

National Do Not Call List

I understand the headaches telemarketers can cause. The flood of constant calls, often at inconvenient times, has become a problem for more and more people. That is why Congress passed legislation enabling the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to establish the "Do Not Call" registry to help millions of Americans limit these unwanted disturbances.

Despite some legal challenges, the FTC has been cleared to move forward with implementing this common sense measure. The registry allows consumers to legally deny telemarketers the right to contact personal numbers, including cellular phones. It is important to remember the registry will stop most, but not all, telemarketing calls. Political organizations,



**NATIONAL
DO NOT CALL
REGISTRY**

charities, telephone surveyors or companies with which you have an existing business relationship are exempt from the new rule. But you may ask an exempted organization not to call you again, a request they must honor.

Millions of Americans are tired of receiving unwelcome solicitations and it is time to limit these disturbances. I will work to make sure the FTC and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) continue to have the resources they need to maintain and enforce the Do Not Call registry.

Please visit www.donotcall.gov or call 1-888-382-1222 to register.

Economy, continued

months. Manufacturing had been in a slump since the stock market and investment declines that began in 2000. The sector was especially hard hit by the investment declines because much manufacturing is devoted to production of capital goods. Fortunately, the tax policy changes passed by Congress have encouraged investment, leading to this expansion in the manufacturing arena. In addition, the rise in the new orders index and the low level of inventories suggest that future increases in manufacturing activity are likely.

All the economic data emerging today indicates a climate conducive to more investment, job growth, and economic expansion. In recent months we have seen growth that far exceeded expectations and we are witnessing daily improvement in financial markets. The economic policies passed by this Congress and the Bush administration have helped make these improvements possible and I will continue to support pro-growth legislation to ensure the American economy makes a full recovery.

To receive email updates and newsletters, please go to www.adamputnam.house.gov or fill out the following information and mail to Congressman Adam H. Putnam:

506 Cannon House Office Building

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing Congress next year?

Controlling federal spending _____

Fighting the war on terrorism _____

Making last year's tax cuts permanent _____

Enacting the budget on time _____

Please check the newsletters you would like to receive:

- Seniors
- Small Business
- Veterans
- Agriculture
- Social Issues
- All Newsletters



Congressman Adam H. Putnam

Contact Information

Washington
506 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
p. 202-225-1252

Florida
650 East Davidson Street
Bartow, FL 33830
p. 863-534-3530

Hotline
1-866-534-5350

In This Issue

The War on Terror	1
Medicare Reform	1
Economy	2
Veterans	3
National Do Not Call	4

2003 End of the Year Review 108th Congress First Session Bringing Stability to Iraq

Since 9/11, the United States has been a nation at war. Iraq has emerged as the central front in the war on terror, and our forces, as well as Coalition forces, have worked diligently towards a lasting security for the Middle East and the U.S.

It has become evident that failure to eradicate terrorism leaves us vulnerable to future acts of terror. Though the U.S. and our Coalition partners have been successful in removing those governments who support terror and terrorist tactics, it is critical to ensure that the liberated people of Iraq establish a nation that no longer serves as an incubator for terrorism, but instead becomes a stronghold of democracy.

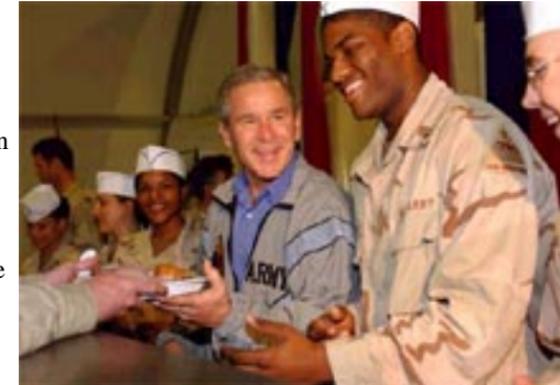
The seeds of democracy are taking root, and the Iraqi people are moving closer towards a self-government that can help bring peace and stability to a region dominated by dictatorships, violence and poverty.

