
CAPITOL CONNECTION

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

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



January 26, 2007

President Bush Delivers State of the Union Address

On Tuesday, the President delivered his State of the Union address, outlining his priorities for the coming year. Below are Congressman Miller's views on the President's key policy proposals:

Immigration: America Needs Enforcement First

During his State of the Union address, the President renewed his call to Congress to pass immigration reform that includes a new guestworker program. On Wednesday, Congressman Miller joined his fellow members of the Immigration Reform Caucus in denouncing the President's plan to give amnesty to millions of illegals. While Congressman Miller is pleased that the President is supporting congressional efforts to strengthen border security and crack down on employers that hire illegals, he strongly believes these proposals should not be combined with a new guestworker plan. Congressman Miller will continue to support only those proposals that reject amnesty and pursue an enforcement-first approach to solving our nation's immigration crisis.

Health Care: Increasing Insurance Availability and Affordability

To increase the availability and affordability of health insurance, the President unveiled a proposal under which individuals and families could claim a standard tax deduction for health insurance. This deduction would amount to \$7,500 for singles and \$15,000 for families. If enacted, this proposal would provide a tax incentive for Americans to independently purchase health insurance coverage. As the merits of this proposal are debated over the coming weeks and months, Congressman Miller believes it is critical that Congress work to hold down rapidly spiraling health care costs while making coverage for working families more readily available.

Energy: Strengthening America's Supply

In his speech, President Bush also outlined a proposal to reduce gasoline consumption in the United States by twenty percent over the next ten years through an expansion of ethanol use and tougher fuel economy standards. Congressman Miller believes that American ingenuity and advanced technology can allow us to produce massive amounts of energy safely, with great benefits to our national security and our economy. However, he remains concerned about increased ethanol mandates that may increase the price of gasoline for California consumers. Congressman Miller will continue working to expand existing domestic energy supplies while seeking alternative resources to secure our nation's energy future.

Iraq: Securing Freedom and Achieving Victory

On Tuesday, President Bush called on Congress to carefully consider his proposal of sending 21,500 additional troops to Iraq to quell sectarian violence and allow democratic institutions there to flourish. If more troops are indeed needed, Congressman Miller believes Congress must establish a substantive oversight mechanism using quantifiable benchmarks to ensure that such a troop increase helps transfer power to the Iraqi government, allows democratic institutions to take hold, and suppresses insurgent activity. These benchmarks will measure our political, economic, and security progress in Iraq, and give Congress a tool with which to monitor activity on the ground.

Supporting Our Troops At Home: Rancho Santa Margarita Adopts Local Marines

During his discussion on Iraq, the President called on Americans to support our troops as they stand in harm's way. On January 10, 2007, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita adopted the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines out of Camp Pendleton. The City has asked for residents, businesses, service groups, churches, and non-profit organizations to become involved in supporting our servicemembers and their families. Similarly, in March of last year, the City of Mission Viejo adopted the Headquarters Battalion, First Marine Division out of Camp Pendleton. If you would like to become involved in these worthwhile endeavors, please contact the City of Rancho Santa Margarita at (949) 635-1825 or the City of Mission Viejo at (949) 470-3000. Congressman Miller salutes both the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and the City of Mission Viejo for their dedication to our Armed Forces.

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