



# The 47th Flyer

News for California's 47th Congressional District  
from Congressman Alan Lowenthal



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April 15, 2013

**Issue #3**

## A TRAGEDY IN BOSTON

Just moments before this issue of the newsletter was set to be sent, the tragic events at the Boston Marathon occurred. Like most Americans I was horrified, shocked and saddened as the details of the aftermath were reported.

My most sincere sympathies go out to the families and loved ones of those who were killed and my thoughts and prayers go out to those that were injured.

This attack, like those before it, will not break our spirit as Americans. The cowardly perpetrators of this crime will learn that our nation is unflinching and resilient.

*Alan Lowenthal*

## THE FIRST 100 DAYS

Friday, April 12 was exactly 100 days since I was sworn into office to represent the constituents of the 47th District. These first 100 days have been a learning experience for both me and my staff. We have been busy setting up our district and Washington, D.C. offices; getting caught up on legislation and committee work; and, building a strong constituent service organization to assist residents and organizations who need someone to fight for them. Here is just a brief overview of what my office and I have been up to since Jan. 3.

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## Congressman Alan Lowenthal's First 100 Days in Office

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<b>8559</b>	Pieces of constituent mail responded to
<b>1831</b>	Constituents subscribing to my weekly e-newsletter, <i>The 47<sup>th</sup> Flyer</i>
<b>~1000</b>	Constituents given tours of D.C. landmark buildings through my office
<b>265</b>	Legislative/constituent meetings I have held in D.C. and in my district offices
<b>142</b>	Constituents who have had issues with Federal agencies resolved
<b>102</b>	Votes cast on the House floor (100% attendance)
<b>75</b>	Number of bills I have cosponsored
<b>16</b>	Bipartisan congressional working groups (caucuses) I joined
<b>1</b>	Number of marriage proposals facilitated by my office (she said yes!)

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## IT'S APPROPRIATIONS SEASON

During this period of the legislative year, my colleagues and I in Congress are busy with the appropriations process. Some people have asked what exactly appropriations are.

Appropriations generally provide funding for numerous activities, for example, national defense, education, and homeland security, as well as general government operations.

The United States Constitution provides that all expenditures for all federal agencies and programs must be approved by Congress and then signed by the President.

About 2/3 of federal spending is "non-discretionary." This is for programs like Social Security, whose annual costs are already determined by law based on the number of people served and their eligibility.

The remaining 1/3 is "discretionary": this includes areas like defense or education funding, for which the spending is set each year by the Congress and the President.

Discretionary spending bills are generally enacted annually for the next fiscal year. It is a two-part process. Discretionary spending is usually first "authorized" in one bill, and then the actual funding is "appropriated" in another bill - an "appropriations bill." This mechanism is meant to help control overall spending.

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## HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

On April 11th, I participated in a Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on human rights issues in Vietnam.

Despite strong U.S.-Vietnam relations, the Government of Vietnam has yet to demonstrate its commitment to upholding international laws and norms such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Vietnam is a signatory.

The Government of Vietnam has disregarded its promises on respecting basic human rights, freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of association of its own citizens as enshrined in Vietnam's Constitution.



Currently, highly respected religious leaders such as the Supreme Patriarch Thich Quang Do of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and Father Nguyen Van Ly, along with many activists are under house arrest; and, according to reports, at least 50 human rights defenders have been arbitrarily detained within the last year alone.

I believe that the United States should use our diplomatic relations and influence to do everything that we can to support the people of Vietnam in their aspirations for justice, liberty, and freedom.

My hope is that the U.S. Congress carefully examines the seriousness and commitment on the part of the Government of Vietnam in respecting human rights and basic freedom of its citizens given the current conditions in Vietnam.

There are large numbers of Vietnamese American constituents that I proudly represent, particularly in Little Saigon – one of the largest concentrations of Vietnamese outside of Vietnam – and I stand in solidarity with them on their

struggle to attain the basic human rights which they deserve.

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### **MCGARVIN INTERMEDIATE VISITS CAPITOL.**

I was excited to meet with students and teachers from McGarvin Intermediate School in Westminster who were in Washington, D.C. as part of their Spring Break trip. With the recent arrival of spring weather in Washington, we decided to meet on the steps of the Capitol where I answered the student's questions about everything from how I got into politics to foreign policy.

The annual trip allows the students to see the sights of Philadelphia, Gettysburg, Washington DC, Williamsburg/Jamestown, and Charlottesville. McGarvin is located in the Garden Grove Unified School District.



## LAST WEEK'S SURVEY RESULTS

The question asked was: Women currently earn about 77 cents on the dollar compared to men who perform the same work. Who is responsible for this pay inequity?

- a. No one - this is how the free market works - 22%
- b. Employers - should pay the same for the same work - 56%
- c. State govt - states don't do enough to level the 'paying' field - 0%
- d. Federal govt - pay equity legislation has not gone far enough - 21%.

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