



CONGRESSMAN JIM SENSENBRENNER NEWS FROM CONGRESS

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Cutting Our Taxes

Most Americans agree that our unemployment rate is too high and economic growth is at best, weak. There is also general agreement that the events of September 11, 2001, combined with our renewed focus on defending America, are part of the reason for our nation's current economic slump and budget deficits. But when it comes to providing solutions, it seems almost impossible to reach a national consensus.

Thus, it was no surprise that when President Bush first proposed an economic stimulus plan months ago, liberals were quick to oppose it. Claiming that it was merely a giveaway to the affluent, these individuals asserted that the President's stimulus plan would not expand the economy or create jobs.

Alleging that tax reductions hurt the economy is tantamount to saying that aspirin causes headaches. Historical evidence reinforces this fact. In the early 60s, President John F. Kennedy stated that "the current tax system exerts too heavy a drag on growth." He then cut taxes significantly, bringing the highest marginal income tax rate down 21 percentage points. The result was an increase in federal tax revenues as economic activity grew markedly, and the budget was balanced in five years. President Ronald Reagan employed these same tactics in the early 80s when he

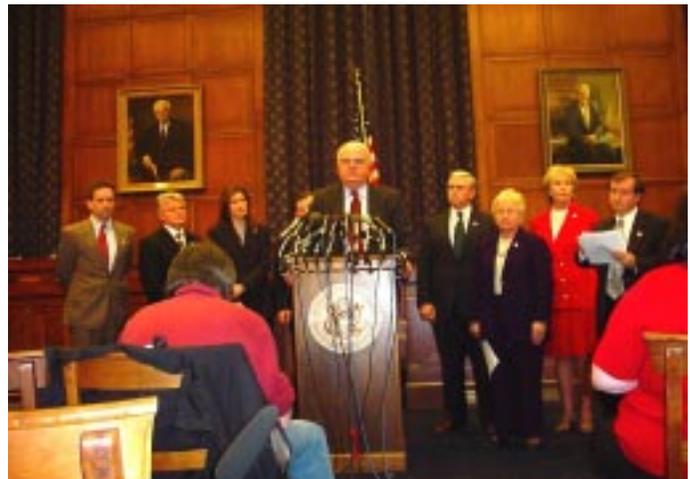
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PROTECTing Our Children

Of the various forms of crime in the world, crimes against children are arguably the most horrific. When a child is reported missing, the entire community comes together to help in the search. We share in the parents' anguish each time we hear about such an incident, and we feel their distress, particularly when it's close to home, as in the case of Alexis Patterson, who disappeared in Milwaukee last year.

Over the last couple of years, the media has reported on missing children cases more frequently, bringing to the national forefront a problem that needed to be addressed by Congress. In the House of Representatives, the Judiciary Committee, which I chair, has worked aggressively to combat child kidnappings and sex crimes against minors. Last year, by an overwhelming, bipartisan vote, the House passed a sweeping bill to do just that. Unfortunately, that legislation died once it reached the then Democrat-con-

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Congressman Sensenbrenner and Members of the House of Representatives hold a Press Conference in March to discuss HR 1104, the Child Abduction Prevention Act. HR 1104, which includes the Amber Alert provisions, was incorporated into the Senate version of the bill, known as the PROTECT Act, and signed into law by the President in April.



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Office Hours and

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Congress Must Fill The Right Prescription

Every time I hold Town Hall Meetings or Office Hours in the district, the conversation invariably turns to the issue of health care, and oftentimes, the role of a prescription drug benefit for folks on Medicare. Well, Congress has long considered adding a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. In fact, in 1988, Congress passed the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act, which provided a prescription drug benefit, but required beneficiaries to foot the bill.

The 1988 bill actually proposed modest and limited reforms that had overwhelming support from the public and interest groups at that time. But shortly after it became law, these modest changes translated to major problems. The initial estimate of the annual cost of the drug benefit went from \$5.7 billion to \$11.8 billion in the span of a year. As soon as the bill was signed into law, it became apparent that implementing it would be complicated because of the various agencies involved. Moreover, the centerpiece of the bill, the new drug benefit, began to pose major problems because it became clear that a complex and expensive administrative system was required to process as many as 300 million claims per year, and monitor about 67,000 pharmacies.

