



Working for You

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Rep. Devin Nunes



Nunes and Major Leader Boehner pause for a picture with Lt. Commander Correia after a press conference on conditions in Iraq.

My Fact Finding Mission to Iraq

Recently, I was honored to take part in a Congressional Delegation Fact Finding Mission to Iraq. I was invited by Majority Leader John Boehner to take part in this important endeavor, and I am grateful I was able to join my colleagues in investigating part of the defining struggle of my generation. Operation Iraqi Freedom is one phase of the overall plan to bring freedom and democracy to countries that have struggled for years under the rule of dictators and tyrants.



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At this time, Iraq is front and center in the Global War on Terror. Ignoring this fact would risk the future of democracy in the region. While some claim that more work needs to be done elsewhere in this world-wide struggle, they often do so only to discredit the effort in Iraq. The bottom line is that it would be fool hardy to ignore the work and progress that has been made in Iraq.

Furthermore, the job that America's noble and brave soldiers are accomplishing to bring about change by not only beating back foreign insurgents but by winning the hearts and minds of the average Iraqi citizen has given me renewed strength and resolve to win this war. These honorable men and women are doing their part to help train Iraqi civilian police and military forces in order to give Iraqis the power to police their own country. This is a goal they are deeply committed to achieving and I will do my part in the House of Representatives to ensure that they have the resources and support necessary to conduct this vital mission.

During my time in Iraq I took part in briefings conducted by top American military officials, discussed the security situation with local Iraqis, and was even honored to meet a constituent and high school classmate Lt. Commander Steve Correia of the U.S. Navy. After meetings and discussions with these different folks, I was left with one impression: we must remain committed to freedom and democracy in Iraq. If we do, we will win the Global War on Terror.

If you have a problem with a federal agency, please don't hesitate to stop by or call my offices in Visalia or Clovis.

Visalia — 559-733-3861
113 N. Church St., Suite 208
Visalia, CA 93291

Clovis — 559-323-5235
264 Clovis Ave., Suite 206
Clovis, CA 93612

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Improving Energy Independence

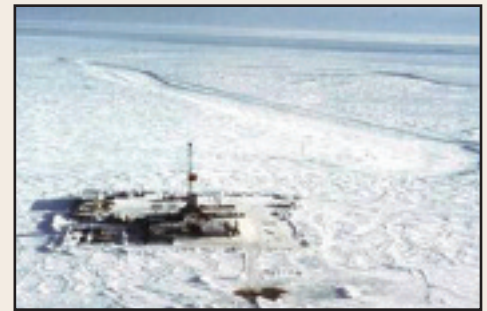
Every year we pay higher prices for energy consumption – whether at the pumps or in our monthly home energy bills. This has stifled economic development and placed an unnecessary burden on the family budget. America needs a coherent energy policy that stimulates growth while providing security for all. Our immediate inclination is to blame the energy companies or blame the government for not fixing the situation. While some responsibility lies with the government, it is not the main reason why we are paying higher prices. Considering that we have not expanded our infrastructure in nearly three decades – the situation we face is not surprising.

Unfortunately, the lack of infrastructure investment can be traced back to the nature of a vocal minority here in the United States. They perpetuate the myth that this country can simply produce enough energy from renewable sources to break our addiction to oil. Certainly, renewable energy should be a part of our overall energy portfolio, however we simply can not rely on it until significant technological advances are achieved.

In order to tackle this problem and begin the task of reducing America's reliance on foreign sources of energy, I have authored a bi-partisan bill, the American-

Made Energy Freedom Act. This bill represents a comprehensive national energy policy that explores for resources in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and uses the money generated from ANWR leases and royalties to assist in the building of more nuclear plants, develop alternative fuel sources, and bolster America's renewable energy portfolio. This nearly \$40 billion investment over 20 years will ensure that America remains competitive far into the future.

