
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



March 15, 2007

House Transportation Committee Holds Hearing on Mexican Truck Proposal

On Tuesday, the Highways and Transit Subcommittee, on which Congressman Miller serves, convened a hearing to analyze a proposal to allow Mexican trucks to have full access to American highways. Currently, Mexican trucks are restricted to making deliveries within a 20-25 mile commercial zone along the Southwest border. However, under a new year-long pilot program recently announced by the Department of Transportation, 100 Mexican trucking companies would be allowed to make international deliveries anywhere within the United States. Mexican trucks would not be allowed to deliver shipments from one U.S. city to another, haul hazardous materials, or transport passengers. However, because the program does not include a way to track Mexican truck drivers to ensure they comply with program rules and return to Mexico, Congressman Miller believes that this program will create a new immigration loophole. In addition, he is concerned that Californians will bear the brunt of increased emissions, traffic congestion, safety hazards, and strain on our infrastructure that may result from adding thousands of Mexican trucks to our freeways. Congressman Miller questioned Department of Transportation officials regarding his concerns and will work to ensure that these issues are addressed before the Department of Transportation allows Mexican trucks further beyond our borders.

Congressman Miller Cosponsors Pair of English Language Bills

This week, Congressman Miller cosponsored two bills recognizing English as our national language. The first bill, H.R. 997, would require that all official U.S. business, including publications, income tax forms, and informational materials, be printed in English. With hundreds of different languages spoken in the United States, Congressman Miller believes it is both impractical and inefficient for countless government documents to be translated into foreign languages at a substantial cost to hardworking American taxpayers. In addition, because applicants for citizenship are required to demonstrate a working knowledge of English, this bill would require that all candidates for naturalization be tested by the Department of Justice for language proficiency. The second bill, H.R. 769, would repeal burdensome provisions of the Voting Rights Act requiring bilingual ballots to be printed for areas with high rates of non-English speakers. Under current law, more than 300 counties in 30 states must have bilingual voting materials available, at substantial cost to taxpayers. Because individuals must learn and understand English in order to become citizens, Congressman Miller believes there is no reason that local governments should be required to provide ballots in any language other than English.

Congressman Miller Discusses Local Priorities with City Council Members

This week, city council members from the Cities of Anaheim, Brea, Chino, and Diamond Bar traveled to Washington to meet with Congressman Miller and discuss local priorities. In particular, the cities and Congressman Miller discussed the need for regional cooperation to improve transportation and relieve congestion on area roads and highways, the importance of vital investment in water infrastructure, and the value of community programs in improving schools, libraries, and neighborhoods. Congressman Miller would like to thank these dedicated city officials, as well as others who have visited in the past, for making the trip to Washington and he will continue to work in Congress to address the needs of the 42nd District.

State Route 241 Wild Fire at Windy Ridge

Congressman Miller would like to salute all of the brave firefighters and law enforcement personnel involved in battling the State Route 241 Fire at Windy Ridge. On Tuesday, the Orange County Fire Authority announced that the fire is now 100 percent contained. The fire started last Sunday when a stolen vehicle was abandoned alongside the 241 and then set ablaze. The cause of the fire was deemed to be arson. Individuals who witnessed anything suspicious that morning along the 241 are asked to call the Orange County Fire Authority arson tip line at 1-800-540-8282 or to contact local police.

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