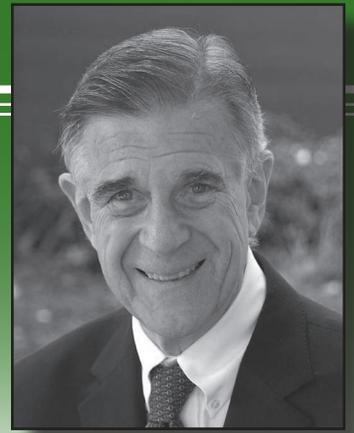


JUNE 2012

PETE STARK'S LEGISLATIVE REPORT



"MAKE IT IN AMERICA" KEY TO RECOVERY

I was pleased to participate in a Dept. of Commerce "Make it in America: Sell it to the World" event last month to honor Bay Area manufacturers. These companies are American success stories that grew from small start up operations and now employ hundreds of workers. Such manufacturing businesses are critical to job creation in the East Bay.

One way to help American industry is to lower the tax rate for our manufacturers. I'm an original cosponsor of the *Rebuilding American Manufacturing Act* (H.R. 5795). The bill would boost competitiveness by dropping manufacturers' effective tax rate to 20 percent. This would provide real financial savings to help them build and keep facilities here at home where they can hire American workers, produce American goods, and continue to grow and innovate.

We also need to bring manufacturing jobs back from

overseas. I've cosponsored legislation, the *Bring Jobs Home Act* (H.R. 5542), which would encourage insourcing by allowing a 20 percent tax credit for expenses incurred when moving a business or production line back home from abroad.

We must also ensure that the transportation and infrastructure projects funded by American taxpayers are constructed by American workers with American raw materials. I'm a cosponsor of the

Invest in American Jobs Act (H.R. 3533). It would strengthen the requirements to ensure projects with Federal financial assistance are constructed with American-produced steel, iron and manufactured goods.

These are some of the efforts being made to enact our "Make it in America" agenda.

I'll continue promoting manufacturing initiatives

that bring these jobs to the East Bay community.



Rep. Stark awards Hayward's Sugar Bowl Bakery with an Export Achievement Certificate. From Left to Right: Kim Huggett, President, Hayward Chamber of Commerce; Mark Ly, Sugar Bowl Bakery; Rep. Stark; Michael Ly, Sugar Bowl Bakery; Rod Hirsch, Dept. of Commerce.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS IN HEALTH

Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center, Inc. of Union City recently won \$500,000 in funding from the Dept. of Health and Human Services for renovation and construction, which will create jobs and allow them to care for more patients. The funds are another example of how the health reform law is improving access to affordable, quality health care.

Tiburcio's Union City clinic provides medical care to more than 4,800 people each year. Our community is lucky to have health care centers that provide services to all comers, including uninsured, low-income, and non-English speak-

ing individuals. Tiburcio's clinic provides care to many who would otherwise go without.

Since passage of health reform, 190 health centers across America have benefitted from renovation projects and 67 new health center sites have been built. These investments are critical: centers like Tiburcio will be on the front lines, providing coverage to millions of newly insured Americans, once the health care law is fully implemented in 2014.

I commend Tiburcio for the important work they do in the East Bay and I'll keep working to promote additional federal investments back home.

DYSLEXIA: A BIPARTISAN CONCERN

As the parent of a child with dyslexia, I understand firsthand the challenges faced by the millions of Americans who struggle to overcome learning disabilities and reach their full potential. Inspired by my son and the children of my constituents, I joined with Rep. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) to form the bipartisan Congressional Dyslexia Caucus. Our goal is to educate other Members of Congress in order to advance policies that will break down educational and social barriers for people with dyslexia.

Our first Dyslexia Caucus event last month was quite a success. We screened the award-winning documentary, *The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia* and heard from students and families featured in the movie. Dr. Sally Shaywitz, a prominent dyslexia expert at Yale University, addressed the 150 Members of Congress and advocates in attendance -- including Pulitzer Prize winning poet Phillip Shultz, who has dyslexia.



Rep. Stark addresses attendees of a May Dyslexia Caucus event along with his co-chair, Rep. Bill Cassidy (R-LA).

As we saw in the launch event documentary, the day-to-day concerns of families with a dyslexic child are considerable. Both Rep. Cassidy and I have heard from constituents about schools ignoring or failing to make or accept the diagnosis of dyslexia, or to provide proven, effective reading instruction.

These challenges don't end in grade school. A recent GAO report I requested found that people with dyslexia are often denied legally required accommodations, such as extra time, when taking high-stakes tests like the SAT -- effectively halting their professional and educational progress. This has to stop.

Rep. Cassidy and I hope the bipartisan Congressional Dyslexia Caucus will make important headway in ensuring people with dyslexia, and other learning disabilities, have all the tools they need to reach their full potential.

KEEPING STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES LOW

The interest rate on federal student loans is set to double to 6.8 percent on July 1st. Without swift Congressional action, 7 million Americans will be saddled with even more debt and higher education will become unattainable for many middle class Americans.

I joined with colleagues to introduce the *Stop the Rate Hike Act* (H.R. 4816). This bill would prevent

the doubling of student loan interest rates next month, while helping restore fairness to our tax code. In order to pay to keep student loan interest rates at 3.4 percent, our bill would end tax breaks and subsidies to big oil companies. We should not be using taxpayer money to support the oil industry's excessive profits -- especially at a time when many Americans already struggle to pay student loans.

