



The NUNES Report

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Quick Facts

In March, Rep. Nunes wrote to 1,176 constituents in response to their inquiries. Year to date, Rep. Nunes has responded to 3,644 constituents via the U.S. Mail. Furthermore, since Rep. Nunes was elected to Congress he has responded to 16,855 constituent letters via the U.S. Mail.

Highway 99 gets priority status from House

In a strong bipartisan vote, the House of Representatives passed a federal transportation bill that includes a provision at the request of Rep. Devin Nunes to recognize Highway 99 as a high-priority corridor for special funding.

If signed by the President, Highway 99 would be in line for a share of \$3.3 billion over the next six years as part of the \$275 billion federal transportation reauthorization bill.

Rep. Devin Nunes recently introduced legislation seeking to include Highway 99 in a select group of roads throughout the nation in a program that funds high priority transportation projects. At Mr. Nunes' request, the language from that bill was inserted into the overall transportation funding legislation.

"This means that much-needed improvements to Highway 99 will be eligible for millions more dollars to get the work done," Mr. Nunes said. "The congested traffic on 99 poses driving hazards, contributes to our air quality problem and slows our agricultural economy."

Once the bill becomes law, Highway 99 would be-



Highway 99 would be eligible for new federal funding under a designation by Rep. Devin Nunes to make it a national high-priority corridor.

come known as the California Farm-to-Market Corridor. It would be one of only 54 nationwide, and one of few within California.

Widening Highway 99 from four to six lanes, as well as making other needed improvements to the roadway, has been a priority for Mr. Nunes since he took office.

There are several other projects included in the transportation bill that will benefit valley residents.

- Tulare County will get \$7.5 million to improve its rural road system.

- The City of Visalia will get \$2 million to widen the

Ben Maddox Way over crossing at Highway 198.

- Highway 99 will get \$17.8 million to widen the roadway from four to six lanes in both Fresno and Tulare counties.

- The City of Clovis will get \$200,000 to construct trails along Dry Creek and Enterprise canal.

- The City of Fresno will get \$500,000 to upgrade the intersection at the Save Mart Center to handle the high amounts of traffic.

City of Visalia expecting \$3.94 million federal grant

The City of Visalia is just a speed bump away from a new 5-story parking structure downtown, Rep. Devin Nunes announced recently.

The Department of Commerce has asked the city to apply for a \$3.94 million grant to help pay for the parking structure. The invitation—a strong indicator that the federal agency wants to fund a project—came after weeks of talks between the congressman, city and Commerce officials.

The city committed to build the new parking structure to alleviate traffic congestion near the hospital and nearby businesses. The hospital will likely be the greatest benefactor of the structure as it undertakes the first stages of a 30-year improvement and expansion plan at the health care center. The parking structure will be built on Acequia Avenue north of the hospital.

“The city has dedicated itself to preserving and building on the vitality of its

downtown, of which the hospital has been an integral component for more than 30 years,” Mr. Nunes said. “I



am happy to be able to serve the needs of the city and the hospital district at the same time.”

Visalia Mayor Bob Link welcomed the news.

“We’re very pleased to have been invited to formally apply for an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to help fund the West Acequia Parking Structure,” said Visalia Mayor Bob Link. “This parking structure will provide nearly 700 parking spaces and will provide some much-needed parking relief downtown, and pave the way for the expansion of the hospital, as well as accommodate new business.”

The grant is expected to pay for more than 43 percent of the construction costs of the structure. The city is expected to use additional funds toward the project, including parking in-lieu

fees and funds from the Property and Business Improvement District, among other sources.

“This outstanding news is an example of how a Congressman that is from this county and is committed to this area can make a significant difference in the economic success of Tulare County,” Mayor Link said. “We’re deeply indebted to Congressman Nunes for his efforts on behalf of the city, the hospital and downtown.”

City Manager Steve Salomon said he appreciated the collaborative effort toward getting the grant.

“The city, Kaweah Delta Health Care District, the Downtown PBID and Congressman Devin Nunes all worked very hard on the preliminary application and it’s exciting to see that the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce has recognized the merits of this project and the positive impacts it will have on the economic health of Visalia and Tulare County,” Mr. Salomon said.

Nunes seeks applicants for fall/spring Page program

Rep. Devin Nunes is looking for an outstanding high school student in Fresno or Tulare County to spend the fall or spring as a Page in the House of Representatives.

This unique program gives students the opportunity to meet students from around the country, attend special classes and seminars at the Page School, and serve the country’s leaders while working in the House of Representatives.

The fall and spring sessions are Sept. 5, 2004-Jan. 8, 2005 and Jan. 31, 2005-June 10, 2005. The application can be obtained online at <http://www.nunes.house.gov/congressionalpage.htm>.

The application must be received no later than May 5 at 5 p.m. Applications will be reviewed and a successful candidate will be forwarded to the Speaker of the House for consideration in either session. The Speaker’s office will select 72 Pages for

each program on a competitive basis from the pool of nominees.

To be eligible for the page program, applicants must:

- Be 16 years of age at the time of their appointment
- Have a ‘B’ average or better
- Be willing to serve as a Page before or after their junior year of high school.

Legislative work encompasses many issues

Business

Small Business Development Centers

Congressman Nunes signed a letter by Rep. McKeon to Small Business Committee Chairman Manzullo asking for him to remove a provision in H.R. 2802, the Small Business Reauthorization and Manufacturing Revitalization Act, which would require the Secretary to close four to six regional lead Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) in California. Congressman Nunes would rather see California's SBDCs be exempt from this provision just like Texas. A regional approach for the SBDC program makes sense for a state that is as large and diverse as California. It allows the program to be tailored for its cliental, while increasing the efficiency and quality of the services provided.

