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The Week Just Past

"The House Appropriations Committee Thursday approved a bill containing funding that will allow our troops to continue their vital missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The bill, which also contains security assistance for Pakistan, was passed without timetables or 'benchmarks' that will tie the hands of our commanders in the field. While there still is room for improvement in this measure, passing this funding quickly and getting it to our military leaders must remain a priority. The House Leadership needs to bring this bill to the full House next week.

"I was disappointed that Committee Democrats voted down amendments relating to the closing of the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. President Obama announced his intention to shut down the detention facility last fall and now must decide what will happen to the 241 terrorists now housed there. These men are neither nameless nor faceless, and they are not common criminals. They are some of the world's most dangerous terrorists and they should not be released or transferred to the United States!

"Among the amendments the Committee debated was a modest proposal offered by Rep. Frank Wolf of Virginia. His amendment directed the federal government to conduct a formal assessment of the threat posed by each terrorist, required the government to consult with local and state officials before transferring terrorists to their region in the U.S., and sought a concrete estimate of the costs associated with closing down Guantanamo Bay and housing detainees on U.S. soil. Yet, the Majority even voted down this reasonable attempt to assure the American people that they won't be put at risk."

Bad Idea of the Week

Tucked away deep inside the budget approved by Congress last month is a provision that will essentially "nationalize" the federal student loan program. Under a plan put forward by the Obama Administration, the federal government would stop providing subsidies for new loans made through thousands of banks and other lending institutions under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program by July 1, 2010. Instead, the federal government would offer all loans directly to students.

"Historically, the FFEL and other student loan programs offered by the private sector provided choice and opportunity for millions of young men and women," said Frelinghuysen. "The message that only the government can provide student loans is simply wrong. This government takeover will result in higher federal borrowing costs to the taxpayer, more program overhead and another significant increase in hiring

bureaucrats. And it is absolutely unnecessary.”

Noted with Interest

1) Although President Obama has vowed that Americans will be able to track “every dime” of the trillion dollar government “stimulus” bill, USA Today reported this week that “a government website dedicated to the spending won’t have details on contracts and grants until October and may not be complete until next spring — halfway through the program.”

2) The White House chose to quickly release highly classified memoranda regarding the treatment of violent international extremists in our custody but refused to release the pictures of Air Force One overflying New York City last month.

Jobs for Veterans

Saying “the cost of their dedicated service to our nation is not a place on the unemployment line,” Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen has asked senior New Jersey officials to ensure that funding under the recent “economic stimulus” bill is used to hire veterans and companies that employ veterans.

In letters this week, Frelinghuysen urged New Jersey Transportation Commissioner Stephen Dilts and New Jersey Transit Executive Director Richard Sarles to use every tool at their disposal to ensure that military veterans secure as much of the pending transportation infrastructure work as possible. (New Jersey will receive over \$1 billion in federal funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.)

“We owe all of our veterans, including those New Jersey Army Guard personnel preparing to come home from a year-long deployment to Iraq, an extra measure of support,” he said.

New Horizons for Employment Horizons

Rep. Frelinghuysen was on hand last weekend as Employment Horizons, a not-for-profit organization providing comprehensive employment, training and job placement services to persons with disabilities, officially opened a new 22,000 square foot annex in Cedar Knolls. The agency works to provide high-quality services to the business community while, at the same time, furthering its mission to “assist people with barriers to employment to achieve their individual vocational objectives and establish self-sufficiency...”

“Since it’s founding in 1957, Employment Horizons has made invaluable contributions to our community,” said Frelinghuysen. “This new facility will help them do their important work.”

Town Meetings Tomorrow!

Rep. Frelinghuysen will hold public town meetings in Roxbury and Long Hill on Saturday, May 9. All residents and concerned citizens in the 11th Congressional District are invited to attend.

“I hold town meetings on regular basis because there is no better way for a Member of Congress to know what is on the minds of his or her constituents than by reaching out to residents to listen to their concerns and address their questions in a face to face town hall meeting,” said Frelinghuysen.

The Roxbury Town Meeting will be held from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Roxbury Senior Center, 72 Eyland Avenue, Roxbury (07876).

The Long Hill Township Town Meeting will be held from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the Town Hall Municipal Building, 915 Valley Road, Gillette, (07933).

Seating may be limited. Both facilities are handicapped accessible. Constituent service staff will be available to address individual concerns.

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