



The 47th Flyer

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



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December 6, 2013

There are four days left in the first session of the 113th Congress, and there still remains much to be done. Next year's budget must be completed; comprehensive immigration reform needs to be achieved; and hardworking Americans should be guaranteed a better minimum wage similar to what is guaranteed in California.

While it will be difficult for the Congress to achieve all three of these goals before the New Year, the House Budget Conference Committee has a deadline of Friday, December 13th to compromise on funding the 2014 fiscal year. My hope is that they proceed with a balanced approach of reasonable cuts and revenue increases.

If the remaining goals are not accomplished, they will be dealt with in the second session of this Congress, which begins on January 6th. Needless to say, I continue to remain optimistic that cooperation and compromise will prevail, if not in the last four days, then in the second session. The goals mentioned above, however, are absolutely critical, and there must not be any further delay in dealing with them.

THE TIME IS NOW

On the last night of Hanukkah, I joined the group Fast for Families on the National Mall in support of comprehensive immigration reform. These activists have been staging a hunger strike for weeks in support of a plan that protects our borders and offers a clear pathway to citizenship for the millions of immigrants waiting to become American citizens. I was proud to show my support for their efforts.

As the son of an immigrant, I empathize with those who are stuck in a system that does not function properly – often denying hardworking people a clearly defined, legal path to citizenship while at times separating families for years at a time.

The 12 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. are for the most part woven deeply into the fabric of our nation. I believe the solution lies in a comprehensive and bipartisan approach that allows for greater legal immigration while deterring illegal immigration.

We need an immigration system that works for immigrants and is good for America's economy. As I have said in previous newsletters, this is why I cosponsored H.R. 15, the "Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act", which is a comprehensive immigration reform bill cosponsored by 191 members of the House of Representatives, including three Republicans.

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With four days left in the first session of the 113th Congress, what should be Congress' top priority?

- Comprehensive Immigration Reform
- Raising the minimum wage
- Completing a balanced budget
- Other

[If you have a problem, click here to open survey in a new window](#)

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

To quote President Obama from his speech at the Center for American Progress on Wednesday: The current economy is “profoundly unequal.”

According to the nonpartisan Economic Policy Institute, raising the minimum wage will help four million African American workers; seven million Hispanic workers; seven million parents; three million single parents; and fourteen million workers with family income under \$40,000 per year.

The current federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. If, over the years, the minimum wage had kept up with the pace of inflation, researchers at the nonpartisan Center for Economic and Policy Research argue that the current minimum wage would be \$21.72 per hour.

President Obama spoke about raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour – a minimum wage that I support and a wage that I have been fighting for by cosponsoring the Fair Minimum Wage Act. My hope is that the momentum for a higher minimum wage continues.



SESSIONS OF CONGRESS

The annual series of meetings of a Congress is called a “session”, and there are two sessions in each elected cycle which are based on the constitutional mandate that Congress assemble at least once a year. The first session, the current session, ends on December 13th, 2013.

The constitutional mandate, Section 2 of the 20th Amendment, states: “The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3rd day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.” The 113th Congress has enacted a law that begins the second session on Monday, January 6th, 2014. At the end of the second session, we then enter into the 114th Congress.

LATEST POLL RESULTS

Should oil and energy companies disclose where they will be fracking or drilling in our communities?

77.8% Yes - it is critical to our environmental and public health needs
11.2% Maybe -I do not think it is a big deal
11.0% No - it is too much of a burden on industry
0.0% Not sure

Thank you,



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Washington, D.C. Office

515 Cannon
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-7924
Hours: M-F 9-5:30pm

Long Beach District Office

100 W. Broadway
Long Beach , CA 90802
West Tower Suite 600
Phone: (562) 436-3828
Fax: (562) 437-6434

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