



# The 47th Flyer

News for California's 47<sup>th</sup> Congressional District  
from Congressman Alan Lowenthal



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January 20, 2015

## Investing In Our Future

President Obama has announced [a new plan](#) to help cover two years of tuition for students at community colleges.

As a former educator who has experienced the importance of investing in our future through higher education, I believe the President's 'America's College Promise' plan could be a giant step in the right direction for our nation's education system.

While not all the details of the plan have been released, I like what I have seen so far. The President's proposal will raise new ladders of opportunity for nearly nine million students by improving graduation rates, investing in job training and reducing the burden of tuition that weighs on the futures of so many Americans seeking to create businesses, bolster their careers, and start families.

Nothing provides a greater return to us as a nation than investments in education.

In fact, in California, for every \$1 invested to get students in and through college, the state's economy receives a \$4.5 net return on investment.

And, the investment pays off for students as well. Students receiving a degree or certificate from a community college nearly double their earnings within three years. It pays off for businesses, too. For every dollar spent in California on economic and workforce development programs at community colleges, there is a \$12 increase in the state's business income and employee wages.

With one in four of every community college student in the nation attending a California community college, the President's plan could not only be a boost for the nation, but a very serious boost for the state of California.

## In The 47th District

### Speaking On Our Ports

It was my distinct honor to address the members of the California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference (CMANC) on Thursday for their annual winter meeting, held this year in Long Beach.

CMANC began in the Bay Area in the 1950's as a regional committee concerned with civil works related to waterway and ocean navigation. It has grown into a statewide coalition of California city governments, port authorities, harbor departments, and marine interests groups that advocate for the maintenance and improvement of California harbors, ports, and navigation projects.

I was excited to speak to the CMANC members about the successful partnership between my office, the Congress, the Administration, the city of Long Beach, and

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The 2010 Dodd-Frank financial reform legislation increased the oversight of derivatives, reduced the systemic risk large banks posed, and created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

### Should the consumer protections under Dodd-Frank be scaled back?

Yes - They are no longer needed, the market will self-regulate

Maybe - But each regulation within Dodd-Frank should be considered separately

No - The law helps to prevent another financial collapse

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the Army Core of Engineers, all working together to secure dredging funding to keep the Queensway Bay channel open to Catalina ferry and recreational traffic; my national freight bill that will provide a secure revenue source for investing in our national goods movement infrastructure; my work to assure that Harbor Maintenance Tax funds collected at ports like Long Beach and Los Angeles return to these ports; and, on my hope for a speedy conclusion to the West Coast dock workers contract negotiations.



*The GMANC representatives*

## On The Hill

### Helping Our Veterans

Twenty-two American veterans commit suicide daily – more than 8,000 every year. Of the more than 2 million Americans who have served in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is estimated that one-third, roughly 600,000 women and men, have traumatic brain injury, PTSD, or depression.

To help address this serious issue the House this week unanimously passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act – bipartisan legislation originally introduced in the 113th Congress – to address the epidemic of suicide among our nation's veterans.

One veteran lost to suicide is one veteran too many, this bipartisan legislation provides our heroes the care and support they have earned and deserve to overcome mental health challenges, traumatic brain injuries, and post-traumatic stress disorder.



*The Veterans Administration Long Beach Healthcare System complex*

I proudly supported this legislation to ensure our nation stands behind our brave veterans with compassion and dedication every day.

The SAV Act, H.R. 203, will establish a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services. To ease access to services, the bill will require the VA to create a one-stop, interactive website to serve as a centralized source of information regarding all mental health services for veterans. A student loan repayment pilot program, aimed at recruiting and retaining qualified psychiatrists, is included in the legislation and will help address the shortage of mental health care professionals in the VA system. To improve care, the legislation will require an annual, third-party evaluation of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the VA to find out what's working and what's not.

### **My New Subcommittees**

As many of you know, I have been a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) since I joined Congress in 2013.

The Foreign Affairs committee as a whole is responsible for oversight and legislation relating to trade, diplomatic relations, national security; strategic planning and agreements; war powers, treaties and executive agreements; the deployment and use of the United States Armed Forces; international law; global human rights; and arms control.

At the start of each new session of Congress, Members have the opportunity to change the subcommittees within the full committees that they sit on. I have selected to sit on two key HFAC committees that cover regions that are critical to the Asian American and Latino communities in the 47th District, the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific (SAP), as well as the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere (SWH).

I chose these specific subcommittees because they cover issues that bear directly on the 47th District. Serving on them will allow me to work on issues that impact our diverse Asian and Pacific Islander and Latino communities including international trade with Pacific Rim and Latin American countries and fighting for human rights throughout these regions.

## **Congress U**

### **Committees and Subcommittees**

Congress divides its appropriations, oversight, internal administrative, and legislative tasks among just over 20 committees and nearly 200 subcommittees. Within assigned areas, these committees and subcommittees perform a host of functions, such as raising revenue; allocating government spending; gathering information; comparing and evaluating potential legislation and legislative alternatives; identifying problems with existing legislation or policy, and proposing solutions; practicing oversight of executive branch performance; and, investigating allegations of wrongdoing.

Most House Members sit on two full committees. For example, I sit on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Natural Resources Committee.

Some Members, who sit on one of five 'exclusive committees' (Rules, Financial Services, Appropriations, Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce), are typically only allowed to sit on that particular committee.

Each committee is led by a chairperson, who is from the majority party, and a ranking member, who is from the minority party. Which Members sit on which

committee, as well as which Members fill committee leadership positions, are selected by each party's leadership, subject to the approval of the full caucus.

Most full committees are further divided into subcommittees, which are made up of small groupings of each full committee's membership and deal with specific issues within the full committee's jurisdiction. For example, I sit on the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, and the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere.

Unlike full committee assignments, subcommittee assignments are selected by the individual Committee Members themselves based on a round-robin seniority selection process.

### Last Week's Poll

**Should the President approve the Keystone XL pipeline, which will transport tar sands oil from Canada to Texas for export?**

39.2% -- Yes - America needs this project

12.5% -- Maybe - But more review on the possible impacts need to be done

48.3% -- No - This is a bad project for America

Thank you,



Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

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