



**Congresswoman Nancy Boyda  
Kansas Second Congressional District  
2007 & 2008 Summary**

# Table of Contents

## **I. Biography**

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## **II. The Top Ten Things Wrong With Washington – And How to Fix Them**

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## **III. County-By-County Visits and Accomplishments**

When I was sworn into Congress, I knew that my top priority must be to stay in touch with constituents. Only by hearing about the day-to-day concerns of Kansans could I hope to avoid "going Washington." I worked to stay in touch with Kansas by returning home nearly every weekend, participating in nearly 500 public events, and hosting 58 *Congress on Your Corners* throughout the Kansas Second District.

## **IV. Constituent Services**

I refer to constituent service as "customer service," and I believe it is of the highest priority. From helping veterans obtain the medical care they have earned, to ensuring that seniors receive their Social Security benefits, to assisting farmers struck by natural disasters, my office helped literally thousands of constituents since January of 2007. My staff and I work for Kansans, and we don't forget it for a minute.

## **I. Biography**

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## Biography of Congresswoman Nancy Boyda

Congresswoman Nancy Boyda represents the Kansas Second Congressional District, which includes Topeka, Leavenworth, Manhattan, and most of northeast and southeast Kansas.

Nancy graduated with honors from William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, where she received dual degrees in chemistry and education. She began her career in 1978 working as an analytical chemist and field inspector for the Environmental Protection Agency. Over the next two decades, she held management positions in several pharmaceutical companies, including Marion Laboratories.

Nancy has developed a reputation as a common-sense fiscal conservative willing to reach across party lines to solve today's most pressing problems.

The *Kansas City Star* described her as "an outspoken advocate for reform at home and wiser policies abroad" who "speaks forcefully against wasteful federal spending."



The *Parsons Sun* wrote, "All of a sudden the 2nd District of Kansas [has gone] from having obscure representation to being up front in the national news on a regular basis. The impact of Congresswoman Boyda is impressive to the point of being staggering."

And the *Topeka Capital-Journal* has credited Nancy with "rebuilding trust" in Washington, saying, "Boyda's first 100 days in the House [were] remarkable.... Boyda had barely figured out how to maneuver the maze of marble hallways on Capitol Hill when she hit the limelight with a bill stripping members of Congress of taxpayer-funded pensions if convicted of a felony. She authored a bill requiring forfeiture of pensions upon conviction for bribery, conspiracy and perjury. It passed the House unanimously."

Nancy's first priority is to directly serve her constituents through her two district offices. Her other priorities include drawing upon her pharmaceutical industry experience to help rein in America's skyrocketing prescription drug prices; advocating for the Second District's three military bases; and, passing strong ethics reform laws to reduce the influence of the billion-dollar lobbying industry.

Nancy lives in Topeka with her husband, Steve Boyda, a former Marshall County Attorney and Marine Corps veteran. She is the mother of two children and five stepchildren and attends Countryside United Methodist Church in Topeka.

## **II. The Top Ten Things Wrong With Washington – And How to Fix Them**

As my first year in Congress drew to a close, I was invited to host *The Jim Cates Show*, a talk radio program in Topeka. For three hours on the morning of December 3, 2007, I took calls from listeners and shared what I saw as the ten biggest problems with Washington, D.C. today. This section summarizes those problems, describes how I have tried to help fix them, and highlights the hard work that remains to be done.

## 10. **CAPITOL HILL IS AN ETHICAL SWAMP**

***The problem:** A recent national poll asked Americans whether they trusted Congress. Only 14% answered "yes" – fewer than the number who trusted HMOs, unions, or Big Business. Why do Americans have so little faith in Congress? Probably because, for so many years, Congress has done so little to earn their trust. Politicians who committed federal crimes still received generous, taxpayer-funded pensions. Lobbyists wined and dined lawmakers with almost no limits. Capitol Hill embraced a culture of corruption.*

- **In my first month in office, I authored the Pension Forfeiture Act.** H.R. 476 strips the pension of any Member of Congress who commits any of a number of federal crimes in the course of his official duties. Consider Congressman Bob Ney, who is serving 30 months in federal prison for bribery. Because he committed his crime before my law took effect, he will receive a \$33,000 annual pension upon his retirement. Every penny will come straight out of taxpayers' wallets. My Pensions Forfeiture Act ends this. It passed the House of Representatives unanimously, and the president recently signed it into law.
- **On my first day in office, I voted for a sweeping ethics reform package, H.Res. 6.** The reform package:
  - Ended the K-Street Project by forbidding any Member from influencing, on the basis of partisan political affiliation, any employment decision or practice of any private entity.
  - Prohibited Members from accepting any gift of value from lobbyists or their agents, including privately funded travel.
  - Improved transparency in fundraising.

