term solution to the water crisis in the Klamath Basin is reached.

District Wrap Up

Northeast Oregon Methamphetamine Summit

As the father of a young man on the cusp of his teenage years, the dangers posed by illegal drugs are deeply worrisome to me. Because the spread of dangerous substances is a problem that is particularly acute in Oregon, combating this trend is one of the most profound responsibilities that public officials in our state must undertake.

On that note, on Monday, May 13, I organized a meeting with local, state and federal law enforcement officers at the Umatilla County Justice Center to discuss the increase in illegal drug manufacturing and use in northeast Oregon, with an emphasis on methamphetamine, or "meth." Attending the meeting were the sheriffs of Morrow, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa counties and the chiefs of police of Pendleton, La Grande, Milton-Freewater, Enterprise and Baker City, as well as representatives of the Oregon State Police (OSP), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the DEA.

As a member of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, I wanted to lend whatever support I could to these law enforcement officials after receiving a request from them to assist in establishing a DEA post of duty in Pendleton. The roundtable discussion was designed to give law enforcement officials an opportunity to update me on the operations of multi-agency counter-drug task forces in northeast

Oregon and discuss their request for federal assistance in combating the prevalence of meth in the area.

I arranged for the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Asa Hutchinson, to speak to our meeting via speakerphone from his office in Washington, D.C. During Hutchinson's call he acknowledged the rise in meth production in the rural West and pledged to look into the request for a DEA presence in northeast Oregon. He praised the multi-agency approach to counter-drug operations, which enables small police agencies to pool their resources in the fight against drugs. Hutchinson also stressed that his experience as a House member representing rural Arkansas made him familiar with the drug enforcement needs of rural communities. The DEA was represented at the event by a special agent based in Seattle who flew to Pendleton to take part in the discussion at the direction of Administrator Hutchinson.

Meth production, distribution and use has long been recognized as a growing concern in rural Oregon. During 2001 a total of 456 clandestine meth laboratories were discovered in Oregon, more than in 25 states combined. Only four states saw more lab seizures that year than Oregon – California, Washington, Missouri and Oklahoma. Hermiston and Pendleton in particular have been identified as major meth manufacturing and distributing hubs due to their close proximity to the Tri-Cities and Yakima in Washington State, as well as the relatively small number of law enforcement officers to control the problem.

During the May 13 meeting, I also briefed the law enforcement officials on my efforts in Congress to deliver additional federal funding to local agencies for meth eradication efforts. I'm a cosponsor of the Clean, Learn, Educate, Abolish, Neutralize, and Undermine Production (CLEAN-UP) of Meth Act, which would authorize federal funds to help train law enforcement to identify meth labs, educate students about the dangers of meth, provide grants to hospitals and health care clinics for meth treatment programs, and provide grants to local law enforcement agencies to clean up toxic sites that remain when meth labs are closed down.

It's too early to tell if our efforts to increase the federal drug enforcement presence in eastern Oregon will bear fruit, but I'll stay focused on this issue for as long as it takes to remove these poisons from our communities.

New Second District Agriculture and Natural Resources Field Representative

I recently hired a new member of my Bend district office staff to serve as a field representative and agriculture / natural resources policy aide for Oregon's Second District. Burns native Colby Marshall, a member of a fourth-generation Oregon ranching family, will come on board June 1st. In addition to handling agriculture and natural resource issues, Colby will travel extensively in central, southern and eastern Oregon and work closely with farmers, ranchers, natural resource groups and other Oregonians who recreate and make their living off the land.

A former 4-H Grand Champion livestock showman and “Hotshot” wildland forest fire fighter, Colby is a 1999 graduate of Oregon State University’s agriculture program at Eastern Oregon University, where he was a scholarship student of the Pendleton Grain Growers. Colby’s achievements as a student included serving as Student Body President of EOU and being named the Outstanding Agriculture Graduating Senior. Colby graduated *magna cum laude* with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture Business Management and a minor in Crop and Soil Sciences.

Colby’s work experience has included stints with the Oregon Cattleman’s Association and the Pendleton Grain Growers. Most recently, he has been employed as the coordinator of alumni and government relations at Eastern Oregon University. Colby’s previous federal experience includes a 1998 summer internship with the House Committee on Agriculture in Washington, D.C.