Having already realized that this bill was indeed going to be “catastrophic,” I voted against it. The complicated benefits proposed within this legislation were too difficult to explain and the new Medicare program was doomed to have low participation rates. To its credit, Congress recognized its error and repealed the legislation a year later.

Congress revisited the issue earlier this year, and in the early hours of June 27, passed HR 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act of 2003. This bill, which passed by a one vote margin, provides a prescription drug benefit to all eligible Medicare beneficiaries. Nevertheless, as much as I believe in, and support the idea of helping seniors with a prescription drug plan, I voted against HR 1. This legislation makes even more drastic changes to the Medicare program than the modest reforms that were proposed in the 1988 bill, and it is so fraught with problems, it will not accomplish its goals.

According to the *New York Times*, HR 1 represents “the biggest expansion of Medicare since its creation nearly four decades ago.” The Medicare program is already

overtaxed fiscally, and while proponents of the bill say that the drug benefit will cost \$400 billion over 10 years, this figure is merely an estimate. I believe the \$400 billion will be a floor, rather than a ceiling, and in its present form, HR 1 will lead to the unraveling of the Medicare program, which is an important social safety net for our nation's senior citizens.

As Americans learn more about the details of the bill, they will see that for the most part, private prescription drug plans will be better for Medicare beneficiaries than the options provided under HR 1. But private companies will not be able to compete with the government, and as businesses and employers start dropping them in favor of the less expensive government plan, Medicare beneficiaries will suffer through reduced or insufficient services.

Another concern I have with HR 1 is that it does not allow Americans to purchase prescription drugs from Canada, where they are generally cheaper than in the US. If this provision had been included, it would have helped drive drug prices down, without cost to the taxpayer. Certainly, there are legitimate safety concerns that must be met to allow this

practice, but I support allowing American seniors and others to determine if this option is right for them.

Congress would be well served by taking a look at Wisconsin's SeniorCare Prescription Drug program, where the lowest and middle income people without a health plan get more help

than those seniors who are financially well off. HR 1 fails to follow this successful model.

I have grave concerns about whether the Medicare program will stay afloat once the Baby Boom generation is eligible for Medicare and Social Security. Adding a drug benefit that does not place constraints on future spending would result in massive tax burdens for our children.

America's bureaucratic Medicare structure needs to be reformed -- but it cannot be accomplished by simply throwing money at the problem in the hopes that future Congresses will address the larger problems that will inevitably emerge down the line. As the House and Senate continue their deliberations in a Conference Committee, the conferees need to keep in mind that this is a real problem in need of legitimate, not political, solutions.



PROTECTing Our Children

trolled Senate.

This year, once again, the Judiciary Committee turned to the issue. To ensure that child abductors do not escape justice, on March 12, the House passed a bill nearly identical to the one from last year by a vote of 410 to 14. This bill was then merged with its Senate counterpart, known as the PROTECT Act, and signed into law by President Bush on April 30, 2003.

As a father of two, I can only imagine the suffering endured by a parent when his or her child is snatched by a predator. Of all the issues I have been involved in during my 25 years in Congress, I am particularly proud of my work on this legislation. This law will not only get the word out after kidnappings occur, but it takes strong steps to prevent them from occurring in the first place. The law strengthens penalties against kidnappings and helps law enforcement agencies effectively prevent, investigate, and prosecute crimes against children. It does this because it includes the following measures, which are but a few of the many provisions in this comprehensive legislation:

- Provides a judge with the discretion to extend the term for supervision of released sex offenders up to a maximum of life;
- Extends the statute of limitations for child abductions and sex crimes to the life of the child victim;
- Denies pretrial release for child rapists or child abductors;
- Establishes a national AMBER Alert communications network to facilitate the recovery of abducted children;
- Requires a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment for twice-convicted child sex offenders; and
- Reauthorizes and doubles the annual grant to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to \$20 million each year through 2005.

