



E-NEWS from *Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn*

An electronic legislative update for July 11, 2002

Did you know?

In recognition of the Independence Day Holiday, the Congress was not in session last week and Members were in their districts for the July 4th District Work Period. Below are photographs taken at a few of Jennifer's events last week. (See page 2 for this week's legislative agenda)



Jennifer held four seniors' town hall meetings last week (above at the Issaquah Middle School) to discuss Medicare and other issues that are of concern to seniors. Among topics discussed was the \$350 billion prescription drug benefit recently approved by the US House.



At Jennifer's request, Acting Director of the Food and Drug Administration Dr. Les Crawford visited the Puget Sound region. Dr. Crawford (pictured 2nd from left in blue blazer) and Jennifer toured Siemen's Medical Solutions in Issaquah where they observed a demonstration of a new, three dimensional, color ultrasound diagnostic device.



Jennifer held two community-wide town hall meetings (left: in Maple Valley and the surrounding area) to listen to their concerns regarding homeland security, the recent House approval of a bill to permanently eliminate the death tax and the House prescription drug legislation.

What is going on this week?

BILL TO ALLOW PILOTS TO CARRY GUNS IN COCKPITS PASSED THE US HOUSE

The House has approved HR 4635, the “Arming Pilots Against Terrorism Act.” The program allows qualified pilots to carry guns in cockpits. Qualified pilots include those who have military or law enforcement backgrounds or have received intensive training administered by the Transportation Security Administration. By allowing qualified pilots to carry guns, we provide a last line of defense against committed, creative terrorists and security lapses at airports.

HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY PASSES ARMED SERVICES TAX FAIRNESS ACT

By a vote of 412-0, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to provide additional tax relief for military personnel selling their homes and for families of those killed during military service. Under current law, a family receives a \$6,000 death benefit when their loved one is killed in service. Unfortunately, half of that amount is subject to income tax. The Armed Services Tax Fairness Act completely exempts it from tax. The bill also liberalizes the rules for the primary residence capital gains exclusion so that time away from home counts towards satisfying the five-year holding period to qualify for the exclusion. A soldier fighting for our freedom does not sacrifice alone; the family must endure financial hardship, separation from a loved one, and concern for their well-being. We want to honor these brave soldiers and their families by easing the burden of military life.

HOUSE APPROVES LEGISLATION TO SPEED AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION

The US House has approved legislation that streamlines and expedites the process for expanding runways in our nation’s airports. Over the past 20 years, air travel in the US has grown faster than any other mode of transportation, but airport runway capacity has not kept pace with growth. Prior to September 11, one of four commercial flights was delayed because of air traffic congestion. Air traffic is quickly approaching pre-September 11 levels, so the need to expand runway capacity must be addressed. In order for an airport to expand its runways, dozens of approvals and environmental impact studies must be conducted by numerous state, local and federal agencies—a process that can take up to ten years. This bill streamlines the approval process by allowing these approvals and environmental impact studies to be conducted at the same time. It allows the Department of Transportation to place deadlines on agencies for conducting studies and forces them to report to Congress if the deadline is not met. Jennifer supported the measure.

US HOUSE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO CONSIDER THE FISCAL YEAR 2003 INTERIOR SPENDING BILL

On Friday, July 12, the House may consider the fiscal year 2003 interior spending measure. The bill allots \$19.7 billion to the Department of Interior and related agencies (US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service and various conservation projects). It includes \$700 million in emergency funding for fighting wildfires. (See following page for Interior projects that will benefit Washington State.)

At the request of Congresswoman Dunn, the following projects to benefit Washington State will be included in the fiscal year 2003 interior spending bill:

- \$244,000 for rehabilitation of the Paradise Guide House at Mt. Rainier** These dollars will complete the rebuilding of the Guide House.
- \$4 million for continued development of Ramgen technology.** Ramgen technology utilizes environmentally-friendly engines to generate electricity using methane gas from coalmines.
- \$4.5 million for the purchase of Plum Creek Option lands in the I-90 corridor.** This funding will allow the Forest Service to purchase 6,530 acres of Plum Creek Timber Company lands, all of which were identified in the I-90 land exchange legislation passed in 1998.
- \$4 million for additional funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the Washington Timber Fish and Wildlife Initiative.** These funds will help stabilize tribal involvement with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.
- \$4 million to continue the Puget Sound and Coastal Washington Hatchery Reform Project, which began in 1999.**
- \$4.4 million for the construction of dormitories for seasonal employees at Mt. Rainier.** These dormitories will be constructed near the Ashford entrance to Mt. Rainier

Summary of Press Releases:

US REP JENNIFER DUNN RELEASES STATEMENT REGARDING JC WATTS' RETIREMENT

Last week, Oklahoma Congressman and Chairman of the House Republican Conference JC Watts announced that he will not seek re-election this November. Following Watts' announcement, Congresswoman Dunn released the following statement: (The following is a summary. For the complete text of the statement, visit Jennifer's website: www.house.gov/dunn/)

"Many of us tried very hard to convince JC Watts to stay in Congress. He has been an invaluable Member of Congress, a great leader, and great face for the Republican Party. I wish him well as he moves in new directions...I have always believed that the Republican Party would be wise to elect a woman to a top leadership post. This is a particularly opportune time for us to select a leader who brings an unique set of experiences to the leadership table.... At this early juncture, of those Members who have expressed an interest in filling this leadership post, I believe that Deborah Pryce best meets these qualifications.

"This is JC Watts' moment and we should pause to reflect on the many contributions he has made to this country and the Republican Party."

US REP JENNIFER DUNN ON CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Following the President's Wall Street speech outlining his corporate responsibility proposal, Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn released the following statement:

"The President has sought the delicate balance between giving shareholders a renewed sense of confidence in corporate America without creating new layers of bureaucracy that will impede our struggling economy.

"It is important for corporate leaders to be accountable for false information that is knowingly distributed to shareholders, employees and the general public. I applaud his efforts to increase criminal penalties for such fraudulent acts as well as to force corporate leaders to live under the same stock trading rules that everyone else does.

"This is a good proposal that builds upon corporate responsibility legislation passed by the US House last spring. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue as the President's plan comes to fruition."