I’m delighted to have Colby on board to assist me in serving the good people of the Second District. Colby’s rich experience dealing with agriculture and natural resource issues and his strength in working cooperatively with a broad range of interests lend themselves well to public service. His deep roots in eastern Oregon are a real asset to my office, too.

You can reach Colby by calling my Bend office at (541) 389-4408 or emailing him at colby.marshall@mail.house.gov.

News from Capitol Hill

Round-trip Electricity Trading

In the wake of the Enron meltdown, reforming the way energy firms do business – particularly the shady practices that have contributed to the industry’s woes – is a fast-moving train in Washington, D.C. With a seat on the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy, I have the opportunity to play a role in these reform efforts to increase consumer protection and help prevent dubious business practices.

My Oregon colleague Peter DeFazio and I have teamed up in bipartisan fashion to put a stop to a practice among energy firms of falsely boosting sales volumes by selling wholesale electricity and buying it back for the same price. This practice, known as “wash” trading or “round-trip trading,” creates the false impression that an energy firm sells more power than it actually controls and inflates the price of power by using the artificial price of the round-trip trade as a basis for price comparison. Additionally, concern exists that round-trip trading contributes to power grid congestion. The companion legislation Congressman DeFazio and I put forth would ban round-trip trading or reporting phantom revenues resulting from such electricity sales.

The questionable practice of round-trip electricity trading gained the attention of federal regulators following the Enron bankruptcy. In recent weeks at least seven major energy

firms have admitted to engaging in round-trip trades, including one company that acknowledged that the trading practice accounted for more than 70 percent of its electricity trades since 1999. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is investigating the extent of round-trip trading and has required over 150 energy firms to file a sworn statement indicating whether they engaged in the practice. Companies that conducted round-trip trading must provide FERC with details of those transactions.

The Truth in Electricity Trading Act (H.R. 4826) would amend the Federal Power Act to prohibit round-trip sales and impose penalties for violations under FERC that are similar to current penalties for other market manipulation practices. Complementing this measure is the Truth in Electricity Revenue Reporting Act (H.R. 4827), which would amend the Securities Exchange Act to prohibit the recording of revenue from round-trip sales of electric power. H.R. 4827 would treat such recording as providing false and misleading material, which would subject energy firms to penalties under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

It's time to put a stop to the gimmickry in energy trading that falsely inflates company revenues and probably inflates market prices. It's not just Enron that engaged in sham, round-trip trades. Many other companies have allegedly taken advantage of this loophole and as a result have deceived their investors and harmed their customers. While not every swap may be illegal, most are certainly shady. That's why it's time to put a stop to these schemes and protect rate-payers in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the country, and our legislation will do just that.

Mt. Ashland Ski Area Expansion

Senator Gordon Smith and I recently sent a letter to Chief Dale Bosworth, head of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), urging him not to cut short funds needed to complete a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the proposed expansion of the Mt. Ashland Ski Area. Located in the Rogue River National Forest, the Mt. Ashland Ski Area is in the process of developing additional intermediate and beginner ski trails. In March of 2002 the Forest Service notified Mt. Ashland personnel that funds previously allocated for the FEIS would be insufficient to complete the federally mandated study. The expansion project cannot proceed without additional financial resources to finalize the FEIS.

In a letter we delivered to Bosworth last week, Sen. Smith and I requested that the estimated \$150,000 needed to finalize the FEIS be provided to allow the expansion project to continue. Citing the thousands of signatures that have been collected on a petition urging funding to complete the FEIS, we stressed the level of support in the local community for the expansion project.

The non-profit Mt. Ashland Association has contributed between \$350,000 and \$400,000 toward completing the final environmental impact statement. The Mt. Ashland Ski Area expansion project is expected to provide 15 to 20 new jobs at the ski area following its completion.

Pulling the rug out from under the Mt. Ashland project at this point in the process would be tremendously unfair to all the people who have worked so hard over the years to make this expansion possible. Years of collaboration between Mt. Ashland and the Forest Service have gone into this project, and it would be a shame not to continue that as the plans for the expansion move into the final phase. I look forward to working with Sen. Smith to ensure that the funds needed to complete this project will be available.