Also included in the ethics package was the so-called "toothpick rule," which prohibits lobbyists from treating lawmakers to lavish, lengthy meals. Lobbyists can now pay only for appetizers – the sort of foods you eat from a toothpick while standing up. The idea that *toothpicks* will change Washington might sound silly, but this is actually an important reform. No longer can lobbyists buy a lawmaker's full attention for the whole dinner hour; now, they have only a few moments at a reception. It is a small but meaningful step toward cleaning up Congress.

- **I broke party lines to vote for the Lobbying Transparency Act of 2007.** H.R. 2317 requires registered lobbyists to issue quarterly reports on their contributions to lawmakers. To me, it simply makes sense that this new transparency will help hold government accountable.

**Many further reforms remain desperately needed.** The House Ethics Committee is far too weak; it needs more power and more independence. We must also strengthen restrictions against retired lawmakers lobbying their former colleagues. Until these changes are made, the American people are never going to trust their Members of Congress.

## 9. ***D.C. KICKS YOU WHILE YOU'RE DOWN***

***The problem:*** *Too many lawmakers view taxpayers as their personal piggy banks. They don't think twice about asking taxpayers to write a check for a "Bridge to Nowhere" or having the American people pay for their families' health care. And hard-working, middle-class Kansans can't find help from Washington if they're struggling to pay winter utility bills or unable to afford health care for their kids. Congress has passed several bills this session to help the middle-class, but the President has pulled out his veto stamp each and every time.*

- **I authored legislation to permanently cut taxes on military families.** The Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act, H.R. 6081, won unanimous approval and included my language to permanently end the "Soldier Tax" – a restriction on the eligibility of military families to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). This legislation became Public Law 110-245 in June of 2008.
- **I supported H.R. 2764, the landmark 2008 Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill.** Congress fell just two votes short of overriding the president's veto of this legislation. The final omnibus appropriations bill that passed in its place will cut actual funding for many programs important to Kansans. Compared to fiscal year 2007, some of the actual dollar funding cuts for FY08 are:
  - Head Start: \$11M cut
  - Vocational Education (Carl Perkins Grants): \$21M cut
  - Safe and Drug-Free Schools: \$52M cut
  - National Health Service Corps (Rural Doctors and Nurses): \$3M cut
  - Math / Science Teacher Education Partnerships: \$3M cut
  - Funding to States for Unemployment Insurance Offices: \$40M cut
  - Retraining for Dislocated Workers: \$7M cut
  - Healthy Start Prenatal Care: \$2M cut
  - National Service Corps (AmeriCorps): \$28M cut

Expect our state budget to be pinched by these cuts, as well as by several others not listed.

- **I co-sponsored H.R. 549, the Teacher Tax Relief Act.** Teachers often spend hundreds of their hard-earned dollars each year on supplies for their students. Current law provides a \$250 tax deduction for educators who spend personal funds on student supplies. Unfortunately, that deduction is set to expire. The bill I co-sponsored would not only extend the tax relief but expand the deduction to \$400 per year.
- **Rep. Baron Hill and I co-sponsored legislation to provide motorists relief from exorbitant gasoline prices.** Gasoline continues to hit all time highs, yet a significant fraction of the price you pay at the pump goes to Washington through the gas tax. H.R. 2480, the Gas Price Relief Act, would pay the federal gas tax from Big Oil subsidies any time prices soar above three dollars

per gallon. This would save motorists 17 cents on every gallon of gas. It would also protect Highway funding by ending some subsidies for the five Big Oil Companies.

- **I supported H.R. 5749, The Emergency Extended Unemployment Compensation Act.** There is no question that the current ailing economy is impacting our Kansas families. Four percent of Kansas workers are currently without paychecks. H.R. 5749 provides unemployed individuals up to an additional 13 weeks of income while they continue to look for work. At a time of rising gas and food prices, this legislation gives them at least a fighting chance to stay afloat. In addition, economists say that extending unemployment benefits during a recession actually stimulates the economy.

