Friday, November 3rd, 2006

War against Islamic Fascism: Two major pieces of legislation on this subject were passed by Congress in September and signed by President Bush. One is the Department of Defense Appropriations bill which increased defense spending by 7% and included $70 billion in additional funding for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq so that they don't have to go back and get more later as they did in the last couple of years. This bill addresses many of the funding deficiencies for military equipment and training that have been discussed of late.

The second piece of legislation was the bill dealing with military tribunals for captured terrorists. You may recall that a U.S. Supreme Court decision required that the previous way in which war criminals held at Guantanamo Bay were being tried was not valid. Legislation had to be passed in order to try these detainees. Congress passed legislation, which the president signed into law that will allow terrorists to be tried and held accountable for their actions, while applying a legal framework that will protect our national security. Information that is classified would not be disclosed if it would harm national security. This was a major source of debate about this bill. Some wanted even more legal guarantees included in the bill, which could have resulted in disclosure to terrorists about covert operations and intelligence. I disagreed with their position, and I am glad Congress did as well. The final bill carefully balances our societal desire for due process with our need in time of war to defend and protect ourselves from an uncivilized enemy devoid of any morals.

Energy: The progress in this area has been one of my greatest disappointments for the year. Frankly, the bills that were signed into law merely nibble at the edges of this big problem. We need to extract the existing vast oil and gas resources in Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico which would dramatically increase our domestic supplies and therefore reduce foreign dependency. But bills to do that are stuck in the Senate or in conference committee.

We also need to embark on a mission to increase supply, development and distribution of the many alternatives to oil and gas that exist today. This stuff is complex and requires difficult and deliberative legislative action. Unfortunately, it seems that the crisis of the day always came first and nothing moved forward here either.

You can be sure that one of my objectives in 2007 will be to engage in that necessarily complex

and deliberative process to get alternative energy policy off the ground. You will hear more from me about that later this year and next.

So what now? This week, I have given you a snapshot of where we are on the four biggest issues that constituents say are on their minds. There is significant progress in three out of the four. Changes in Congress could completely alter the direction we are taking on these issues and in my view it would be unwelcome. Simply blocking extension of the tax cuts would lead to tax increases on every taxpaying American. Spending more would obviously increase the deficit. Not extracting oil from proven domestic resources like Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico will increase our dependence on foreign oil regardless of what we do with alternatives. The Senate already voted for amnesty for illegal aliens while the House strongly opposed this measure. If a new House were to alter this course, we would have to count on a presidential veto. And if we withdraw from the war on Islamic Fascism and allow them to build up strength again, they will attack us again as they have been doing since 1979 under Presidents and Congresses of both parties.

I hope this doesn't happen. But we'll talk more next week.

Until next week, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell

P.S.

The readers of this laptop report are a learned bunch who know their grammar and spelling. A number of you wrote me about our error in calling it a "capitol gains tax" instead of a "capital gains tax." Several people suggested that a "capitol gains tax" is one intended to confiscate all gains for the benefit of the "capitol" and you don't want that. I agree. Thank you for your proof reading and the mistake will not happen again. If it does, I guess that John Kerry would conclude that I will then likely be "stuck in Iraq."