Rural Health Care

Over the past several months I've met with health care providers and hospital, nursing home and assisted living facility staff from La Grande and Medford to John Day and Ontario. It's clear that our health care system in Oregon is under enormous pressure.

One of the chief problems we face is the Medicare reimbursement system, which short-changes rural hospitals. For that reason, I've cosponsored the Rural Community Hospital Assistance Act, which would increase Medicare reimbursements to small community hospitals. Having spent five years on the Board of Directors of the Hood River Memorial Hospital, I know how important this change would be to rural hospitals.

Many small hospitals serving rural communities are paid in advance for Medicare-related costs based on a calculation of the average cost of treating a patient for a particular procedure. This system differs from the reimbursement system for larger urban hospitals, which are paid by Medicare following the treatment of patients based on actual expenses incurred. Congress created the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission to study the effects of the Medicare pre-payment system and found that small, rural hospitals were being inadequately reimbursed by Medicare. Today only certain rural health care facilities designated as Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) qualify for the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program, which allows them to receive the same cost-based Medicare reimbursement available to larger hospitals.

The Rural Community Hospital Assistance Act would enhance the cost-based reimbursement system for Critical Access Hospitals and expand it to include rural hospitals with 50 or fewer beds. Without this legislation, these hospitals will continue to face the dilemma of being too large to qualify for the CAH program, but too small to absorb the cost of providing treatment that is not adequately reimbursed by Medicare. The measure would also help small, rural hospitals by providing additional funding for technology and infrastructure needs. Thirty-one hospitals in Oregon would immediately benefit if this legislation is signed into law, and I'm committed to making that happen.

I'm also supporting legislation, entitled the Medicare and Medicaid Nursing Facility Quality Improvement Act (HR 4030), to help remove barriers that prevent many long-term nursing facilities in Oregon from making improvements to the quality of care they deliver. This bill would address the statewide shortage of trained nursing staff, ensure that government bureaucrats cannot come between patients and the advice of their doctors, and help keep nursing homes open in rural communities.

The shortage of quality nursing care is one health care problem that is reaching crisis proportions in Oregon. Contributing to this problem are federal regulations that force nursing homes to cease on-site nurse aide training programs for two years following the discovery of a nursing home standards violation, even ones that are unrelated to nurse aide training. Because off-site training facilities are often unavailable in rural Oregon, this rule forces many nurses' aides to relocate elsewhere, depriving communities of desperately needed health care personnel. HR 4030 would revise these regulations to allow on-site nurse aide training to resume as soon as violations are corrected.

HR 4030 also contains a provision that would prohibit government health inspectors from overturning treatment ordered by a patient's own physician, a practice that often occurs despite the lack of medical training by nursing home inspectors. I'd rather follow a physician's recommendation of treatment over a government bureaucrat any day of the week, and this bill recognizes that widespread sentiment.

Of additional concern are unnecessarily strict regulations that can force nursing facilities to close their doors over relatively minor violations of nursing home standards. Right now nursing homes cited for more than one violation six months apart are automatically kicked out of the Medicare and Medicaid program. The automatic termination can occur even if the original problem is corrected. This legislation would give states flexibility to allow providers to remain in the program if this would be in the best interests of residents and if other corrective actions can be taken. Closing nursing home doors and pushing people out when simple improvements can be made doesn't make sense, especially in communities where there are very few, if any, options for people in need of health care.

As a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, which holds jurisdiction over a number of health care-related issues, I have the opportunity to weigh in on efforts to reform health care policy in America. As I do so, chief among my priorities will be assisting rural communities in delivering the quality of health care Oregonians deserve.

Bioterrorism Preparedness

On May 22, the House passed the final version of a measure to improve the nation's ability to respond quickly and effectively to bioterrorism attacks and other public health emergencies. The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act (H.R. 3448) authorizes \$4.6 billion in funding for state emergency preparedness grants, anthrax antibiotics and smallpox vaccines, and emergency response plans to protect municipal drinking water systems. The bill also authorizes measures to protect America's food supply by funding U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) efforts to develop new methods to detect contaminated foods and granting authority to USDA to regulate pathogens that are most devastating to crops and livestock.

