

Wednesday, November 8, 2006

In my travels throughout our community, I often say that Congress decides “who gets what when.” That is what government is about on every level: determining priorities, allocating resources, moving in one direction or the other.

This week, the American people chose a different direction and new priorities. In January, I will be joining a new majority in the House of Representatives. And I’ll continue working hard to put politics aside and move America to the “sensible center.”

Under the old priorities, Congress slashed funding for federal college tuition assistance programs to give a \$2 billion tax cut to the richest oil company executives on earth. Under the new priorities, I’ll work for tax relief for working families so they can afford to send their children to college.

Under the old priorities, Congress would pass resolutions supporting our troops; and then pass budget resolutions underfunding veterans’ health care. Under the new priorities, I’ll work to stop underfunding veterans’ benefits by refusing to overpay Halliburton.

Under the old priorities, oil companies were allowed to draft energy legislation in Congressional and White House offices. Under the new priorities, I’ll continue focusing my efforts challenging America’s companies to unleash their talents and develop a new generation of advanced energy technologies.

What is our task now? To unite Americans behind the new priorities.

These things won’t be easy. The past six years has created an \$8 trillion debt and a fraying fabric of civility in the halls of Congress.

We have no choice but to accept these challenges. As President John Kennedy said in announcing that we would land man on the moon: “We choose to do these things...not because they are easy, but because they are hard...That challenge is one we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to win.”

We must accept these challenges. Not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans. Not to move to the left or the right, but forward. We are heading in a new direction for a better future.

Posted by: SI