

## Right Now

### **President's Budget Proposal is Fiscally Irresponsible**

During the State of the Union address, President Obama stood before a joint-session of Congress and told the American people that he was committed to a new era of fiscal responsibility. Shortly after that, he met with House Republicans and reiterated that same promise. Unfortunately, despite his pledge, the President unveiled a [budget](#) that continues down the same path of overspending and job killing tax policies that we experienced last year. This budget pushes spending to record heights, spending \$3.8 trillion in this year alone. Furthermore, President Obama's budget doubles the debt in 5 years and will triple it by 2019 while burdening American families and small businesses with the largest tax increases in our nation's history. In all, over \$46 trillion in spending over the next decade is included in the President's new budget. The President's call for a spending freeze, while commendable, is simply not enough. It won't take place until at least a year from now and would affect a mere 13% of spending in Washington. We need to do more - we need to cut spending and get our priorities in line with what the American people need. Promising to return to fiscal responsibility one day and proposing an unsustainable budget that will bury our children in debt the next is not good government. I am committed to standing up for commonsense fiscal discipline and tax relief that will create jobs and get our nation's economy back on track.

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### **As Oil Prices Rise, Administration Moves to Further Restrict Domestic Energy Production**

Recently, Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary Ken Salazar [announced](#) changes that would further limit oil and gas leasing on federal land. This announcement will make it more difficult, expensive and time consuming to produce American energy.

By way of background, I supported passage of energy reform legislation in 2005 that encouraged and expanded domestic energy production by streamlining and expediting the process for oil and gas leasing on federal land. As a result, the Bureau of Land Management's permitting backlog was greatly reduced, and environmental reviews of oil and gas lease sites more than doubled. However, the Administration is proposing to roll back these commonsense changes and continuing an alarming [pattern](#) of blocking access to our abundant domestic energy resources at the expense of American consumers. I and many of my colleagues in the

House and Senate communicated these concerns in a

[letter](#)

to Secretary Salazar. As oil prices continue to creep back up – twenty percent in the last month alone - we need to be doing all we can to encourage domestic energy production to avoid a repeat of the painfully high energy prices of 2008. I will strongly advocate for such as this issue continues to be debated and strongly oppose all efforts – such as

[cap and trade](#)

legislation – that will increase energy prices and hurt American families and businesses.

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## Recent Past

### End TARP and Pay Down the Debt

In December, the Administration used its authority to extend the Troubled Asset Relief Program ( [TARP](#) ) until October 2010. This program was going to expire on December 31, 2009, had Secretary of the Treasury Tim Geithner not authorized an extension. TARP funds have been repeatedly misused for unnecessary bailouts, twisting the program away from its intended purpose and turning it into a political slush fund to hide the true cost of reckless federal spending. Americans don't want any more bailouts; they want their money back. As such, I have introduced a bill with two of my colleagues that would shut down TARP immediately and ensure that all unspent TARP funds and future TARP repayments are used to pay down the national debt. The END TARP Act ( [H.R. 4566](#) ) would take a big step toward restoring fiscal sanity in Washington by slashing at least \$200 billion from the national debt. We introduced this legislation during the same week that the House passed legislation, which I strongly opposed, to raise the ["debt ceiling"](#) by another \$1.9 trillion.

I [spoke](#) on the House floor against the debt ceiling measure and called for the House to vote on the END TARP Act. I believe it is grossly irresponsible for Congress to authorize more debt. Congress needs to get serious about protecting taxpayers and addressing the crippling deficit spending that will burden our children and grandchildren for years to come by passing the END TARP Act and bringing this era of big government spending to an end. [Share your thoughts](#)

## **Congress Passes Law to Extend Deductibility of Charitable Donations for Haiti Earthquake Relief**

Like millions of Americans, I was moved by the reports and images of the terrible earthquake that struck Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on January 12. Throughout our history, Americans have been eager to help others recover from the devastation of wars and natural disasters in faraway places. Once again, we have seen the compassion and generosity of the American people displayed front and center in the Haiti relief effort, including an outpouring of real-time donations through cell phones and the Internet. Recently Congress passed [legislation](#) to acknowledge the significant charitable giving by allowing Haiti-related donations made through the end of February to be claimed on taxpayers' 2009 tax returns. Thus, donors will have the opportunity to receive an immediate tax write-off instead of having to wait until they file their 2010 tax returns next year. The bill also permits taxpayers who contribute to the Haiti relief effort via cell phone text messages to use their phone bill as a record of their donation for tax purposes. As a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee, which oversees tax laws, I was an original cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation. I am pleased to report that President Obama has signed this bill into law.

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## **Northern California News and Events**

### **Former Governor Palin Visits Redding**



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