

Last Minute: I write to you as I am flying home to California on Saturday morning. Congress adjourned at about 20 minutes after midnight this morning. Both the House and Senate wrapped up work meeting the deadline set by a predetermined adjournment date. This past week was the last chance to pass legislation until Congress returns in late November for a lame duck session.

In my experience, legislative bodies are like attorneys, accountants (I am one of those too) and college students during final exams. They put off lots of work until a deadline forces them to do it. Congress is no different.

In the last week, nearly 100 bills were passed in the House. You probably heard or read about the most significant legislation that passed both houses this week and was sent to the president for signature. These bills included the military tribunal bill, the terrorist surveillance bill, or the multiple pieces of border security legislation including a fence that passed. I will write more about all of that in the coming weeks when I will give you my individual assessments of what was accomplished and what needs to be done on the "Big 4" issues (war, illegal immigration, taxes/budget, and energy). A quick note on the border security bills, we made significant progress that will make a difference and has absolutely no amnesty or guest worker provisions. But more still needs to do be done.

In this week's update, I want to shed a little light a few bills we passed which did not receive much coverage in the mainstream media:

HR 4772: The Private Property Protection Act (Steve Chabot R-Ohio) expedites access to federal courts for private property owners when local governments try to take property without compensations. Private property rights are protected by the 5th Amendment and this bill will provide property owners with similar access to federal court as plaintiffs in other constitutional cases. This is significant legislation for the protection of property rights. It passed the House by a vote of 231-181 and is now pending in the Senate.

HR 2679: The Public Expression of Religion Act (John Hostettler-R-Ind.) is another great bill. Under existing law, if the ACLU, for example, sues the government to prohibit prayer at a high school graduation, to remove the crosses and stars of David from veterans cemeteries, or to take the cross down from Mount Soledad in San Diego the taxpayers have to pay the plaintiff's attorneys fees if they prevail. Millions of your state, local and federal tax dollars have gone to fund the ACLU and other similar groups' activist legal agendas when these cases involving the establishment clause have occurred. This bill changes that. I don't mind them filing suit, but they should do it with their own money. The bill passed the House by a vote of 244-173 and is now pending in the Senate.

HR 3127: The Darfur Peace and Accountability Act of 2006 (Hyde-R-Ill.) imposes sanctions on individuals responsible for the genocide in Darfur. It also provides measures for humanitarian operations and peace efforts in the Darfur region of Sudan. The bill passed in both the House and Senate is expected to be signed by the president. Two other Darfur-related resolutions passed this week (HRes 723 and HRes 992) to take action to deal with this horrible situation of human suffering.

S 403: The Child Custody Protection Act (Sen. Ensing-R-Nev.) makes it illegal to knowingly transport a minor across state lines to have an abortion without the consent of her parents. This passed the House 264-153 and is now on hold in the Senate.

HR 6143: the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 (Mary Bono-R-Calif.) reauthorizes what has been a very successful treatment program that has helped make a significant reduction in AIDS-related deaths in this country. It passed the House 325-98 and is pending in the Senate.

We also named or renamed over 24 federal buildings, parks and post offices.....OK, so that may not be the most important thing we did. But somebody has to do it.

Until next week, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell