

Right Now

Threat from Iran Growing More Severe and Urgent

As you may have heard in the news, there have been major developments regarding Iran's nuclear program in recent weeks. First, leaders from the United States, Great Britain, and France publicly charged Iran with concealing a uranium enrichment facility in a mountain near the city of Qum. According to reports, western intelligence agencies were aware of, and had been monitoring, the nuclear site for a few years. Even more disturbing, the New York Times reported that "Many diplomats and analysts believe that the Qum facility is only one of a series of hidden installations that Iran has constructed alongside its public ones for what is considered to be a military program." I am particularly concerned about this development given President Obama's [recent decision](#) to abandon missile defense systems in Europe. The discovery of the Qum facility should lead our nation and the international communities to address this looming crisis with renewed urgency, enforce immediate crippling sanctions on Iran, and make it clear that a nuclear Iran is unacceptable because it would severely threaten our national security and regional stability.

Meanwhile, the United States participated in talks with six nations plus Iran. President Obama subsequently indicated that these initial talks will be followed by further negotiations in late October. The meeting also brought forth a promise by Iran to allow international inspectors to visit the previously concealed nuclear facility. While this is a welcome development, we should also demand that Iran immediately suspend all uranium enrichment and disclose all of its nuclear activities. Above all, the United States must not accept a cycle of behavior where Iran appears to cede to international demands, but in fact continues to move forward with their nuclear activities. Because I am extremely doubtful that negotiations will lead to Iran abandoning its current course, I believe we must leave all options on the table. [Share your thoughts](#)

Administration Prevents Free Speech About Health Care Reform

Last week the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a [gag order](#) on Medicare Advantage (MA) plans. Medicare Advantage is a program that allows seniors to choose from a range of private health coverage options, many of which offer benefits

unavailable in traditional Medicare. Humana, a provider of a MA health care plan, sent a letter informing its enrollees that Medicare cuts proposed by the President and Congressional Democrats could alter their benefits. Health care legislation being considered in the House of Representatives would cut reimbursement to MA plans by \$156 billion, and the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has confirmed that these cuts could result in reduced benefits for senior citizens enrolled in MA. In issuing the gag order, CMS overturned a Clinton-era ruling that “prohibiting such information would violate basic freedom of speech and other constitutional rights.” I went to the Floor of the House of Representatives to speak out on this issue. You can see video of the speech

[here](#)

[Share your thoughts](#)

Recent Past

Preventing Illegal Immigrants from Receiving Taxpayer Benefits

There has been a lot of concern and discussion as to whether or not illegal immigrants will be able to receive taxpayer benefits under the Majority’s health care bill currently under consideration in Congress. While the bill currently before the House, H.R. 3200, states that illegal immigrants cannot receive benefits, it contains no verification mechanism to ensure that is the case. This fact has been verified by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service in their report entitled [Treatment of Noncitizens in H.R. 3200](#). Additionally, the bill gives the Health Choices Commission the ability to determine which individuals are eligible for federal subsidies to help purchase health insurance, but again does not specify any enforcement mechanism, such as ID checks, to ensure illegal immigrants are not eligible for the benefits. As such, I have joined 53 of my colleagues in

[urging](#)

Speaker Pelosi to include language that would prevent illegal immigrants from receiving taxpayer-funded benefits. As we work to bring skyrocketing health care costs down, I believe it is essential that we do everything possible to eliminate the excessive burden that illegal immigrants place on our health care system.

[Share your thoughts](#)

Congress Defunds ACORN, President Waits

A hot topic over the past month has been the federal funding of a group known as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). I wanted to inform you of recent developments regarding this organization. Reports and videos have shown ACORN employees giving advice in schemes involving tax evasion, prostitution, human trafficking, fraud and conspiracy. These are only the latest revelations in a pattern of wrongdoing, including significant charges of voter registration fraud in of the last election. I strongly support the calls for a Justice Department investigation into ACORN and the potentially criminal activities by some of its employees. This group certainly shouldn't be receiving taxpayer dollars, and I'm pleased that both the House and Senate passed [legislation](#) to strip funding from ACORN once and for all. I signed a [letter](#) to the President urging him to issue a directive to all government agencies and departments to halt funding for ACORN immediately. Unfortunately, President Obama has thus far turned a deaf ear to the legitimate concerns of both Congress and the American people.

[Share your thoughts](#)

Obama Administration Admits Truth on Energy Tax

The US Treasury Department recently released internal [documents](#) that further confirm that the "cap and trade" [legislation](#), recently passed by the slimmest of margins in the House, would impose significant new costs on American families and businesses. The Treasury Department's own analysis shows that a cap and trade program could cost taxpayers up to an additional \$200 billion, or \$1,700 per household, each year. Proponents of this national energy tax have consistently issued claims that cost increases would be minimal. After the release of these internal documents, the following is clear: the costs of a cap and trade program would be far from minimal and the plan would restrict economic growth.

President Obama could not have said it better himself during an [interview](#)

last year in which he said that under a cap and trade program "electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket."

I have long believed that we can incentivize business and industry to develop and utilize alternative energy technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are several proposals that represent a fiscally sound alternative to the government bureaucracy and micromanagement imposed by cap and trade legislation, and they will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, provide a cleaner environment, keep energy prices low and put Americans to work.

[Share your thoughts](#)

Northern California News and Events

Expanded Service for Veterans Now Available

I wanted to share some positive developments regarding efforts to expand health care services for veterans in Northern California. Veterans in the Yuba/Sutter area are now able to receive their primary care at the Feather River Tribal Health located at 1231 Plumas Street, Yuba City. The VA partnered with the Feather River Indian Tribe and the Indian Health Service to provide care for our veterans closer to home until the Yuba City/Marysville Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) is established. Veterans can schedule an appointment by calling 530-751-8457. The clinic will be available to see veterans on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with expanded appointment availability expected as more veterans visit the clinic. Meanwhile, the VA expects the Yuba City/Marysville CBOC to open within six months. In Siskiyou County, the VA is still working its way through the contracting process with medical providers in the Yreka area to provide primary care services to local veterans. Once a vendor has been selected and a contract signed, the medical provider will have 60 days to update their facility and go through the necessary training and orientation before it can open its doors to veterans. It is my understanding that the VA is in the final stages of issuing a contract, which means veterans should see primary care services in Yreka before the end of the year. [Share your thoughts](#)

State Bill Raises Privacy, Second Amendment Right Concerns

As you may know, the California State Legislature recently passed legislation, AB 962, mandating that all retail handgun ammunition sales be made “face-to-face.” This would prohibit online or mail purchases of ammunition. It would also require that all buyers of ammunition fill out registration paperwork and be fingerprinted at the point of purchase. If enacted, the legislation would disrupt interstate commerce, prevent Californians from participating in a federal marksmanship program, and infringe on Californians’ constitutionally-protected right to bear arms. The bill has been sent to Governor Schwarzenegger’s desk, and he is now deciding whether to veto it or sign it into law. I believe it is incredibly unfortunate that the state legislature decided to resurrect a failed federal ammunition registration program at the state level. While proponents believe this type of program will prevent ammunition from reaching the hands of criminals, history has already demonstrated that Second Amendment restrictions are not successful in preventing criminals from breaking federal or state laws and only serve to infringe upon the rights of law-abiding citizens. I was joined by 13 other U.S. Representatives from California in urging Governor Schwarzenegger to stand up for Second Amendment rights, and I

will continue to fight in Congress to protect the intentions of our founding fathers. [Share your thoughts](#)