While this process will not happen overnight, significant progress is being made, and our resolve to accomplish these tasks must be firm. As Presi-

dent Bush aptly put it when he shared Thanksgiving dinner with our troops in Iraq: "We did not charge hundreds of miles into the heart of Iraq, pay a bitter cost in casualties, defeat a brutal dictator and liberate 25 million people only to retreat before a band of thugs and assassins."

Major Accomplishments Since Liberation:

Government
Iraqis of all social levels are coming together to make decisions for themselves and their future. They are serving in city councils, district councils, and village advisory boards. More than half of the entire population is repre-



President Bush shares Thanksgiving with troops stationed in Iraq.

resented in over 200 neighborhood advisory councils that have been set up by citizens to communicate their concerns and needs to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).

In an effort to establish a democratic government, a governing council was formed in July consisting of highly qualified interim cabinet ministers who were

continued page 3

Congress Approves Prescription Drug Benefit in Medicare

This year, Congress has made tremendous progress towards modernizing and strengthening Medicare. The Medicare reform legislation passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bush is a tremendous step forward in improving the health and lives of older Americans. This legislation will modernize Medicare and provide a prescription drug benefit for all seniors in Medicare that is affordable and voluntary. For the first time in history, it will provide all of Florida's nearly 3 million beneficiaries with access to a Medi-

care prescription drug benefit. I want to applaud the AARP, the American Association of Retired Persons, the largest senior organization in the nation, representing more than 35 million of our seniors, for endorsing this bill. The AARP has proven themselves at the forefront of caring for America's seniors.

Better Choices Under Medicare

If seniors have better choices under Medicare,

continued page 2

For more information or to sign up for upcoming newsletters, please visit www.adamputnam.house.gov

Jobs & Growth Package Stimulates Economy

A series of recent economic indicators demonstrate that America's economy is gaining strength, and President Bush's jobs and growth agenda is working. These are encouraging signs for America's workers, families, manufacturers and small businesses.

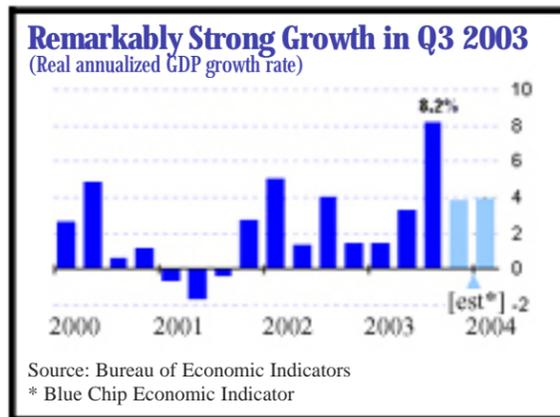
During the third quarter of this year, America's economy grew at the strongest rate in almost 20 years, rocketing to 8.2 percent growth in GDP. Meanwhile, the value of U.S. stock markets has increased by roughly \$2 trillion since January 2003. Economists credit this growth to the tax reductions and rebate plan that put more money in the pockets of American families this year. Due to the productivity of the American worker and the policies we have enacted in the House of Representatives, consumers are spending more, businesses are expanding and the American economy is on the road to recovery.

Because of pro-growth and job creation policies, Americans are getting back to work. Nearly 300,000 jobs have been created over the last three months, for a total jobs gain of over a quarter million. The economy created 126,000 jobs alone in October. Also, initial claims for unemployment insurance are down.

While these recent economic signs are encouraging, I will not be satisfied until every American looking for work can find a job.

Our policies have fostered a climate for greater economic growth, bringing economic activity to a higher level and increasing incomes and living standards for all American workers. This type of economic expansion is critical to job creation. Historically, substantial job creation occurs when the economy expands at a rate of at least 5%. I am confident that the latest GDP news indicates that more quality jobs are on the way.