## 8. **WASHINGTON IS OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE HEARTLAND**

*The problem: This is actually two problems in one. The first is that Washington is out of touch, period. The second is that lawmakers from the coasts – from New York and New Jersey and California – don't know or care what life is like in Middle American places like Kansas. Many don't even know what's going on in their own districts. Mostly, they just stay in Washington, trapped inside the beltway.*

- **I have made a concerted effort to avoid “going Washington” and to remain in close contact with my constituents.** While many Representatives only return to their districts a few times a year, I return home nearly every weekend. Only by hearing about the day-to-day concerns of Kansans could I hope to avoid “going Washington.” Since I took office in January 2007, I have worked to stay in touch with Kansans by participating in nearly 500 public events and hosting 58 Congress on Your Corners throughout the Second District of Kansas. I appeared on a local radio talk show monthly and made it a priority to respond to constituent calls. Staying in touch with Kansans in my highest priority.
- **I declined to accept the Congressional health care plan.** I felt it would be hypocritical to take advantage of a plan that would have insured my whole family for under \$300 a month at a time when, for so many Kansans, insurance costs well over a thousand dollars per month.
- **I am fighting in Congress to support heartland biofuels and wind energy.** There is no more clear-cut example of Washington turning its back on the heartland than the Energy Independence and Security Act. In its original form, H.R. 6 included an innovative provision to end America's dependence on foreign oil and support fuels harvested primarily in the Midwest. The legislation would have stripped billions of dollars in tax subsidies to the five major oil companies and instead directed those funds to renewable energy, such as biodiesel, ethanol, wind, and solar power.

I was proud to twice vote for versions of the bill that included these provisions. At the end of the day, however, the Senate caved in to Big Oil lobbying pressure and stripped the tax provisions – allowing wind energy tax credits to expire in 2008. The result was a watered-down bill that invests in Middle East instead of the Midwest.

## 7. **LAWMAKERS PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK WITH THE FEDERAL BUDGET**

*The problem:* Every single Member of Congress can request taxpayer dollars – earmarks – for special projects in their communities. At their best, earmarks help make the federal government more responsive to citizens. Earmarks allow representatives of each American community to have a voice in directing federal funds, rather than leaving all of the decisions to some bureaucrat in D.C. But at their worst, earmarks are pork-barrel giveaways, hashed out in back-room deals like the "Bridge to Nowhere" in Alaska. Taxpayers should know exactly how lawmakers want to spend your money.

- **I was the first representative in Kansas history to make public my requests on the Internet.** You can view them on my website at [www.boyda.house.gov](http://www.boyda.house.gov).

A few other Members of Congress have followed suit. But most – about 90% of Congress, including four of the six members of the Kansas delegation – have not.

- **I have advocated for requiring *all* representatives to post their earmark requests online.** The lack of transparency in the earmarking process today is the number one reason why earmarks have exploded out of control. Taxpayers deserve to know how Members of Congress want to spend their money. I introduced a bill to require all Members to post their earmark requests on their websites within 24 hours of making the request.

## 6. **D.C. HAS ABANDONED OUR KIDS**

*The problem: Politicians love to talk about "helping the children." They'll kiss babies for the camera, but when it comes time to follow words with deeds, they just fall short. Last year, a Kansas man who was found guilty of possessing child pornography walked free. Why? Because Congress wrote a needlessly vague law, leaving it unclear as to whether use of the internet qualified as interstate commerce. Lawmakers opened a jurisdictional loophole, a clever lawyer exploited it, and a guilty man walked free.*

- **I authored H.R. 4120, the Effective Prosecution of Child Pornography Act.** The legislation won unanimous approval to close the gaping loophole once and for all. In November of 2007, the bill passed the House of Representatives. The Senate then packaged my bill with H.R. 4136 which was approved by both chambers in September of 2008 and signed into law shortly thereafter. That's good news, but Congress should have done the job right the first time. It shouldn't be this hard to keep our kids safe from child predators.

Much more work remains to be done to keep our kids safe online. We need to require sex offenders to register their e-mail addresses with the National Sex Offender Registry. We must support the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. We must clean up video games – the biggest pastime for many kids. Until Washington takes these steps, our kids will remain needlessly at risk.

- **I fought for health coverage for tens of thousands of Kansas kids who lack health insurance.** For the last decade, the State Children's Health Insurance Program has provided cost-effective coverage for children. This bipartisan program was established by a Republican Congress and signed into law by a Democratic president.

