



SPONSORED BILLS IN 110TH CONGRESS

CONGRESSWOMAN GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

Immigration/Border Security

Tunnel Enforcement Act (H.R. 4326)

Ensures that there are criminal penalties for using tunnels to smuggle illegal aliens, goods, controlled substances, weapons, or terrorists.

Status: Passed the House as a provision in the final FY 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Act (H.R. 2764), on December 19, 2007, and was signed by the President on December 26, 2007.

Border Security Accountability Act of 2008 (H.R. 5552)

Requires that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) report on a variety of activities, benchmarks and expenditures including: the apprehension, detention, and deportation process and rates; the staffing needs for all border security functions, taking into account threat and vulnerability information pertaining to the borders and the impact of new security programs, policies, and technologies; and training for all border security functions, taking into account new security programs, policies, technologies, and challenges and threats unique to the region and terrain where the trainee will be assigned.

Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Border, Maritime, and Global Counterterrorism.

Innovation Employment Act (H.R. 5630)

Reforms the H-1B visa program by increasing the general H-1B visa cap and uncapping H-1B visas for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) masters or doctoral graduates from U.S. universities who will be working in a STEM job. It also institutes safeguards against fraud and abuse.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Border Health Care Relief Act of 2008 (H.R. 6394)

Extends the program that reimburses states for emergency health services that are provided to undocumented workers through Fiscal Year 2012. Current law providing for these reimbursements expires at the end of FY 2008.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Employee Verification Amendment Act (H.R. 6633)

Reauthorizes the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Basic Pilot electronic employment eligibility verification program, also known as "E-Verify." Without congressional action, E-Verify will expire in November 2008. This legislation provides for a 5-year extension of this voluntary program for the electronic employment verification of employees. It also includes provisions that ensure DHS provides timely reimbursements to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for E-Verify's use of SSA resources. Government Accountability Office investigations into E-Verify's impact on small businesses and its eligibility confirmation process are also authorized.

Status: Passed the House on July 31, 2008 by a vote of 407-2. Pending Senate action.

Military/Veterans

Stop Arming Iran Act (H.R. 1441)

Prohibits the Department of Defense from selling any parts for the F-14 fighter aircraft.

Status: Passed the House on December 12, 2007, in Section 1035 of the conference report for the FY 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4986), which was signed into law on January 28, 2008.

Combat Troops Tax Relief Act (H.R. 3808)

Increases the Standard Tax Deduction by \$1,000 for all members of the Armed Forces who are called up for active duty, and permanently fixes a flaw in the tax code that penalizes our soldiers for serving in combat zones. This provision will allow soldiers to qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Care Tax Credit—affecting as many as 10,000 soldiers currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Status: The EITC provision passed the House as part of H.R. 3997, the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act on November 6, 2007, and was signed into law as part of H.R. 6081 on June 16, 2008.

National Security Culture and Language Training Act (H.R. 6037)

Would provide the Secretary of Defense with the authority to establish an incentive bonus to encourage individuals in officer training programs such as the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and the service academies to engage in the study of “critical” foreign languages and cultural education.

Status: Important provisions were included in the FY 2009 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 5658) that passed the House on May 22, 2008. Pending in the Senate.

Solar Energy

Solar Energy Research and Advancement Act of 2007 (H.R. 2774)

- Creates a research and development program into thermal energy storage technologies for concentrating solar power (CSP),
- Conducts a report regarding the integration of concentrating solar power plants and regional electricity transmission systems, including how to send electricity from high solar resource areas (such as Arizona) to areas with less solar power,
- Analyzes how to reduce the amount of water consumed by concentrating solar power systems; and
- Creates a program to create and strengthen solar industry workforce training and internship programs in order to ensure that current and future employees obtain the necessary skills to install, operate and maintain solar energy products.

Status: Passed the House in H.R. 6, the Energy Independence and Security Act on December 18, 2007 and was signed into law on December 19, 2007.

Renewable Energy Assistance Tax Act (H.R. 3807)

- Extends the 30% commercial solar property and residential investment tax credit for eight years,
- Extends the existing energy-efficient appliance credit and extend this credit for three years (through the end of 2010), and
- Extends the energy-efficient doors, windows, and insulation consumer tax credit for eight years.

Status: Provisions have passed the House four times: in H.R. 2776 on August 4, 2007; in H.R. 6 on December 6, 2007; in H.R. 5351 on February 27, 2008; and in H.R. 6049 on May 21, 2008.

Energy

Diesel Tax Parity Act (H.R. 6487)

Lowers the federal diesel tax from 24.3 cents a gallon to the same tax rate as gasoline, 18.3 cents a gallon through the end of 2008 while protecting the federal Highway Trust Fund.

Status: Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Conservation/Natural Resources

Arizona National Scenic Trail Act (H.R. 2297)

Amends the National Trail Systems Act of 1968 to designate the Arizona Trail a National Scenic Trail.

Status: Hearing on H.R. 2297 held in the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands on July 15, 2008.

Sierra Vista Subwatershed Feasibility Study Act (H.R. 3328)

Authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, through the Commissioner of Reclamation, to complete a feasibility study of alternatives to augment water supplies in the Sierra Vista Subwatershed.

Status: Referred to the House Subcommittee on Water and Power on August 8, 2007.

Las Cienegas Enhancement and Saguaro National Park Boundary Adjustment Act (H.R. 3617)

Adds nearly 2,400 acres to Las Cienegas National Conservation Area and 160 acres to Saguaro National Park.

Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands on September 24, 2007.

The Levee-like Structures Consideration Act (H.R. 4050)

Requires FEMA to create a process for considering the effects of levee-like structures when revising or updating flood maps.

Status: Passed the Committee on Financial Services on December 4, 2007, but the issue was resolved through negotiations with FEMA.

Health

Safe and Effective Drug Development Act of 2007 (H.R. 2592)

Creates and funds public-private partnerships between the FDA and universities or non-profits to work on drug safety. These partnerships expand the FDA's 'Critical Path Initiative' by working to solve the problems facing drug safety and new drug development, and the research areas that provide the greatest opportunities for rapid improvement and public health benefits. These partners will modernize the medical product development sciences, accelerate innovation and enhance safety.

Status: Adopted as an amendment to the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act (H.R. 3580) in the Energy and Commerce Committee on June 21, 2007. It was signed into law by President Bush on September 27, 2007.

Education

Establishing the William H. Rehnquist Center at the University of Arizona (H.R. 4225)

Establishes the William H. Rehnquist Center on the Constitutional Structures of Government at the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers School of Law.

Status: Referred to the Committees on Education and Labor and the Judiciary.

Other

Honor the International Year of Astronomy (H. CON. RES. 375)

Honors the goal of the International Year of Astronomy (IYA) to celebrate astronomical discoveries and encourages the public to participate in IYA celebrations and activities, and discover more about the Universe and the science of astronomy. The Resolution also applauds the efforts of the employees, centers, and laboratories of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) in promoting public understanding of the astronomical sciences during the IYA celebration.

Status: Unanimously passed the House on July 9, 2008.

Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month (H. Res. 339)

Designates May as "Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month" and encourages motorcycle riders to always wear helmets and other protective gear, to never drink and ride, and to be properly licensed and trained. It also serves as a reminder to all riders and motorists to always share the road respectfully.

Status: Unanimously passed the House on May 21, 2008.

National Day of the Cowboy (H. Res. 984)

Officially designates the "National Day of the Cowboy" on July 26, 2008, and encourages Americans to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Status: Unanimously passed the House on July 14, 2008.