I am especially encouraged to see growth in the manufacturing area. For the first time since the fall

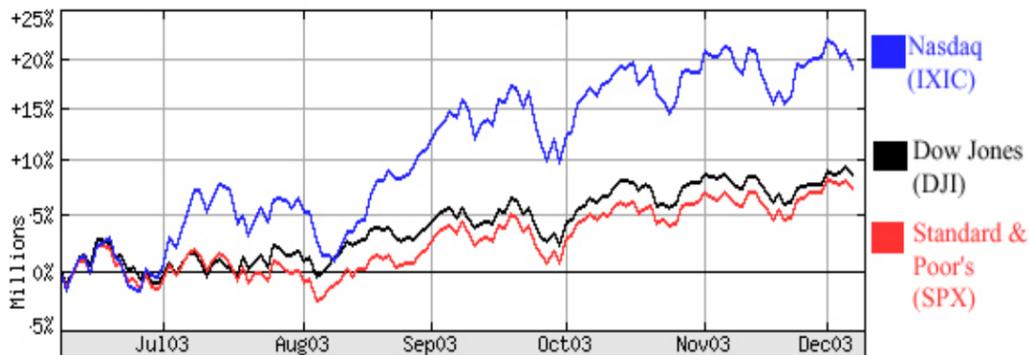


of 2000, the Manufacturing Employment Index has expanded. According to the Institute for Supply Management (ISM), "the manufacturing sector enjoyed its best month since December 1983," and has been expanding for 5

continued page 4

Stock Market Shows Improvement

7/03 - 12/03



Medicare, continued

health plans will compete for their business by offering better coverage at more affordable prices. This plan includes the choice of making no change at all. I understand that some seniors don't want to change, and that's an option too.

Help for Seniors without Drug Coverage

For seniors without any drug coverage now, this legislation will make a huge difference. In return for a monthly premium of about \$35, seniors now without coverage would see their drug bills cut roughly in half. Seniors with no drug coverage now and monthly drug costs of \$200 a month would save more than \$1,700 on drug costs each year. In addition, this legislation allows for limited drug remimportation from Canada.

Prescription Drug Discount Card

This legislation will produce immediate savings for millions of seniors

and real reform to Medicare. For 2004 and 2005, all seniors will be eligible for a Medicare-approved drug discount card that saves between 10 to 25 percent off the cost of their medicines immediately. In 2006, the full Medicare benefit will be implemented.

Employers Encouraged to Continue Benefits for Retirees

Congress wanted to ensure that the prescription drug coverage provided to many retirees by their employers is not undermined. This legislation encourages employers to continue benefits, while also extending drug coverage to the millions of Medicare beneficiaries who now

lack it.

For more information, please call 1-800-MEDICARE.

For a Senior currently spending \$2500 annually:

Out of Pocket Costs	Seniors who spend more will have greater savings.
\$35 a month premium.....\$420	
\$250 Deductible.....\$250	
20% of \$1,625.....\$325	
Total out of pocket costs.....\$995	
Total Savings.....\$1,505	60% Savings

The War on Terror, continued

appointed to run the day-to-day operations of government agencies until national elections can be held. The governing council has made great progress in the last six months, including joining the Arab League, participating in OPEC meetings and addressing the UN General Assembly. Locally, there are municipal councils in all major cities and 85 percent of towns, enabling Iraqis to take responsibility for management of local matters like healthcare, water, and electricity. In 2004, a Transitional Assembly will assume full governing power, and once the Constitution is written and a government is elected, sovereignty will be given to the Iraqi people.

Education

Iraqi children are now served by a modernized educational system, which is in the process of renovating and rehabilitating of over 6,000 schools. Seventy-two million new textbooks, over 1 million school kits with essential schools supplies, and over 64,000 secondary teachers have been included in the reconstruction of their educational system. These essential renovations and supplies have allowed nearly all Iraqi children to finish their exams from last year and have them ready to start a new school year in the fall.