When a child is abducted, it is absolutely essential to get the word out quickly. But ideally, we would prevent the abduction from occurring in the first place. To do so, we need the provisions of this comprehensive child protection law. This is a proactive law that is aimed at stopping the twisted individuals who would abduct our kids. Success shouldn't just be measured by the abducted children we retrieve, but also by the abductions and molestations we prevent. ■

OFFICE HOURS:

Wednesday, August 27

8:30 a.m. Helenville Fire Hall
 9:15 a.m. Sullivan Village Hall
 10:00 a.m. Palmyra Village Hall
 10:45 a.m. Dousman Village Hall
 11:30 a.m. Genesee Town Hall
 12:15 p.m. Wales Village Hall
 1:45 p.m. Nashotah Village Hall
 2:30 p.m. Merton Town Hall
 3:15 p.m. Merton Village Hall
 4:00 p.m. Pewaukee Village Hall

Thursday, August 28

9:00 a.m. Newburg Village Hall
 9:45 a.m. Fredonia Village Hall
 10:30 a.m. Belgium Village Hall
 11:15 a.m. Saukville Village Hall
 1:30 p.m. River Hills Village Hall
 2:15 p.m. Bayside Village Hall
 3:00 p.m. Fox Point Village Hall

Friday, August 29

9:00 a.m. Butler Village Hall
 9:45 a.m. Lannon Village Hall
 10:30 a.m. Sussex Village Hall
 11:30 a.m. Jackson Village Hall
 1:00 p.m. Addison Town Hall
 2:00 p.m. Kewaskum Village Hall

TOWN HALL MEETINGS:

Wednesday, August 27

7:00 p.m. Brookfield Safety Building

Saturday, September 6

9:00 a.m. West Allis Public Library
 1:00 p.m. Glendale North Shore Library

Saturday, September 13

9:00 a.m. Wauwatosa Public Library
 1:00 p.m. Waukesha Public Library

Sunday, September 14

7:00 p.m. Oconomowoc City Hall

Saturday, September 20

9:00 a.m. Richfield Town Hall
 1:00 p.m. Brown Deer Public Library

Sunday, September 21

12:00 p.m. Johnson Creek Village Hall

Saturday, October 4

9:00 a.m. Delafield Town Hall
 1:00 p.m. Elm Grove Village Hall

Sunday, October 5

7:00 p.m. Menomonee Falls Village Hall

Saturday, October 11

9:00 a.m. Hartford City Hall
 1:00 p.m. Cedarburg Police Dept.

Sunday, October 12

7:00 p.m. Shorewood Village Hall

Saturday, October 25

9:00 a.m. Mequon Safety Building
 1:00 p.m. New Berlin City Hall

Sunday, October 26

1:00 p.m. West Bend City Hall

Town Hall Meetings and Office Hours provide me the chance to hear your views on the issues before Congress or to help you with problems you may be experiencing in dealing with a federal agency. I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting nearest your home. Please contact my district office if you require special accommodations to attend.

FLAGS FLOWN OVER THE US CAPITOL

A new United States flag with a personally signed certificate marking the day it flew over the U.S. Capitol is available at cost (including postage) from my Washington office. If you would like to order, please make your check or money order payable to "**SENSENBRENNER OFFICE SUPPLY ACCOUNT**" and send it along with this order form to the address below. Please allow 4 to 8 weeks for processing and delivery of your order. **Limit 3 per household.**

Number	Size	Price	Total
	3' x 5' nylon	\$17.02	\$
	4' x 6' nylon	\$21.52	\$
	5' x 8' nylon	\$26.02	\$
Grand Total			\$

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 Washington, DC 20515-4905

These prices are guaranteed only through December 2003. After that date, prices are subject to change. Please consult my homepage at www.house.gov/sensenbrenner for the latest prices.

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Cutting Our Taxes

cut taxes to stimulate the economy and create jobs. During his Administration, tax revenues doubled in ten years. Unfortunately, Congress used the escalating tax revenues to increase spending and run up the budget deficit. This fiscal irresponsibility eventually helped cause the economic recession of the early 90s.

I believe it is essential for Congress to exercise fiscal discipline during these shaky economic times. A Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution would guarantee just this by requiring that federal spending not exceed tax revenues except in the case of a war or national emergency. I am a cosponsor of the Balanced Budget Amendment, H.J.Res. 22, and as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over this matter, I hope to expeditiously bring this proposed amendment to the floor of the House.

Additionally, in recognition of my legislative work, I have been a frequent recipient of the Taxpayers' Hero Award from the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, and the Taxpayers' Friend Award from the National Taxpayers Union. Rest assured, I will continue to maintain my reputation as a friend of the taxpayer by striving to cut your taxes, and reduce the size of the federal government. ■

Contact Information:

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