

## Right Now

### **National Energy Tax Devastating to Agriculture**

One of the most hotly debated topics on Capitol Hill these days is the possible implementation of a "cap and trade" program being proposed by the House Democrat leadership and President Obama. This bill, if successful, would be incredibly harmful for our entire economy, but it would be especially harmful for our energy intensive Northern California agriculture industry. Put simply, "cap and trade" is a new tax on energy consumption, which would impact everyone who uses energy -- from families to small businesses to family farms and ranches. Fuel, fertilizer, and other chemicals - all or most of which are petroleum based - currently make up two-thirds of the production costs of most farmers. Those costs have already increased some 40% over the past five years. It has been estimated - conservatively - that cap and trade could increase those costs by an additional 20%. In 2008 farmers across America spent \$59 billion on fuel, electricity, fertilizer, and chemicals, and a 20% increase would represent an additional \$12 billion hit to their bottom line. For many North State farmers, these cost increases could make the difference between staying in business or closing up shop. As we cope with a third year of drought and ever-increasing regulation, please know I will be working to defeat this "national energy tax." Instead of passing additional regulations that will increase costs for our farmers and ranchers, Congress should instead be working to lessen their tax and regulatory burden, and to enact policies that will *increase* our domestic energy supplies. [Share your thoughts](#)

### **Medicare Trustees Report Shows Need for Bipartisan Reform**

A few weeks ago the Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees issued a report warning that Medicare is approaching insolvency much earlier than previously expected. This report clearly demonstrated that the need for serious entitlement reform has never been more urgent. Due to the recession, the Medicare Hospital Insurance Trust Fund is now expected to run out of money in 2017, two years earlier than previous estimates. Medicare's unfunded liabilities now represent a debt of \$125,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. As Congress debates health care reform, determining how we will keep the promises we have already made to current and future seniors is one of my top priorities. Unfortunately, not all of Congress sees the urgency of the problem. Just a few months ago, over the objections of House Republicans, the House of Representatives voted to do away with an early-warning system that would have forced a debate and solutions in Congress when growth in Medicare spending exceeds a defined threshold. This latest Trustees' Report should serve as a wake-up call that it's time to put the partisan rhetoric and politics as usual aside and do what is right for future generations.

[Share your thoughts](#)

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## Recent Past

### **Troop Funding Bill Passed - House Blocks Closing of Guantanamo Bay**

The House of Representatives recently passed a clean funding bill for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. The measure covers the costs of the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan through Sept. 30, 2009. Our brave men and women in uniform deserve our full support and that includes the funding to successfully execute their missions. I'm also pleased that the measure provides full support for our nation's enhanced counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan.

Additionally, I believe the measure correctly denies funding to shut down the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and rightly requires the President to submit a plan for relocating the detainees by October 1st. I do not see how closing Guantanamo Bay and potentially moving some of the world's most dangerous terrorists onto American soil will do anything to make us safer. I have cosponsored [legislation](#) that prohibits the Administration from transferring or releasing any terrorist detainees at Guantanamo to any state without express approval from the state's governor and legislature. While our armed forces are doing the hard work of protecting our national security overseas, I believe it is our duty to ensure their efforts are upheld here at home.

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### **CA Supreme Court Affirms Proposition 8**

The California Supreme Court recently upheld Proposition 8, the constitutional amendment passed by California voters last year that defined marriage in our state as between one man and one woman. I firmly believe that the Court made the right decision by respecting the will of the people and their support for traditional marriage. Proposition 8 wasn't about discriminating

against gays and lesbians or denying them equal rights under the law. It was about preserving a long-established institution that is fundamental to every aspect of our culture. Supporters of traditional marriage must remain vigilant about defending this institution, because it is increasingly subject to intense debate in California and across our nation. I am hopeful that citizens from every state will remain determined to protect this time-honored and essential institution in the future. [Share your thoughts](#)

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## Northern California News and Events

### Community Fire Forum

I wanted to let you know that I recently took part in a community forum regarding the inability to implement balanced forest management and its resulting impacts on our rural forested communities. Held at the Plumas County Fairgrounds, the discussion focused largely on the [recent closure](#)

of the Sierra Pacific Industries' (SPI) small-log mill in Quincy. Unfortunately, relentless lawsuits and appeals have stalled or blocked the implementation of many Quincy Library Group (QLG) fuels reduction projects. By way of brief background, Congress passed the

*Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act*

in 1998, establishing a strategic forest management pilot project in three Northern California national forests. These delays, in conjunction with an ailing economy, led SPI to close the small-log mill. There are a several reasons why we need to engage in smart and effective forest management. Catastrophic wildfires threaten our safety and our property and the situation only continues to worsen in the absence of forest management. The timber industry, crucial to the North State economy, continues to struggle, resulting in more and more job losses at a time of serious economic difficulty. We have to find a way to move the QLG pilot project forward at the scale and pace originally envisioned by Congress. I'm committed to continuing to work in a bipartisan manner to protect our communities and put people back to work.

[Share your thoughts](#)

## Paying Homage to America's Fallen



On Memorial Day I delivered a speech in Sutter County to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our nation. I wanted to take the opportunity to share the full text of my speech, which you can find [here](#) . [Share your thoughts](#)

## Trade Seminar



Over the Memorial Day District Work Period I gave a speech at a trade seminar in Redding. My speech focused upon the importance of trade during a recession and the 2009 trade agenda. The seminar was sponsored by the Butte College Center for International Trade Development and Small Business Development Center and hosted by Shasta College and the College of the Siskiyous'. Officials from the U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Export-Import Bank, and the Small Business Administration were part of the panel. You can read the full text of my prepared speech [here](#) . Trade is critically important to our economy, now more than ever, and I firmly believe we should be expanding our market opportunities to help Northern California goods to be sold all over the world. [Share your thoughts](#)