Economy

Iraq's economy is being built on the principles of free market economics. This is evident in the increase in privately owned stores, restaurants and businesses. A 100,000 jobs program was launched in Mosul in late November, 2003, and to date nearly 20,000 Iraqis are now employed through the National Employment Program. Iraq will receive up to \$170 million from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to fund micro and small businesses on a commercial basis through financial intermediaries. Additionally, a unified currency for Iraq was created, the Iraqi Dinar (ID), which has maintained its value against the dollar, preserving the dinar-dominated savings of Iraqi citizens.

Healthcare

Iraq has seen dramatic improvements in its healthcare system, with a focus on immunizations, disease surveillance, and treatment of illnesses. More than half of all Iraqi children under 5 have already been vaccinated, with 20,000 receiving required vaccinations each month. Under Saddam Hussein, healthcare was available only for Ba'athist elite, but is now available to all Iraqis.

The Future

Outside observers and coalition leaders agree that much remains to be done to restore order and bring prosperity to a brutalized society with an infrastructure suffering from decades of neglect. The steps toward sovereignty and democracy are difficult and require patience and time. Substantial progress is being made on all fronts, but as President Bush recently stated, the "success of a free Iraq will ... demonstrate to other countries in that region that national prosperity and dignity are found in representative government and free institutions.... As freedom advances in the Middle East, those societies will be less likely to produce ideologies of hatred and produce recruits for terror."

Our enemies are closely monitoring our actions in Iraq. They are hopeful that we will waiver, that we will cut and run. They would most certainly seize such an opportunity, and the Coalition forces must ensure that the terrorists of the world cannot attack our nation or other free people again. As we continue to fight terrorism, the movement toward a free and peaceful Iraq continues to grow and prosper, and this transformation is providing all of us a safer, more secure nation and world.

Concurrent Receipt: Historic Breakthrough for Veterans

For more than 100 years, military retirees have been prohibited from receiving their full retirement pay when they were also in receipt of VA disability compensation payments. Under the Department of Defense Authorization legislation that recently passed Congress and was signed into law by the President, the prohibition on concurrent receipt of disability compensation and military retirement pay will be phased out for every disabled veteran wounded in combat or incurring combat related injuries, including National Guard and reserve members, and every veteran whose disabilities are rated 50% or greater.

This bill, which has the support of our nation's service organizations, will result in more than \$22 billion going directly into the pockets of hundreds of thousands of military retirees who were injured or made ill as a result of their service. For a 100% disabled veteran eligible with a military retirement pension, this could mean as much as \$167,000 in additional benefits over the next ten years.

The new law provides concurrent receipt for many veterans: **Purple Heart** - continues to provide full concurrent receipt to all purple heart veterans



Congressman Putnam meets with Retired Army Corporal James Perkins at Dennison Middle School to discuss veterans issues on Veterans' Day.

who are retired after 20 years and who have a VA disability rating between 10% and 100%. **Combat-Related Special Compensation** - Under current law, combat-related special compensation (CRSC) veterans 60% disabled and above have full concurrent receipt through the

Purple Heart Plus plan for disabilities related to combat situations. The new law expands full concurrent receipt to all CRSC veterans with a VA disability rating of 10% - 100%.

National Guard and Reservists - Very few retired reservists and national guardsmen now qualify under current law for the Purple Heart or CRSC concurrent receipt. The new law removes this barrier and extends full concurrent receipt to all retired national guard and reservists (10 - 100% disabled) who are Purple Heart recipients, or who are CRSC qualified.

Remaining Military Retirees - Under current law, none of the remaining military retirees receive concurrent receipt. The new law establishes full concurrent receipt to the most disabled military retirees 50% disabled and above (50 - 100% disabled).

I am pleased that Congress has taken this important step to provide concurrent receipt for our nation's veterans. Under this plan, those veterans that need help the most will receive it.