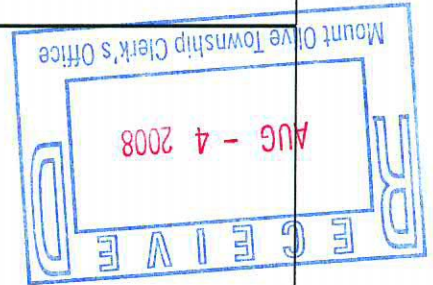
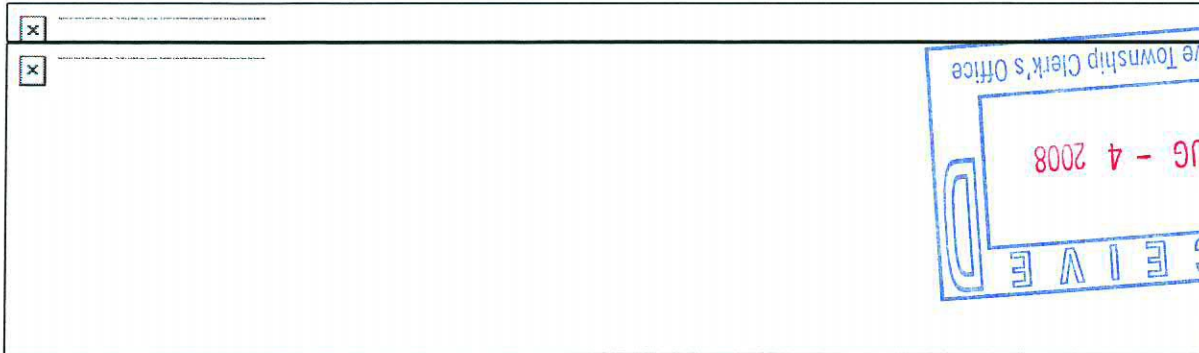




Lashway, Lisa

From: Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen [Congressman.Frelinghuysen@mail.house.gov]
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2008 5:02 PM
To: Lashway, Lisa
Subject: Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen's e-Newsletter



eNews - August 1, 2008

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House Passes Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill

Today, the House passed its first appropriations bill of 2008, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act.

The bill included \$119 billion; \$94 billion of which goes to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Funding for veterans' health programs was increased by 9 percent.



"I am pleased that the House has acted to pass funding for military construction and the Department of Veterans Affairs," said Frelinghuysen. "I am especially proud of the significant increase in veteran's health programs. Our nation's veterans have sacrificed so much for our freedom, and we must do everything in our power to provide the support to which they are entitled."

The bill funds \$3.2 billion for family and military housing. That represents a 10 percent increase. Also included in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill was \$9.9 million for a new Ballistics Evaluations Facility (BEF) at Picatinny Arsenal. Rep. Frelinghuysen requested the funds for the project.

The funding will be used for planning, design and construction of a state-of-the-art Ballistic Evaluation Facility (BEF) for Large Caliber Armaments.

"This is a critical military readiness priority for the Army," said Frelinghuysen. "Our goal is the construction of a 'one-of-a-kind' testing facility that will help Picatinny's scientists and engineers produce cutting edge capabilities. In the process, we will cut the Army's operational overhead and improve safety for its workers."

When completed, the BEF will provide the new capabilities to prepare prototype weapons, propellant charges, and projectiles for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines.

The existing capability for ballistics experimentation resides in five separate, antiquated facilities at Picatinny. These facilities are widely separated and susceptible to work stoppages due to foul weather. The current facilities were never designed to withstand the overpressures generated from today's modern high-velocity gun systems.

Frelinghuysen Iraq Report Published in the Paper

This week, Rep. Frelinghuysen's "Op-Ed" on his recent visit to Iraq was published by the Morris County Daily Record. It reads:

"The briefings confirmed my impressions - security in Iraq continues to improve. Fewer American service members and Iraqi civilians are being attacked and killed. In fact, all violence indicators are dramatically reduced from 2006 levels. Coalition and Iraqi forces continue to "shrink" the areas in which al Qaeda and insurgent groups have support and sanctuary which they, in turn, used to terrorize local populations, making political and economic gains nearly impossible.