I strongly supported passage of the bill, which passed by a vote of 425 to 1. H.R. 3448 originally passed the House on December 12, 2001. House and Senate negotiators have

spent months resolving differences between the House and Senate-passed versions of the bill.

Bioterrorism is one of the gravest threats our nation faces, and the legislation we passed last month will go a long way toward increasing our ability to respond to a bioterrorism attack on American soil. This bill will provide grants to the states to improve emergency preparedness planning and train health care personnel to respond to these attacks. It also contains funds to safeguard our drinking water systems from chemical and biological attacks and increases the number of inspectors at our borders. This is a measure that recognizes the realities of the post-September 11th world, and I believe we'll be a stronger, safer, and more secure nation once this bill is signed into law.

Following the attacks of September 11th I met extensively with emergency first-responders, health care providers and other public safety personnel across Oregon's Second District. Many of the general emergency preparedness needs that were expressed to me during the meetings are addressed by H.R. 3448.

Specifically, the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act authorizes:

- \$1.6 BILLION in grants to states, local governments and other public and private health care facilities to improve planning and preparedness activities, enhance laboratory capacity, educate and train health care personnel, and to develop new drugs, therapies and vaccines.
- \$300 MILLION for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to upgrade and renovate their facilities to deal with public health threats and additional sums, as needed, to improve CDC capabilities.
- \$640 MILLION to expand current national stockpiles of anthrax antibiotics.
- \$509 MILLION to purchase additional smallpox vaccines
- \$100 MILLION to develop vulnerability analyses and emergency response plans for drinking water systems in order to better protect against chemical, biological or radiological attacks on America's drinking water supplies.
- \$545 MILLION for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to hire hundreds of new inspectors at America's borders, develop new methods to detect contaminated foods, and work with state food safety regulators to protect crops and livestock. The bill also provides new regulatory powers to FDA to detain suspicious foods for inspection, to require prior notice of all food imports, to improve access to records to investigate the source of contamination and to require foreign and domestic food facilities to register with the FDA.
- Establishment by the Department of Health and Human Services of a national database of possessors of the 36 biological agents and toxins most dangerous to

humans. The bill also grants authority to USDA to regulate those agents that are most devastating to crops and livestock. Additionally, the bill creates new criminal penalties to enforce both of these important new regulatory regimes.

For additional information on H.R. 3448, click on the following link:
http://www.gop.gov/committeecentral/docs/bills/107/1/bill.asp?bill=hr_terror.

On the Horizon

Resources Committee Field Hearing on Steens Mountain Legislation

The House Committee on Resources is going to hold a field hearing in Frenchglen on Saturday, June 8, from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM to evaluate land use issues that have arisen since the passage of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-399). The hearing is being held following a request I made to Resources Committee Chairman Jim Hansen.

I introduced this legislation in 2000 to preserve the traditional uses of the mountain after learning that the Clinton Administration was planning to declare the area a national monument. Such a designation would have severely curtailed the historical way of life of ranchers and others who work and recreate on Steens Mountain. The introduction of my legislation followed a year of coordination with members of Oregon's congressional delegation, local landowners, environmentalists, federal and state officials, and other users of Steens Mountain.

Since the passage of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act, questions have been raised with respect to the "historical uses" of the mountain, which my legislation was drafted to protect. In particular, the Montana-based environmental group Wilderness Watch is seeking to deny the use of the mountain to the 27-year-old Steens Mountain Running Camp, which brings young people from across the country to Harney County.

Saturday's hearing will be held in the Frenchglen School Gymnasium, which is located approximately an hour south of Burns on Highway 205. Seating is expected to be available for the first 200 attendees, in addition to limited standing room.

Congressman Mike Simpson, who represents Idaho's 2nd Congressional District, will attend the field hearing at my request. The hearing record, which will be developed for the benefit of the entire committee, will memorialize testimony given during the field hearing. The hearing will consist of three panels of witnesses, whose statements will be made available for members of the Resources Committee who are unable to attend.

