

In addition to the legislation that Congress continues to work on, there are a number of others issues I am leading the charge on, both in Washington and at home.

Two local items that I continue to work on are the construction of a joint DoD/VA clinic and a veterans cemetery. The feasibility study for the proposed VA/DoD clinic in Monterey is complete and the findings will be available in early June. Additionally, the Veterans Administration has created a new "lease-back" funding model to help get clinics running quicker, including our new facility. As for the cemetery, the California Department of Veterans Affairs has received pre-approval for the proposed site from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Once local efforts raise enough money for the trust fund, we can move forward with design and construction.

One issue that is important to every congressional district is travel and tourism, and that's even more true as our economy continues to sputter. The travel industry contributes billions of dollars to our economy and will be one of the primary drivers of an economic recovery. Since 1997 I have been co-chair of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus, a group of around 100 members of the House who work to promote the interests of this important industry.

In addition to a variety of local projects, I've been busy on a range of foreign policy issues. In April, I traveled with President Obama to Trinidad and Tobago to attend the Summit of the Americas. It was an important event for the United States, an opportunity to rebuild the influence we've lost over the past several years. Our leaders have committed to working in partnership with other countries to grow our economies, reduce poverty and combat organized crime. We've also seen some important changes on U.S. policy toward Cuba, and I'm looking forward to more success in that area.

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