
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



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House Fails to Pass a Real Energy Bill

This week, the House passed a bill that unfortunately fails to address the need for American energy independence. Although 80 to 88 percent of our nation's oil reserves are located within 50 miles of the coastline, the measure prohibits coastal states from drilling within this range. Furthermore, oil deposits off the coast of Southern California alone total more than the entire amount of oil off the East Coast. Over 97 percent of this oil rests within 50 miles from the California coastline and would be permanently unavailable under this bill. In addition, this legislation does not allow individual states to share in the revenues from oil producing wells off their coast, thereby denying states any meaningful incentive to allow drilling. Lastly, the bill does not expand refinery capacity, nuclear power, or clean coal, all elements of the Republican plan to free America from the grasp of foreign oil. Congressman Miller adamantly opposed this bill and will continue to work with his colleagues until Congress can provide relief to high gas prices and produce a commonsense plan for America's energy future.

Metrolink Commuter Train Crashes in Southern California

Last Friday, a Metrolink commuter train collided with a Union Pacific freight train in Chatsworth killing 25 people and injuring dozens more. Congressman Miller's thoughts and prayers are with the crash victims, their families, and the brave first responders that helped with rescue efforts. The accident took place on tracks that are owned, maintained, and controlled by Metrolink. As the National Transportation Safety Board continues its investigation, Congressman Miller will continue to work on the Railroad Subcommittee to ensure both the freight and the commuter railroads have the tools necessary to safely share tracks throughout the Southern California region.

House Passes Rollback of Restrictive D.C. Gun Laws

Congressman Miller was proud to join his colleagues in passing legislation this week that would repeal the District of Columbia's strict gun laws that prevent citizens from owning a functional firearm in their home. This legislation falls in line with the historic *District of Columbia v. Heller* decision in which the Supreme Court held for the first time in history that the Constitution grants an individual the fundamental right to own a gun. This bill, the National Capital Security and Safety Act, would restore the rights of D.C. citizens to own a firearm within the confines of their home. Congressman Miller has always been a staunch defender of the Second Amendment and will continue to use his voice in Congress to support citizens' right to bear arms.

Open Enrollment Season for Medicare Part D

Congressman Miller would like to issue a reminder that open enrollment season will soon begin for Medicare beneficiaries to join or change their Medicare Part D plan. Open season will run from November 15 – December 31, 2008 and the changes will be effective January 1, 2009. Medicare Part D is a federal prescription drug program for Medicare beneficiaries and offers a variety of options. For questions regarding Medicare Part D, please visit Medicare's website at <http://www.medicare.gov>, call 1-800-MEDICARE, or call Congressman Miller's Brea office at (714) 257-1142.