



The 47th Flyer

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



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August 8, 2014

More Thoughts On A Humanitarian Crisis

This is my first term, and I have had some very frustrating and disappointing moments.

But last Friday was the saddest day so far.

On Friday, the House voted to send children back to unspeakable violence, and to deport young people brought to this country through no fault of their own.

It reminded me of the words of Pastor Martin Niemoller. Words that I have hanging in my office:

*First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.*

*Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.*

*Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.*

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

Who will speak for the unaccompanied children and for the Dreamers if not us?

On The Hill

Disgraceful Disrepair

This past week I asked the United States Department of State and the U.S. Department of Defense to pressure the Vietnamese Government on the issue of a neglected military cemetery in Vietnam where more than 16,000 South Vietnamese soldiers, many of whom fought bravely alongside the United States and its allies during the Vietnam War, are buried.

The Bien Hoa National Military Cemetery was constructed by the Republic of Vietnam in the 1960s but a lack of upkeep has left much of it in a state of disrepair.

The conditions of the Bien Hoa cemetery are disgraceful and as an act of reconciliation the Vietnamese government should treat the final resting place

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Should the public be fairly compensated for natural resources extracted from public lands by private companies?

Yes - These are public lands

Maybe - It would depend on what 'fairly compensated' means

No - Private companies are made up of members of the public, who have a right to use public lands

I don't know

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of so many Vietnamese with respect and a measure of dignity that befits those who have given their lives in combat.

I'm proud to say that 18 of my Congressional colleagues, from both sides of the aisle, joined in my letter asking Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to press the issue of restoring and maintaining the cemetery during bilateral talks with the Vietnamese Government.

Oil And Gas Royalties

As a member of the House Natural Resources Committee, I requested immediate action this week to modernize oil and gas rental and royalty rates on federal lands, rates that remain below other comparable land owners and which are shortchanging the American public while benefiting petroleum companies.

In a letter to the Interior Department cosigned by 42 of my House colleagues, I urged the Interior Department to update the outdated federal onshore royalty and rental rates for oil and gas, the fees that petroleum companies pay to extract the public's natural resources.

Petroleum companies operating on federal public lands currently pay the Interior Department 12.5% of the value of the oil and gas they produce as a royalty to the taxpayer, a rate which has not been updated in nearly a century.

The Department of Interior's own studies have estimated that updating onshore royalty rates could increase revenue collections by about \$1.25 billion over 10 years.

The current federal royalty rate is not close to what others charge and needs updating. Not only is this less than our Western states charge, and what is charged for offshore oil and gas royalties, but it is one of the lowest rates of any country in the world.

These lands belong to the public, and this current royalty rate system is neither fair nor equitable for the American taxpayer.

In The 47th District

Coffee and Conversation at El Dorado Park

It was great to kick off the August district work period with a Coffee and Conversation event at El Dorado Park West. I was happy to answer a whole host of questions from folks ranging from topics such as gerrymandering to educational standards, to interest rates and how the federal government can help California during the drought. It is always a pleasure to hear from constituents and I look forward to meeting with many more during the August work period.



Meetings with Catalina Leaders and Residents

A lot of people might not realize this, but Catalina Island is in the 47th District. This week, I spent two days in Avalon where I met with the City Council and City Manager to discuss ways to help the island, especially around the lack of potable water; met with local business leaders to hear their thoughts and concerns; read to children at the library; hosted another Coffee and Conversation to let people know what is going on in Washington, and to answer their questions. In addition, I also got to spend a little time just walking around talking to residents. I appreciate the warm greeting I was given by everyone and came away from the visit with a much clearer view of the things that are important to my island constituents.



Congress U

"Martial Law, or Same-Day Rule"

Last week, House Republican leadership, unable to garner enough support for a bill to deal with the humanitarian crisis on our southern border, had to pull the first version of the bill. In order to get around a 24-hour waiting period before bringing up another version of the bill, the House leadership had to put into effect what is called “martial law,” or a “Same-Day Rule.”

It is not the “martial law” most people think of, where the government imposes military rule over certain areas during an emergency, but it is a term used to describe a very specific House procedure related to passing legislation.

Under the House martial law procedure, long-standing House rules that require at least one day between the unveiling of significant legislation and the House floor vote on that legislation — so that Members can learn what

they are being asked to vote on — are swept away.

Instead, under “martial law,” the House leadership can file legislation with tens or hundreds of pages of fine print and move immediately to debate and vote on it, before Members of Congress, the media, or the public have an opportunity to understand fully what provisions have been altered or inserted into the legislation behind closed doors.

The Same-Day Rule exists for extenuating circumstances and circumventing it—without a compelling reason—is not the way Congress should operate.

Last Week's Poll

During this time of drought, do you favor or oppose your local water district imposing a mandatory water-use reduction?

72.8% - Favor

19.7% - Oppose

7.5% - Don't know

Thank you,



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