During the Congressional debate on children's health insurance, over 800 Kansans wrote to urge me to vote to renew SCHIP. Two renewal bills passed Congress, and both received support from Republicans and Democrats in the Kansas delegation. Unfortunately, the President vetoed both bills – jeopardizing the health of 47,000 Kansas children. I will continue to fight for this important program.

- **I strongly supported the College Cost Reduction Act, a bill to make college dramatically more affordable for Kansas students.** Among the provisions of H.R. 2669 is an increase in the maximum Pell Grant by \$490 in 2008 and by \$1,350 over the next five years. The bill also expands eligibility for Pell Grants by increasing the annual income threshold. And it cuts in half the interest rates for federal student loans, saving the average Kansas student approximately \$4,420 over the life of his loan. Combined, the Pell Grant increases and loan rate cuts will help approximately 52,000 Kansans every year.

The College Cost Reduction Act was the largest federal investment in higher

education since the GI Bill. Its total support for Kansas students is projected to reach \$282,419,000 over the next five years.

## 5. ***POLITICIANS USE, THEN ABUSE, OUR VETS***

***The problem:*** *Our Veterans Administration system is overburdened and underfunded. Right now, around 150,000 Americans are serving in Iraq. Thousands more are serving in Afghanistan. Although Kansans may have differing opinions about the war in Iraq, we are united in agreeing that these soldiers are America's heroes. But as these troops return home, many find they are shuffled around in the train wreck of a poorly funded VA system. No veteran should have to wait months or years for the care they need. Taking care of our veterans is part of the cost of war.*

- **I pushed hard to stop the bleeding caused by inadequate funding for the VA.** Shortly after I was sworn into office, Congress appropriated \$5.2 billion in emergency appropriations for the Veterans Administration. Unfortunately, Democrats had no help from the other side of the aisle. Some Republicans even referred to this critical investment in the VA as "pork."
- **I fought for a record-size down payment toward meeting veterans' future needs.** The 2007 veterans' health care funding bill, H.R. 2206, was the largest single-year funding increase in the history of the VA. It exceeded the President's budget request by \$4 billion.

I also supported a proposed a \$6.7 billion increase in funding for the VA in 2008. It is nothing short of shocking that \$3.8 billion was cut out of the final appropriations bill. Republicans should have joined Democrats in standing up to the President for the desperately needed funding.

- **I co-sponsored a stronger G.I. Bill to give veterans the education they deserve.** The original G.I. Bill launched millions of families on a course of prosperity and toward achieving the America Dream. However, veterans' education benefits plunged to only 60 percent of the cost of public-school education. The New G.I. Bill restores benefits to cover the costs of a four-year education at the level of the most expensive in-state public school.

In March of this year, I sent out a request to my Veteran's Military Affairs Advisory Committee asking for suggested improvements to the GI Bill. I was an original co-sponsor of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (H.R. 5740), legislation which included many provisions incorporated into the Supplemental Appropriations Act (H.R. 2642). The New GI Bill will allow veterans in Kansas to be eligible for up to an additional \$16,986,093 in education benefits next year alone!

- **I asked the tough questions about the lack of benefits provided to our veterans.** Just this past May, I visited the Wichita VA Regional Office and met with officials about the current backlog of claims. While these questions were critical, we had a very healthy discussion and came to a better understanding of the challenges faced by the VA. The VA has promised to work diligently to correct the problems in order to decrease the backlog.

#### 4. ***CAPITOL HILL IS GAMBLING WITH NATIONAL SECURITY***

***The problem:*** *Our military readiness is stretched dangerously thin. Congress has no higher duty than protecting Americans. But right now, our nation's security is at risk because so much of our military resources are tied up in the Middle East.*

- **I am pushing for a gradual, responsible redeployment from Iraq.**

Let me be very clear: The blame for the problems in Iraq rests squarely with Congress and the president, *not* with America's soldiers. Our troops are serving honorably and skillfully. They're doing everything they can to secure Iraq. But at the end of the day, my duty in Congress is not to secure Iraq. It's to protect America, and America is engaged in a *global* war on terror.

We must be ready to respond to threats from Iran, Syria, North Korea, and other rogue nations. We must protect ourselves from the terrorists who have gained a foothold in over 60 countries worldwide. And we must also be ready to respond to disasters at home.

In an age when America faces global threats, I do not believe our nation is best served by devoting so many of our military resources to Iraq.