Witnesses invited to attend the hearing include Chuck Wassinger, Associate State Director of the Oregon State Office of the Bureau of Land Management; Stacy Davies, manager of the Roaring Springs Ranch and member of the Steens Mountain Advisory

Committee (SMAC); Hoyt Wilson, grazing permittee; Fred Otley, grazing permittee; Jerry Sutherland of the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club and SMAC member; Harlan Yriarte, director of the Steens Mountain Running Camp and SMAC member; Cindy Witzel, operator of the Steens Mountain Packers and SMAC member; George Nickas, executive director of Wilderness Watch; and Bill Marlett, executive director of the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA).

The passage of my bill to protect Steens Mountain was a classic example of the success that can be found when Oregonians work together to come up with our own solutions to the problems facing our state. I requested this field hearing so the Resources Committee could hear firsthand from the people most affected by this legislation. It's key that we stay on track in implementing this law that we worked so hard to get passed.

Committee Hearings – All Times Pacific

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

7:00 AM – House Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs and international Relations hearing on "Transforming the Department of Defense Financial Management: A Strategy for Change." For more information on this hearing, click on the following link: <http://www.house.gov/reform>.

11:00 AM – House Financial Services Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance and Government Sponsored Enterprises hearing on, "Insurance Regulation and Competition for the 21st Century." For more information on this hearing, click on the following link: <http://financialservices.house.gov>.

1:00 PM – House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security hearing to be followed by a markup of H.R. 4598, the Homeland Security Information Sharing Act. For more information on this hearing, click on the following link: <http://www.house.gov/judiciary>.

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

7:00 AM – House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet hearing on, "The FCC's UWB Proceeding: An Examination of Government's Spectrum Management Process." For more information regarding this hearing, visit the following link: <http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

7:00 AM – House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee hearing on H.R. 4701, the Sports Agent Responsibility and Trust Act. For more information regarding this hearing, visit the following link: <http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

11:00 AM – House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality hearing on "Clean Air Act Implementation: Experience of State and Local regulators."

For more information regarding this hearing, visit the following link:
<http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

Thursday, June 6, 2002

5:30 AM – House Armed Services Committee Special Oversight Panel on Terrorism hearing on "Are Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority Credible Partners for Peace." For more information regarding this hearing, please click on the following link:
<http://www.house.gov/hasc/schedules/>.

7:00 AM – House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Education Reform hearing on "Learning Disabilities and Early Intervention Strategies: How to Reform the Special Education Referral and Identification Process." To listen to this hearing live, please visit the following link: <http://edworkforce.house.gov/committee/webcast.htm>.

7:00 AM – House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health hearing on "The National Institutes of Health: Investing in Research to Prevent and Cure Disease." For more information regarding this hearing, visit the following link:
<http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

7:00 AM – House Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, Financial Management and Intergovernmental Relations oversight hearing on "The Federal Management Improvement Act of 1996: Are Agencies Meeting the Challenge." For more information on this hearing, click on the following link:
<http://www.house.gov/reform>.

7:00 AM – House Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs and International Relations hearing on "Combating Terrorism: Improving the Federal Response." For more information on this hearing, click on the following link:
<http://www.house.gov/reform>.

7:00 AM – House Resources Subcommittee on Forest and Forest Health oversight hearing on, "Process Gridlock on the National Forests." To listen to this hearing live, please visit the following link: <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/audio.htm>.

7:00 AM – House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads hearing on recent derailments and railroad safety. To listen to this hearing live, please click on the following link: <http://www.house.gov/transportation/>.

7:00 AM – House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Benefits hearing on the status of the VA's implementation of the VA Claims Processing Task Force's recommendations and the potential for a greater VA/Veterans Service Organization partnership. For more information on this hearing, click on the following link: <http://veterans.house.gov>.

11:00 AM – House Small Business Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform and Oversight and Subcommittee on Workforce, Empowerment and Government Programs joint

hearing on "The Cost of Regulation to Small Business." To listen to this hearing live, please click on the following link: <http://www.house.gov/smbiz/audio/index.html>.