Iraqi security forces, both Army and police, have taken tremendous strides toward everyone's goal: Iraqis better protecting Iraqis. While ethnic and sectarian problems still exist inside various units, we are clearly much closer to the day when their military replaces ours in confronting militias and extremists...

*As I spent 28 hours in the air traveling to and from southwest Asia, I had the opportunity to read David Halberstam's *The Coldest Winter*, about American involvement in the Korean War. Despite the fact that 33,000 Americans died and another 105,000 were wounded, Halberstam writes, "the true brutality of the war never really penetrated the American cultural consciousness."*

While the Korean and Iraq wars are in different regions and of different eras, there are parallels. Of course, we all know the tragic loss of life in all wars and appreciate the huge sacrifices of our soldiers in Iraq and their families. But, I am reminded of the parting words of one soldier that I met. Among other New Jersey residents, I had lunch with a soldier with 23 years of Army service from Middlesex County. She said: "when you get home, remind people you talk to that we are still here. We are worried about talk of a pullout. We have sacrificed a lot here to make the world a better place and to make our families safer at home. We don't want it all to be for naught."

The full "op-ed" is available in the News Section on Frelinghuysen.house.gov.

Safeguarding Children's Toys

On Wednesday, the House overwhelmingly gave final approval to the Consumer Product Safety Modernization Act (H.R. 4040).

The legislation improves protections for consumers with particular emphasis on lead and other chemicals in toys and other items that could end up in a child's mouth. In doing so, the House significantly decreased the permitted levels of lead in toys.

"American families need to know the toys they purchase are safe for their children," said Frelinghuysen. "This common sense legislation strengthens the FDA's enforcement and inspection abilities increasing the safety of our children."

Helping Families Afford a College Education

On Thursday, the House modernized the Higher Education Act and made key improvements to help families and students.

"With college tuition continuing to rise, it is important that Congress help families struggling to afford a quality education," said Frelinghuysen. "The Higher Education Act has helped countless students attend college, and it is necessary to modernize it to meet the needs of today's families."

The *Washington Post* summarized the provisions of the bill:

The Major Changes: Key points in the Higher Education Act reauthorization approved yesterday by the House and Senate.

- Increases maximum Pell Grant amounts from \$4800 to \$6000 in 2009 and up to \$8000 in 2014
- Requires the Education Department to publish data about college costs; requires universities with the highest tuition increases to submit reports to the agency explaining them.
- Requires universities to show costs of textbooks in online catalogues so students know the full cost of a course.
- Simplifies financial aid forms, cutting an eight-page form with 108 questions down to two pages and 44 questions.
- Requires schools to notify students immediately of emergency situations on campus, a provision introduced after the April 2007 killings at Virginia Tech.

Supports Legislation Preventing Tobacco Use

This week, the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act passed the House of Representatives. For the first time, this legislation gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the ability to regulate tobacco.

The bill provides new protections to families and acts to keep children and young people from smoking.

"We need to do all we can to protect children from the influence of tobacco," said Frelinghuysen. "This legislation is an important step in keeping young people from taking up smoking."

House Leadership Fails Appropriations Process

Not since 1950 have so few Appropriations bills been passed by the US House of Representatives before the August "recess".

Sadly, Speaker Pelosi and the House leadership have only passed one bill, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, so far this year. Evidently, the plan is to kick all the Appropriations bills into 2009 for the new President to sign.

The House has failed to get anything substantive done, totally forfeiting its Constitutional responsibilities as a separate branch of government. The Fiscal Year for 2009 begins on October 1, and no bills with the exception of the Military Construction and Veteran Affairs bill have been passed!

Spread the E-News!

Enjoy receiving this weekly e-newsletter? Tell your friends and neighbors to sign up at Rep. Frelinghuysen's website at <http://frelinghuysen.house.gov/>



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