We need to give the Iraqi people every opportunity to secure a sustainable peace, but our ultimate focus must be to strengthen our military's ability to respond to future threats.

- **We must not play politics with our troops.** I immediately condemned a MoveOn.org ad last September that slandered Commanding General David Petraeus. I still find it deplorable that any individual or entity could bash any United States soldier, or their commander, for serving this country.

The ad was despicable, and I was appalled that anyone would take partisanship to that extreme. The job of Congress must be to secure our peace and bring our troops home – not to score political points.

### 3. **WASHINGTON DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE WORD "ILLEGAL"**

*The problem: Washington does not effectively enforce immigration laws. When I speak with folks up and down Kansas, they say again and again that enforcement must be the first plank in any immigration platform. In 1986, when President Reagan signed an amnesty for millions of illegal immigrants, he promised swift and thorough enforcement of tough new immigration laws. But enforcement never came. Stung by that experience, Kansans are now skeptical that enforcement will accompany any new immigration reform. They want an enforcement-first approach: Increase border security, and crack down on immigrants and employers who break the rules.*

- **In April of 2007, I was one of two Democrats who joined 95 Republican colleagues to urge Speaker Nancy Pelosi and President Bush to oppose any legislation that rewards illegal immigration.**

The good news is that Speaker Pelosi never allowed any amnesty bill to reach a vote in the House. The bad news is that we haven't voted on any other substantive immigration reforms, either.

In coffee shops and homes and malls around America, the immigration crisis is a major topic of conversation. But because House leadership has refused to allow a vote on real immigration reform, you won't find that conversation taking place in the U.S. House of Representatives.

- **I am actively recruiting co-sponsors for the bipartisan SAVE Act.** H.R. 4088 would secure America's borders, clarify and enforce existing laws, and enable a practical employment eligibility verification program. I believe these steps are vital to stopping the flow of illegal immigrants.
- **I led the charge against the Department of Transportation's Mexican trucking pilot program.** H.R. 1773, my Safe American Roads Act, was an effort to safeguard our borders and protect American motorists. It prohibited the Department of Transportation from allowing potentially unsafe Mexican trucks onto American roads. After all, there is just no comparison between America's high trucking standards and Mexico's weak rules.

Although my language won overwhelming Congressional approval, the White House moved ahead with the pilot program. Mexican trucks are now traveling our Kansas highways.

In ignoring Congressional opposition to the trucking program, the executive branch severely damaged our constitutional system of checks and balances. *My strong opposition to this program will continue.*

## 2. **REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS CAN'T PLAY IN THE SAME SANDBOX**

*The problem:* Republicans and Democrats have different visions for this country, and no one would expect the two parties to agree on every issue. But, in too many instances, lawmakers have refused to work through their differences and do their jobs.

- **I'm working hard to reach across party lines as the Republican Liaison for the freshman class of Democrats.** But too often, partisanship gets in the way of progress.

In the 110th Congress, this problem has taken the form of procedural delays. A vast amount of House time is wasted on motions to adjourn or motions to recommit. The Senate is always a hair's breadth away from a filibuster. These shenanigans take up valuable time, and block real progress.

For example, in 2007, the House voted on the annual Homeland Security Appropriations Act. H.R. 2638 was bogged down with 29 proposed amendments that required recorded votes. Another 9 amendments were offered and then withdrawn; another 9 were accepted by a voice vote. Additionally, we held 8 procedural votes over appropriations requests.

That's nearly 50 votes on one piece of legislation. The bill took a whole *week* to complete. This is an example of partisanship run amok.

Even worse, in 2007, the Senate Republicans filibustered 62 times. That's an all-time record for any session of Congress – and we're only halfway through the current term!

- **I actively reach across party lines on issues of rural health care, immigration, and agriculture.** By any measure, I am one of the most independent Democrats in Congress, having crossed party lines more frequently than 90% of the members of the Democratic caucus.
- **As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I helped reach across party lines to author a strong, bipartisan Farm Bill.** In its early stages, H.R. 2419 was an example of the system working *right*. Democrats and Republicans worked together to assemble a good bill, one that protected the rural safety net and provided for crop insurance and supported our farmers.

What we came up with wasn't perfect, but it was a good bill that earned the support of every Republican and every Democrat on the committee. Then things just got wacky. The bill left committee and came up for a vote in the full House, where the final vote was almost straight down party lines. Many Republicans who *supported* the bill in committee *opposed* it on the House floor.