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BIPARTISAN FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION REFORM ACT (H.R. 5651): Reauthorizes the FDA's user fee program, which allows the Agency to ensure patient safety by collecting fees from companies in order to help fund efficient, timely reviews of their applications for new drugs and medical devices. *Voted YES. Passed the House (387 - 5) and Senate. Signed into law by President Obama.*

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT (H.R. 4970): The House version of the bill eliminated key improvements made in the bipartisan-passed Senate version, including support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender victims, visas for immigrants, and protections for college students. *Voted NO. Passed by House (222 - 205). Unclear how Congress will reconcile the two bills.*

RECENT K

EXPORT-IMPORT BARRIERS REMOVAL ACT (H.R. 2012): Repeals the charter of the Export-Import Bank, which helps arrange financing for U.S. exports. *Passed the House (330 - 90) and Senate. Signed into law by President Obama.*

PROTECTING YOUR CIVIL LIBERTIES

I was alarmed to learn that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) may have improperly conducted surveillance that targets American Muslims at places of worship in Northern California and other places around the country.

The FBI has apparently used a "mosque outreach program" -- which falls under their community outreach function -- to do much more than build relationships. Instead, it seems they've collected detailed information on the religious views and practices of Muslims for intelligence purposes and shared it with other government agencies.

According to documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, agents in the FBI's San Francisco and Sacramento divisions recorded and disseminated First Amendment-protected informa-

We're particularly concerned about the FBI's actions violating constitutionally-protected civil rights of Muslim Americans.

tion about community leaders, including sermons, conversations, and political opinions. This scrutiny appears to be based solely on the race, religion, and national origin of those in the American Muslim community. I don't believe that's constitutional.

I've gathered the support of colleagues in Congress and we've written to the Inspector General of the Dept. of Justice calling on him to investigate this matter. We are particularly concerned about whether these FBI actions violate the constitutionally-protected civil rights of Muslim Americans.

Protecting our country does not necessitate violating innocent people's rights or targeting individuals because of their religious beliefs. I'll continue to monitor this issue closely and work to ensure that all our civil liberties are protected.

CRACKING DOWN ON DEBT COLLECTORS

In response to recent news reports that a major debt collector has been going after patients for money while they're in the hospital -- and potentially violating federal laws -- I called on the Administration to launch a federal investigation and send a warning to hospitals participating in Medicare. The good news is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has begun to take action on my request.

As detailed in news reports, Accretive Health's debt collectors have sought payment from patients waiting in the emergency room or while they're recuperating in a hospital bed. Of particular concern is if patients are being denied access to care or leaving before they get treatment because they're intimidated. I was the author of the *Emergency Medi-*

cal Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA), now law, which prohibits hospitals from turning patients away from the ER when they need medical attention. Also of concern is that these debt collectors may have had improper access to patients' medical information, in violation of the law known as HIPPA, the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act*.

CMS took a first step in cracking down on the alleged tactics used by Accretive by sending warnings to hospitals reminding them that such practices may violate EMTALA, a serious legal offense.

I'll continue to do everything in my power -- including pressing the Administration, seeking information from Accretive Health, and pursuing legislative action if necessary -- to ensure these practices stop.

KEY VOTES

STARK REAUTHORIZATION (H. Res. 568): Reauthorizes Export-Import Bank, which provides financing for U.S. exporters, for the bank's lending cap of \$40 billion. *Voted YES.*

CYBER INTELLIGENCE SHARING AND PROTECTION ACT (H.R. 3523): Would allow companies to share private consumer information with the government without a warrant or any oversight. The government agencies that receive this personal information could keep it indefinitely. *Voted NO. Passed House (248 - 168). Pending in the Senate. President Obama has issued a veto threat.*

IRAN RESOLUTION (H. Res. 568): Contains broad and dangerous language that undermines any diplomatic solution regarding Iran's nuclear program and, without explicit language stating that there is no authorization for military action, could be interpreted as a blank check for war. *Voted NO. Passed by House (401 - 11), pending in the Senate.*



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M.C.
PRESORTED STANDARD

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The House Majority appeared to show no interest in addressing this serious problem until public pressure forced them to act. Unfortunately, their solution to stopping the student loan rate increase was to eliminate the Prevention and Public Health Fund, created by health reform. The House Majority passed such legislation on a party line vote.

Elimination of this critical fund would be devastating. Women would suffer as the fund will provide hun-

dreds of thousands of screenings for breast and cervical cancer. President Obama agrees that repeal is not an option and threatened to veto their bill. That won't have to happen as the Senate rejected the House bill.

We cannot allow student loan rates to double on July 1st, yet cutting critical health prevention funding to do so is a nonstarter. I urge House Republicans to quickly work with Democrats to find a way forward.

UPCOMING TOWN MEETING SATURDAY, JUNE 23RD

FREMONT

1:00 PM — 2:00 PM

Fremont Senior Center
40086 Paseo Padre Parkway

STAY UP-TO-DATE

SIGN UP FOR PETE'S EMAIL ALERTS AT: WWW.STARK.HOUSE.GOV

FOLLOW PETE ON FACEBOOK & TWITTER:

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