Improvements and innovations in technologies enable us to produce energy and protect our environment at the same time. There are numerous common sense avenues we can pursue to turn the tide on the current trend and return our nation to energy independence. For example, with the advent of technology there is no reason why we should not invest in new nuclear facilities that produce environmentally friendly power. We can also look into other proven technologies that countries are currently using or have used in the past with success. One that has the most promise is Coal-to-Liquid (CTL) fuel production. The CTL fuels process begins with coal as a raw material which is put through one of two processes – indirect or direct. Both processes convert the coal into a synthetic crude oil that can then be refined into a variety



Coastal Plain of ANWR

of fuel products. These fuels then burn more efficiently and produce emissions that are significantly lower than low-sulfur diesel.

While we find new environmentally sensitive ways to expand traditional energy resources, we also must look toward non-traditional resources that have the potential to yield unprecedented amounts of energy.

One of those non-traditional resources is oil shale, which is prevalent in western states. Another source is ethanol, more specifically cellulosic ethanol.

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Possible Energy Solutions

- ▶ Today, nuclear power accounts for 20% of our electricity needs. Considering that the French, who are known to be strong environmentalists, rely on nuclear power for 78% of their needs, now is the time to follow their lead to ensure we remain economically competitive.
- ▶ The potential amount of oil contained in American oil shale deposits is estimated to be the equivalent of 1.8 trillion barrels of oil. This amount can power the United States for years to come.

Medicare Prescription Drug Sign-up a Huge Success

Thanks to large outreach efforts by Congress, approximately 39 million seniors are now receiving free or reduced prices for their prescription drugs. In Tulare and parts of Fresno counties, over 62,000 folks are now signed up to receive this new benefit. I was pleased to be one of the authors of this landmark bill and believe that it will provide our nation's vulnerable seniors with the help and support they need.



Ag Tour Rolls Through the Community

In May, Rep. Nunes held his 3rd Annual Central Valley Ag Tour with more than 40 community and business leaders. The day-long tour took the group by charter bus to six locations for a behind-the-scenes look at the nation's most diverse and productive agricultural region. Traveling with the group this year as the congressman's special guest was California's State Director of USDA Rural Development, Ben Higgins. Mr. Higgins was appointed by USDA Secretary Mike Johanns in March of 2006 and has a background in the cattle industry. This year's tour included stops at Bravo Farms, Campos Brothers Almonds, A-G Sod Farms, Kearney Agriculture Center, Ruiz Foods, and Family Tree Farm.



California State Director of Rural Development Ben Higgins and Rep. Nunes discuss agriculture issues at Bravo Farms

Keep Our Economy Growing

Despite months of languishing, Congress finally passed H.R. 4297, the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act. This important piece of legislation extends a number of tax cuts that have spurred economic growth and reduced the unemployment rate since first going into effect in 2003.

Specifically, H.R. 4297 prevents several current-law tax provisions from expiring in the near future. These provisions affect a broad spectrum of taxpayers, including investors, job creators, and middle-income families. The two largest pieces of the bill are the extension of the lower tax rates on capital gains and dividends and the extension of the alternative minimum tax (AMT) protection.

I was privilege to join the President at the White House on May 18th for the signing of this historic bill and believe that we must continue to pass more pro-growth legislation to continue our economy's successful recovery over the past three years.

Additionally, on June 22nd, I supported the passage of H.R. 5638, the Permanent Estate Tax Relief Act. This bill would permanently eliminate the estate tax or "death tax" for 99.7% of all Americans. Those who are still required to pay the estate tax would have much lower rates.

This would provide much needed clarity for small businesses and family farms in the San Joaquin Valley who



Congressman Nunes joins President Bush and a select group of colleagues on the South Lawn of the White House for the signing of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act.

have struggled for years with the cumbersome and job killing death tax.

Many have sought a full repeal of the law but this compromise is seen as a positive step in the right direction towards fairness and equity in the tax code. Under current law, the estate tax gradually declines until it is fully eliminated in 2010. However, in 2011, the tax returns in full force. In contrast, H.R. 5638 would permanently reduce the estate tax on Americans beginning in 2010. The new rate would be 20% on all estates under \$25 million and 40% for estates over \$25 million. The exemption level would also be increased to \$5 million per person.

