

The NUNES Report

Inside this issue:

Nunes delves into national issues 2-3

Spillway offers flood protection 4

Quick Facts

In December, Rep. Nunes wrote to 676 constituents in response to their inquiries. Year to date, Rep. Nunes has responded to 12,229 constituents via the U.S. Mail.

In December, Rep. Nunes helped 15 constituents overcome problems with government agencies. For the year, the Congressman has directly solved issues for 328 constituents and is currently assisting 410 others.

First year ends in successes

Next session will be busy with many challenges, begins in February

At the beginning of the year, Rep. Nunes was appointed to the House committees on Agriculture and Resources. He was also selected by House leadership to be an Assistant Majority Whip, which positions him to ensure the voices of residents in the Central Valley are heard by our nation's policy makers. To that end, he has made it a point to bring other Members of Congress to the district to showcase our successes and challenges.

Right out of the gate, Rep. Nunes developed and passed legislation that authorized a feasibility study for increased water storage on the Upper San Joaquin River. Furthermore, he hosted a field hearing on water for the House Committee on Resources. Members of the water subcommittee came to hear testimony on legislation to reauthorize a partnership between the state and federal government, called CalFed, which was created to develop and protect water resources in California. Specifically, Rep.



Among his many accomplishments, Rep. Devin Nunes helped found the Congressional Hispanic Conference with (from left) Reps. Mario Diaz-Balart, Henry Bonilla, Illeana Ros-Lehtinen, Richard Pombo and Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

Nunes worked to include key language in the CalFed legislation that would put a dam at Temperance Flat on the fast track.

Earlier in the year, surrounded by top military and government officials, Rep. Nunes participated in a simulated bio-terrorist attack against the nation's agricultural industry. From a command post near Washington, D.C., the strategic planning exercise put Rep. Nunes through the paces of responding to an outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease. Exercise "Silent Prairie" gave participants an opportunity

to examine the gravity and complexity of such a major national-security crisis.

On Earth Day, Rep. Nunes traveled to Yosemite National Park to attend a National Parks Subcommittee field hearing on aspects of the Yosemite Valley Plan. He also participated in an Earth Day celebration, an Ansel Adams Gallery presentation, a Yosemite Valley hybrid-fuel bus tour, and discussions on a more environmentally-sensitive park.

In a continuing effort to highlight the problems with

See Year end—page 2

Cont.d from page one— Many successes in first year

Meth production, Rep. Nunes held a joint hearing by two House subcommittees on the growing problem of drug production on public lands at the Wuksachi Village and Lodge in Sequoia National Park. The hearing highlighted problems with marijuana, opium and methamphetamine on public lands. Along these lines, he has cosponsored legislation called the CLEAN UP Meth Act (CLEAN UP stands for Clean, Learn, Educate, Abolish, Neutralize, and Undermine Production).

Rep. Nunes organized and developed the Congressional Hispanic Conference and was immediately appointed Vice-Chair. In this capacity, he has worked to provide a conservative voice and outreach to those of Portuguese and Hispanic descent. On that note, Rep. Nunes made a landmark visit to the Azores Islands to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Lajes Air Base, as well as visit U.S. troops for Veteran's Day. The Azores Islands have done more than provide moral and strategic support to our country, they have produced many outstanding American citizens.

During the August recess, in which Congress is out of session, Rep. Nunes spent time talking with residents in Fresno and Tulare counties, as well as traveling to South America with the Agricultural Committee on an ag trade mission. He also traveled to Missouri to participate in a tour of Midwest agriculture and to Israel to examine the benefits of U.S. foreign assistance in the country.

On the transportation front, Rep. Nunes began his campaign to get more federal transportation dollars for the Central Valley from the reauthorization of TEA-21 by testifying before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. His main theme, "the roads in the world's most prolific agricultural region are disintegrating." For too long, taxpayers in California have donated money to transportation and infrastructure projects in other regions of the country. Rep. Nunes believes that the time has come for California to reclaim some of the money that we lose on an annual basis to the federal government.



Rep. Nunes help cut the ribbon at the Reedley Workforce Investment Center with Fresno Supervisor Judy Case.



Rep. Nunes discusses health care issues with Kaweah Delta Healthcare District CEO Lindsay Mann.



The congressman takes part in a park clean up in Visalia for Make a Difference Day, alongside staff member Ed Galvan.

Nunes works with colleagues on issues important to nation

Rep. Nunes worked to secure San Joaquin Valley ideals on many other issues that came before Congress this past year. Congress passed three different supplemental appropriation bills to support our efforts on the war on terror. This helped pay for the war in Iraq and for our continued efforts in Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda trained in both countries. Now, both countries are making the tough transition to democratic government.

Congress also passed defense appropriations and authorization bills that included necessary long-term funding for our defense efforts which included a pay increase for our troops and a historic change in the disabled veterans compensation. For the first time since the Civil War, many disabled veterans will be able to receive both their disability payments and their retirement benefits. Congress also enacted into law the Military Family Tax Relief Act, which provides overdue tax relief targeted to our dedicated servicemen and their families.

Another challenge we faced at the beginning of this year was a slowing economy which undermined both business and consumer confidence, while shattering investor confidence. Congress passed the President's economic growth package aimed at restoring confidence in the business, consumer, and investor sectors. Coupled with the earlier tax cut signed into law in 2001, these tax relief bills spurred our economy. With less money going to the federal government, small businesses were able to spend more money on equipment and growth, stemming the tide of unemployment and creating jobs. These bills also returned money to con-



Rep. Nunes visits students at a Head Start center in Porterville.