On the House Floor – All Times Pacific

On Monday, June 3, the House was not in session. On Tuesday, June 4, the House will meet at 11:00 AM for legislative business. The House will consider a number of non-controversial measures under suspension of the rules. On Wednesday and Thursday, June 5 and 6, the House will meet at 7:00 AM for legislative business. The House will consider a number of measures, including:

- H.R. 4628 – [Intelligence Authorization Act for FY 2003](#). This bill authorizes funding for intelligence-related activities at various agencies including the CIA, NSA, Defense Department, and the FBI.
- S. 1372 – [Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2002 Conference Report](#). This bill reauthorizes the Export-Import Bank, which provides loans and loan guarantees for the import and export of goods and services between the United States and other nations.
- H.R. 2143 – [Permanent Death Tax Repeal Act of 2002](#). This bill will make permanent the death tax relief provisions enacted by the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, signed into law by President Bush on June 7. The act's death tax relief provisions are set to be revoked on December 31, 2010, due to a sunset provision inserted by the Senate using a technical rule.

On Friday, June 7, no votes are expected.

Online Survey on www.walden.house.gov

In order to keep abreast of the issues that matter most to Oregonians, I maintain an online survey on my web site at www.walden.house.gov. If you have not already done so, I hope you'll take a moment to register your positions. And please tell your friends, family and coworkers about the new survey and encourage them to fill it out.

My survey asks Oregonians their opinions on a variety of local and national issues, including the war on terrorism, education reform, efforts to stimulate the economy, and the federal government's natural resource policies. Keeping informed about the positions of the people I represent in Congress is critical to my being able to serve them effectively.

My web site also contains a year-end congressional report to taxpayers in Oregon, regular updates on the Klamath Basin crisis and my efforts to improve and reform the Endangered Species Act and other developments in Congress.

Capitol Hill Tours

If you are planning a visit to Washington, D.C., and are interested in arranging a tour of the Capitol Building or any of the other highlights in our nation’s capital, please call Samantha in my Congressional office in Washington, D.C. at (202) 225-6730. You can also call my Medford office toll free at (800) 533-3303.

For additional security, the Capitol Police have implemented new procedures regarding items that visitors will not be permitted to bring into the Capitol. These prohibited items include: aerosol and non-aerosol sprays; cans and bottles; oversized suitcases, duffle bags and oversized backpacks; knives of any length; razors and box cutters; mace and pepper spray. The Capitol Police are authorized to make exceptions if a prohibited item is determined to be necessary and required to serve childcare, medical or other special needs.

Capitol Building

The Capitol Guide Service will conduct tours from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Saturday. Maximum tour size will be 25 visitors every half-hour. At the conclusion of the tour, the Capitol Guide Service will offer all visitors the option of visiting the Senate or the House of Representatives galleries if they are in session. Visitors must be issued gallery passes before their tour of the Capitol, which are available free of charge in my congressional office. The Capitol will be unavailable for tours on Sundays and holidays.

Galleries of the Senate and the House of Representatives

The galleries of the Senate and the House of Representatives remain open to the public when in session. The galleries are unavailable to visitors when not in session.

Sending mail to Capitol Hill

Regular U.S. mail delivery to my congressional office in Washington, D.C. continues to be slow and unreliable. While I was advised that regular mail delivery would resume last fall, the process of irradiating incoming mail to protect against bio-terrorism continues to cause lengthy delays. As a result, I have not been able to respond to a number of Oregonians who have contacted me via regular mail since early October.

Until an efficient reliable means of delivering regular mail to congressional offices is established, I encourage you to communicate with me in Washington, D.C., by fax at (202) 225-5774 and by email at greg.walden@mail.house.gov. You can also send U.S. mail to my district offices in Medford and Bend at the addresses below. My district staff keeps me closely apprised of the mail I receive when I’m not in Oregon.

Medford District Office

843 East Main Street
Suite 400
Medford, OR 97504

Bend District Office
Jamison Building
Suite 211
131 NW Hawthorne
Bend, OR 97701

Second District Trivia

This week's question: What 20th Century American President lived in Oregon as a young boy?

Bonus questions: What were the circumstances that brought the future president to Oregon, and where in Oregon did he live?

For the answer to this question and to take a crack at past questions, click here:
<http://www.walden.house.gov/trivia/trivia.htm>

For more information on these and other issues, please visit my website at www.walden.house.gov or call my Washington, D.C., office at (202) 225-6730. You can also call my Medford office toll-free at (800) 533-3033. If you have any questions or comments, please send them to dallas.boyd@mail.house.gov. If you'd like to be removed from the "Oregon Congressional Connection" list simply send an email to newsletter-request@or02list.house.gov and type UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.