Ultimately, a Farm Bill was passed in early 2008 but not without difficulty. The Farm Bill is a good, but not great, bill. However, it makes real investments in

rural America by increasing support for conservation, nutrition and renewable energy while creating a disaster aid program for America's farmers and ranchers. Especially important to Kansas is the tax relief provision to support the rebuilding of Greensburg, providing aide that is long overdue. The bill is supported by all the major agricultural groups, including, the National Farmers' Union, American Farm Bureau Federation, Kansas Cattlemen Association, Kansas Livestock Association and other producer groups.

## 1. **NAFTA**

***The problem:** NAFTA has cost American jobs, threatened our border security, and undermined our consumer safety laws. Since NAFTA was enacted, the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico and Canada has exploded to \$919 billion. We've lost over a million living-wage jobs. And we've seen illegal drugs flood across our borders. Almost all of the cocaine and marijuana sold in this country comes through Mexico – and it arrives on trucks that receive lenient inspections due to NAFTA rules.*

- **After fourteen years of problems, the time has come for America to either fix NAFTA or get out.** In early December of 2007, I joined eight Members of Congress to introduce a bill requiring precisely that. H.R. 4329, the bipartisan NAFTA Accountability Act, requires a wide-ranging renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Since NAFTA was enacted in 1994, it has posed severe challenges to the American economy. It has facilitated and accelerated the outsourcing of United States manufacturing facilities and jobs to lower-wage Mexico. Conversely, Mexico has become an export platform, displacing U.S. production. Further, Mexico has experienced an outsourcing of productivity to even lower-wage China, as Chinese imports to Mexico have grown and are imported into the United States.

NAFTA has undermined the public welfare through increased imports of food products that do not meet United States health standards. In addition, NAFTA has accelerated the relocation of United States manufacturing facilities to Mexico's border zone, where hundreds of new manufacturing plants have been added. Without adequate environmental safeguards, the uncontrolled industrial and population growth in the border zone has aggravated pollution and health hazards, increasing the incidence of infectious diseases and human exposure to toxins.

NAFTA has allowed the increased flow of illegal drugs and controlled substances into the United States from Mexico. Almost all cocaine and marijuana illegally entering the United States now comes through Mexico, with an increasing portion carried by trucks which undergo only limited inspection under NAFTA. Fewer than two percent of all cargo entering the United States is currently inspected.

If there are not specific, concrete improvements in the problems listed above by April 1, 2009, my bill calls for America to withdraw from NAFTA within six months. It's time for America to either get a NAFTA that works or get the heck out of NAFTA.