Education

Rural Schools

Congressman Nunes became a cosponsor of H.R. 3781, the Assisting America's Rural Schools Act, which was introduced by Rep. Gibbons (R-NV). This bill would provide rural Local Education Agencies (LEA) with some flexibility in meeting the definition of a "highly qualified teacher" without diminishing the accountability standards for a highly qualified teacher. Many rural school districts throughout the country only have the resources to hire a few teachers who teach multiple subjects for all middle and secondary schools. Most of these teachers,

while highly qualified in one subject, are not highly qualified in all the subjects needed to provide a comprehensive education for middle and secondary school students. Once the Department of Education deems a school district eligible, they will be allowed to defer for one year any teacher already highly qualified in at least one core academic subject from the federal regulation of being "highly qualified" in every subject they teach. In other words, a highly qualified teacher working towards obtaining that certification in another subject can still teach both subjects. It's a win win for everyone – especially the students in rural communities. This will impact 28 LEAs in the 21st Congressional District and over 13,170 students.

Energy

Hydro Power

Rep. Nunes introduced H.R. 3932, legislation 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.

Environment

Air Quality

It has come to Rep. Nunes' attention that the transportation reauthorization legislation does not include the PM-10 particulate standard in its Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Funds (CMAQ) allocation formula. This omission could have a sig-

nificant negative impact on San Joaquin Valley cities. With this concern in mind, Rep. Nunes joined with his colleagues in a letter to the Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Congressman Joe Barton urging him to add PM-10 to the funding allocation formula. PM-2.5, a new particulate standard that is to be included in the transportation reauthorization bill (TEA-LU), is not a substitute for PM-10. PM-10 continues to be a federal requirement and therefore this reauthorization should address PM-10 in the CMAQ allocation formula. Although many California areas are expected to be compliant under the PM-2.5 criteria, many will remain moderate or serious PM-10 areas. PM-10 is one of the greatest air quality issues facing California.

Oxygenate

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the California Environmental Protection Agency submitted a request



to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a waiver of the 2 percent oxygenate mandate for California's gasoline. Consequently, Rep. Nunes joined his California colleagues in transmitting a letter to Michael Leavitt, Administrator of EPA urging him to swiftly approve the request. A Federal waiver is crucial to California's ability to improve its ground water and air quality through the

Quick Facts

In March, Rep. Nunes helped 12 constituents overcome problems with government agencies. For the year, the Congressman has directly solved issues for 91 constituents and is currently assisting 349 others.

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Rep. Devin Nunes talks with Diana Dooley, general counsel of Children's Hospital Central Valley, about its service to children and their families throughout Fresno and Tulare counties and beyond.

use of reformulated gasoline. Approval will allow California refiners the flexibility to produce more cost-effective gasoline formulations, saving consumers money at the pump.

Foreign Relations

Laos

Due to the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Laos, Rep. Nunes requested, in a letter to our United Nations Ambassador John Negroponte, that a UN representative or fact-finding mission be sent to Laos to monitor the treatment of hundreds of Hmong-Lao, many of whom are former insurgents and their families, who have recently emerged from the jungles of Laos. A high-level UN presence is essential in securing the safety of these individuals, as well as in providing greater transparency regarding Lao governmental actions to the international community.

Thailand

To help develop market access for Central Valley farmers, Rep. Nunes joined the Friends of Thailand Caucus which is aimed at further promoting the growing relationship between the U.S. and Thailand. While the Caucus will work to strengthen our ties in all its facets, it will also be crucial as the Administration works to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Thailand. Those negotiations are expected to begin later this year.

Grant Support

Ag Crime

Tulare County Office of the District Attorney (ACTION Project) was awarded a grant of \$1,291,550 through the US Department of Justice. The grant funds will be used to fund the operations of the ACTION project. The ACTION project is a six-prong approach to ad-

ressing the issue of agricultural crime.

Registered Nurses

Congressman Nunes wrote a letter expressing support for a grant application submitted by the Tulare County Workforce Investment Board to the National Association of Workforce Boards - High Growth Job Training Initiative. The grant request seeks funds that will allow it to be selected as a model site in the high growth, high demand industry of healthcare. The proposed expression of interest will help fund Licensed Vocational Nurses and Registered Nursing programs.

Fresno Yosemite International Airport

Fresno City - Yosemite International Airport was awarded a grant of \$2,000,000 through the US Department of Transportation. The grant funds, part of a continuing award program, will be used to continue noise abatement programs on homes surrounding the airport.

Tulare Community Health Clinic

Tulare Community Health Clinic was awarded a grant of \$494,210 from the US Department of Health and Human Services. The grant funds, part of a continuing award program, will be used to increase access to comprehensive primary and preventative health care and improve the health status of underserved and vulnerable populations in the area.

Healthcare

Rural Community Health Centers

There are more than 3,500 community health centers in the United States. These facilities operate in rural and urban neighborhoods. They are located in communities that are designated as medically underserved because healthcare is either scarce or non-existent and provide very important services to uninsured Americans. Demonstrating the importance of these facilities, they currently serve nearly 15 million people on an annual basis. President Bush has called for substantial funding increases to make more community health centers available and has made them a cornerstone of his healthcare policy. Congressman Nunes recently sent a letter to the House Appropriations Committee in support of this effort.

Safety Net Health System

Congressman Nunes opposes any efforts that will erode progress in Medicare and Medicaid reform. To this end, he communicated his concerns to the House Budget Committee and requested appropriate funding levels to maintain important services in our nation's safety net health system.