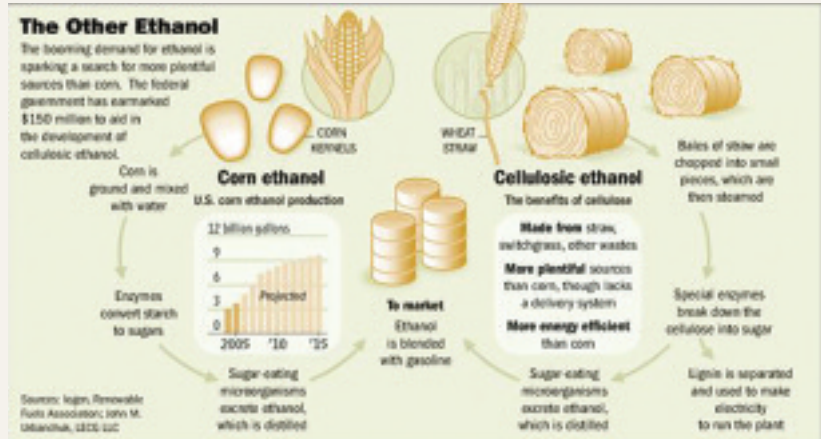
Nunes' Congressional Office Serves Constituents

Linda Dias of Lemon Cove had a problem with a government agency and tried to straighten it out for many months but the agency would not listen. After butting her head against the wall, she contacted Devin Nunes' office and told them what had happened. "The problem was taken care of in a matter of weeks," said Linda. She now reminds her friends that they can go to their representative in Congress and get help if they are having problems with a government agency.

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This is a blend of normal ethanol that can be produced from a great diversity of biomass including waste from urban, agricultural, and forestry sources, corn stalks, rice straw, wood chips, or "energy crops" such as switch grass. According to department of Energy studies, one of the benefits of cellulosic ethanol is that it reduces greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 85% over reformulated gasoline. By contrast, sugar-fermented ethanol reduces GHG emissions by 18% to 29% over gasoline.

Nonetheless, the crisis we face is one that has many problems. The American-Made Energy Freedom Act contains a number of solutions, but thirty years of bad policy can not be wiped away over night. Exploration in ANWR and the Outer Continental Shelf coupled with serious investments in renewable fuels is a good start, but we also need to develop the infrastructure to get those resources to the market. Without Liquid Natural Gas terminals, nuclear plants, refineries, pipelines, or energy efficient homes and vehicles, we will surely face economic decline. To remain competitive we need to invest in current technologies, but we also need to take leaps into the future.



Alternative resources like biomass, clean coal, gas hydrates, oil shale, oil sands, hydrogen, and ethanol, and other alternative technologies should play a central role in the pursuit for energy independence.

There is no quick fix to the problem, but it is clear that many Americans can not continue to afford increased energy prices. Americans need to come to grips with the onerous policies of the past that are strangling us now -- this is an American problem that requires an American-Made solution.

Defending Farmers Against Attacks from Serial Litigators

Recently, several lawsuits were filed by environmental groups against farmers, claiming that manure is a hazardous substance or pollutant. If these cases are successful, other farmers could be held liable under the "Superfund" law (CERCLA) and the "Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)."

I believe that Congress must take action to clarify that it never intended to regulate manure in the same manner that toxic waste dumps and spills such as Love Canal – the environmental disaster during the 1970's in upstate New York – are regulated. Animal agriculture operations

are already heavily regulated by local, state and federal authorities. They are also required to have permits under the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act and are subject to many other laws. Furthermore, efforts to equate farmers with hazardous polluters are irresponsible, inappropriate and a gross distortion of the intent of Congress in adopting laws governing toxic waste.

To rectify this situation, I have co-sponsored H.R. 4341, which would simply exclude manure from the definition of "hazardous substance" or "pollutant or contaminant."