
CAPITOL CONNECTION

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

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



April 18, 2008

Congressman Miller Coordinates with Immigration Officials in Mission Viejo

This week, Congressman Miller participated in a conference call with the City of Mission Viejo, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Border Patrol to discuss the problem of illegal immigrant day laborers congregating in the City of Mission Viejo. Congressman Miller arranged this meeting after receiving numerous calls and letters from concerned citizens and businesses in the area. ICE has pledged to work with Mission Viejo and has also agreed to appear at an upcoming city council meeting to address the matter. In addition, ICE has agreed to meet with local business owners if necessary. Congressman Miller is encouraged by the outcome of the meeting and he will continue working closely with law enforcement officials to crack down on the hiring of illegal immigrants.

House Approves Legislation Increasing Access to Student Loans

In recent months, turmoil in the U.S. credit markets has made it difficult for some lenders in the federally guaranteed student loan program to finance college loans, leading some to scale back their lending activity. In response, the House on Thursday passed the Ensuring Access to Student Loans Act to increase the amount of money available to college students for loans and to authorize the Department of Education to take a larger role in ensuring the availability of student loans. In particular, the measure increases the amount a student can borrow in federal college loans and gives parent borrowers additional time to defer payments of federal loans. Congressman Miller strongly supported this measure when it came to the House floor and he is committed to ensuring that students have access to the college loans they need.

Bill Introduced to Stop Spam Text Messages

A new and irritating marketing technique has emerged in recent months as consumers have begun to receive spam text messages on their cell phones. Unlike spam email, however, consumers are often billed for each text message they receive, making this practice not only irritating, but costly. Making matters worse, under law there is currently no prohibition on sending spam text messages to American consumers, including individuals listed on the national Do Not Call Registry. To close this loophole, Congressman Miller was proud this week to cosponsor legislation known as the SMASH Act. This measure would direct the Federal Trade Commission to explicitly prohibit the practice of sending text messages containing unsolicited advertisements to any cell phone number listed on the national Do Not Call Registry. More than 145 million Americans have signed up for the Do Not Call Registry precisely because they are tired of unwanted and irritating marketing techniques. It only makes sense that spam text messages should be included in this category. Congressman Miller will continue to support this and other commonsense proposals to ensure Americans receive the privacy they expect and deserve.

Americans Observe Tax Day and Brace for Future Tax Increases

On Tuesday, Americans observed Tax Day by sending in checks to cover the more than one trillion dollars the federal government will spend over the next year. Without speedy action by Congress, however, the pain on Tax Day is only going to get worse. At midnight on December 31, 2010, the tax relief approved by Congress in recent years is set to expire. If that happens, Americans will soon experience a \$683 billion tax increase, the largest in American history. The average Californian would see their taxes go up by \$3,331 per year. To prevent this from happening, Congressman Miller has cosponsored the Tax Increase Prevention Act to make the tax relief passed in 2001 and 2003 permanent. At a time when the American economy is slowing down and the cost of living is increasing, he believes that taxpayers need to be allowed to keep more of their hard-earned money. The people of Southern California, who are already overtaxed, deserve no less.