See Congress—page 3

Congress—cont.d from page 2

sumers, increasing consumption, and inspired investors to return to the markets. The results have been better than expected. The economic growth rate hit 8.2 percent in the last quarter. Manufacturing output is at the highest levels in two decades. The Dow Jones Industrial Average reached its highest level in 18 months and the job rate shows the best signs of improvement in two years.

Aside from the war and the economy, our Nation faced other challenges. Health care costs continue to be one of the top concerns of all Americans. Rep. Nunes hosted a health summit that brought together medical leaders from throughout the Central Valley to discuss ways of improving access to health care. This action resulted in Rep. Nunes' proposed legislation, to give health care centers more flexibility in dealing with emergency room patients, spurring a new regulation along the same lines. Following the health summit, Congress passed historic reform to the Medicare system that will now include a prescription drug benefit for the first time in history. This action kept our promise to senior citizens. The prescription drug benefit means that never again will low-income seniors have to face the choice between putting food on the table or paying for life-saving prescription drugs. It also means that seniors with high-cost drugs will have an insurance benefit that will protect them. It is expected that the average senior will get their drug costs reduced by up to 60 percent because of this far-reaching reform.

Included in this historic legislation was wide reaching assistance for rural hospitals in the 21st Congressional District to the tune of \$21 million. Congress also authorized new tax free health savings accounts, which will give consumers more flexibility in managing health care expenses. These health savings accounts will revolutionize the health care market, with the potential of providing consumers better health care at a lower price.

Despite concerns over healthcare, our nation faced another domestic crisis -- the lack of a comprehensive national energy policy. Significant problems with the western power grid, blackouts in California and New York, turbulence throughout the natural gas market and the persistent problem of increasing gasoline prices, catapulted the debate over energy policy to the top of the agenda. With prices at the gas pump soaring, Rep. Nunes helped take the lead to increase the domestic supply of oil and natural gas to lower prices for consumers and reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil. With our 21st century economy unable to rely on 20th Century energy supplies and infrastructure, new, reliable sources of energy must be found to maintain our economy and bolster our national security. Based on this, Rep. Nunes traveled to the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to examine oil and gas leasing plots and hear testimony on the region's massive energy potential, which is estimated to be the largest discovery of oil in the United States.

Consequently, Congress put together a comprehen-



Rep. Devin Nunes traveled with other Congressmen to Alaska on a fact finding mission regarding domestic oil supplies.

sive energy policy aimed at making our Nation more energy independent. The Energy Security Act did several things. It created incentives to get the most out of our natural resources, from promoting greater energy efficiency, to encouraging the use of renewable fuels such as ethanol. It encouraged greater reliability for electricity by providing for open access of transmission lines, while improving the transparency of electricity markets. This energy policy has another key benefit -- it will create jobs. The latest estimates are that it will create up to a million jobs. The House passed the energy conference report by a large bipartisan margin in the House, and we are waiting for final action by the Senate.

Another issue addressed last year was education. In the 107th Congress, the President's No Child Left Behind legislation was passed, increasing accountability and demanding results when it comes to educating our children. This year, Congress kept its

promise by increasing education funding to \$4.1 billion, the highest Federal contribution to education in history. Clearly, Congress is keeping its promise to the parents, teachers, and children of America.

Finally, Congress passed a series of legislative initiatives designed to make this nation a better place to live. Congress passed the Do Not Call and Do Not Spam bills, aimed at stopping consumers from being harassed through the phone and through computers by marketers. Congress passed the Amber Alert bill, to help keep our children safe from kidnappers. Congress passed historic levels of funding to combat AIDS. Congress passed the President's Healthy Forests Initiative, to protect communities from out-of-control forest fires. Congress passed the Fair Credit Reporting Act so that consumers have better access to their credit reports to protect against the persistent problems of credit card fraud.

Flood control gets boost with spillway

Construction is nearing completion on the project to raise the spillway at Terminus Dam.

The long-awaited construction effort will provide significantly more flood protection for communities downstream of Lake Kaweah. The higher spillway will allow the lake to hold more water, which will help with water conservation and environmental enhancement along the river.

By raising the spillway at the dam, the lake will increase its capacity by nearly 30 percent.

While the unique spillway increases lake capacity, Army Corps of Engineer officials are also busy improving recreational facilities around the perimeter of the lake.



Above— Rep. Nunes discusses the completion of a new spillway at Terminus Dam with Army Corps of Engineer officials Norbert Suter and Phil Deffenbaugh. **Below—** Workers finish the spillway to provide Tulare County communities with better flood protection.



Nunes asks President Bush for water study money

Continuing his work to develop new water storage for the San Joaquin Valley, Rep. Nunes asked President Bush to include a \$6 million line item for the Upper San Joaquin River Basin storage feasibility study in the Fiscal Year 2005 budget proposal.

The San Joaquin Valley continues to face a water crisis in which our water sup-

plies have become inadequate to meet expanding needs. Demands by domestic users, industry, and environmental needs continue to grow with no relief in sight.

The Upper San Joaquin River Basin storage study would take the next step in the process to resolve this pervasive problem. The study will determine the fea-

sibility of increasing water storage capability on the Upper San Joaquin River in California. It will identify the feasibility of increasing power generation, improving water supply reliability and quality, improving water management efficiency, and improving the environment and flood control on the river.