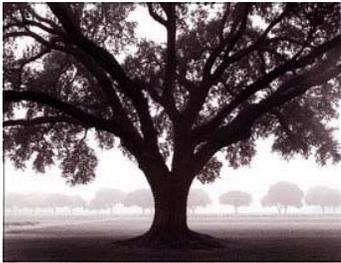


## Legislative work continues in July

### Agriculture

#### *Sudden Oak Death*

The American nursery industry is valued at \$14 billion and is vital to rural economies. The proliferation of Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is a significant threat not only to this important industry, but also to wild forests. Cases of SOD have



been found in 16 states, including California. As a result of SOD discoveries, foreign trading partners have instituted quarantines against California nursery growers. Recognizing the importance of addressing SOD through a nationally coordinated, scientifically sound approach, Congressman Nunes co-sponsored legislation, H.R. 4569, directing the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a national plan to control and manage SOD.

#### *Peaches*

The peach industry is suffering from record low prices. Complex and inter-related economic problems, including the consolidation of retail buyers, has resulted in significant hardships for peach growers. Congressman Nunes shared his concerns with Secretary Veneman in a recent letter, including his appreciation for the USDA's initial 22 million pound pur-

chase of fresh frozen free-stone peaches. While this was a good start, it was not enough. Mr. Nunes pressed for additional commitments for purchases and impressed upon the Secretary the importance of leveraging as much federal assistance as possible during this very difficult time for peach growers.

### Energy

#### *Hydro Power*

The House of Representatives passed Rep. Nunes' legislation, H.R. 3932, to reauthorize the continued use of hydroelectric facilities in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. In this time of diminished capacity of electricity generation, the last thing we need to do is close down a clean source of energy.

### Healthcare

#### *Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education*

The Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) program assures that our nation will have the pediatric workforce needed for future generations. Children's hospitals represent only one percent of all hospitals in the United States, but



train nearly one-third of all doctors specializing in pediatrics. Existing federal law recognizes the importance of these hospitals in training our medical workforce.

However, federal funding for these hospitals is due to expire.

Congressman Nunes co-sponsored H.R. 4578, the Children's Hospitals Education Equity and Research Act, to make certain that doctors may continue to receive important medical training at institutions like Children's Hospital of the Central Valley.

### Portuguese Issues

Congressman Nunes has been working with Rep. Pombo and Rep. Cardoza on a proposal to the Luso-American Foundation



(FLAD). This month the Portuguese project proposal was mailed to Rui Machete and Ambassador Palmer, both of whom are members of FLAD's Executive Council.

The goal of the project is to connect the academic world of Portuguese studies with the average person of Portuguese heritage. If all goes according to plan, there will be a "one-stop-shop" for all things related to Portuguese culture.

### *Factor or Fiction*

There is a lot of false information floating around the Internet. I want to take this opportunity to provide you the facts to some of the fictional claims.

#### **Fiction:**

Members of Congress do not pay into Social Security yet they receive it.

#### **Fact:**

Prior to 1984, federal civil service workers nor Members of Congress were not required to pay into Social Security, nor were they eligible to receive Social Security benefits. Members of Congress and federal employees were instead covered by a separate pension plan called the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). However, this changed in 1983 when all federal employees hired after 1983 were required to participate in Social Security program.

Furthermore, all Members of Congress were required to participate in Social Security regardless of when they first entered Congress.