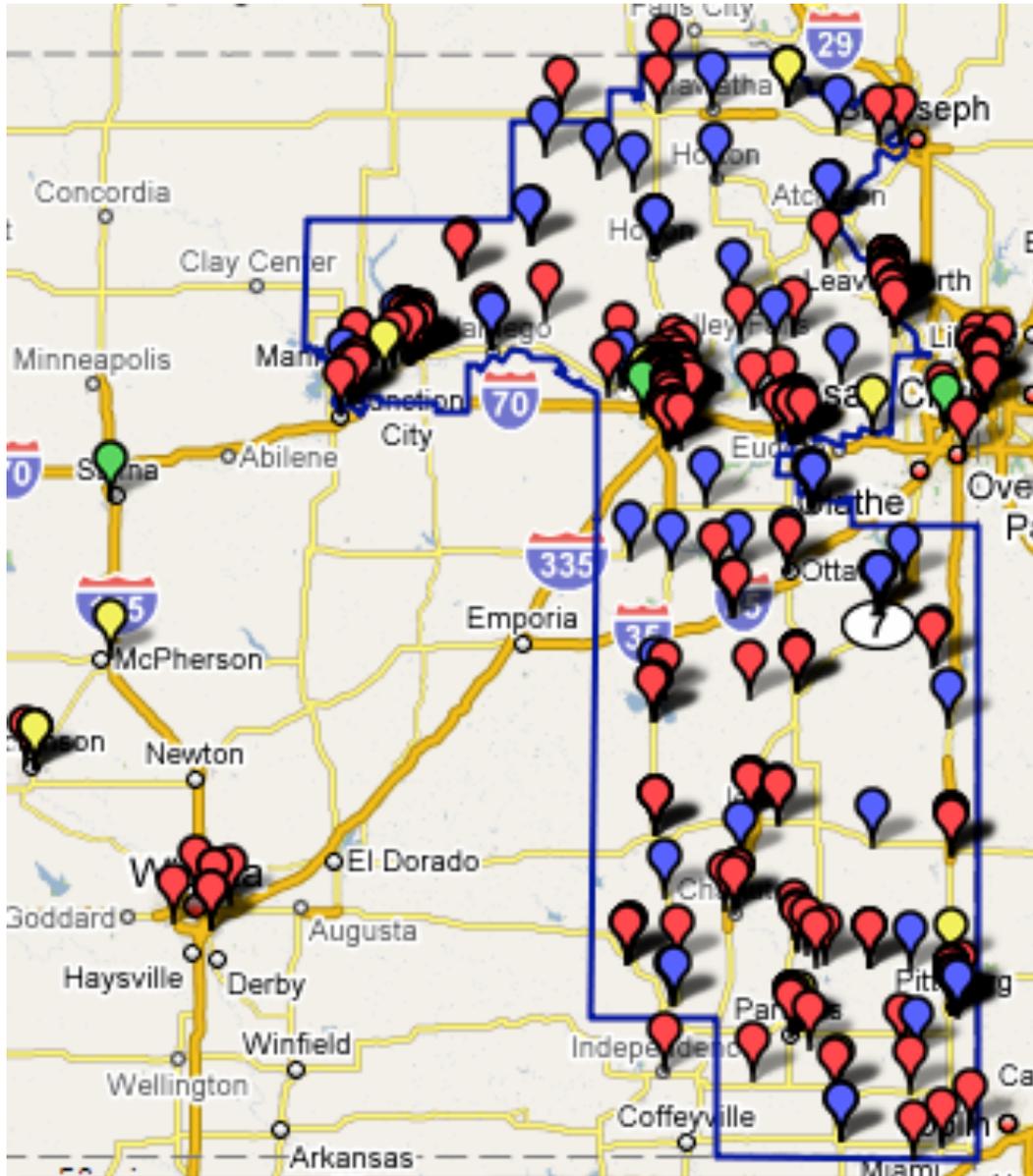
### **III. County-By-County Visits and Accomplishments**

When I was sworn into Congress, I knew that my top priority must be to stay in touch with constituents. Only by hearing about the day-to-day concerns of Kansans could I hope to avoid "going Washington." Since I took office in January 2007, I have worked to stay in touch with Kansans by returning home almost every weekend, participating in nearly 500 public events, and hosting 58 *Congress on Your Corners* throughout the Second District of Kansas.

# 2007-2008 Public Events Map

Congresswoman Nancy Boyda

Kansas Second Congressional District



**Map Key:**

 Congress on Your Corner	 Press Conference
 Keynote Remarks	 Other Event

## **Allen County**

*In the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill, Allen County secured two appropriations at my request: \$492,200 for wastewater infrastructure and \$96,285 for improvements to the public library. In my visits to Allen County, I had the privilege of speaking at Memorial Day services in La Harpe and Iola, and I joined Angel Food Ministries for a food drive at Haldex Manufacturing (pictured below).*



- 08/25/08 - Housing Conference, Humboldt Public Library
- 04/28/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Humboldt Senior Center
- 07/05/07 - Iola Community Involvement Task Force THRIVE Tour, Iola City Hall
- 05/28/07 - La Harpe Memorial Day Service, La Harpe Cemetery
- 05/28/07 - Iola Memorial Day Service, Iola Cemetery
- 03/24/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Bonnie's Corner Cafe, Gas
- 03/24/07 - Eggs and Issues, Greenery Restaurant
- 01/20/07 - Retired Military Personnel Group Meeting, Greenery Restaurant
- 01/20/07 - Angel Food Ministries, Haldex Manufacturing

## **Anderson County**

*In early April 2007, I toured several independent farms in Anderson County to learn more about agricultural issues affecting the region. These events were part of a series of roundtables with farmers and ranchers across Kansas, and they provided critical input as the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture began our discussion about reauthorizing the Farm Bill.*

- 04/25/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Garnett Town Hall Center
- 04/11/07 - Rural Development Discussion, Malone's, Garnett
- 04/11/07 - Pracht Farm Tour
- 04/11/07 - Farm Bill Roundtable, Town Hall Center, Garnett
- 04/11/07 - East Kansas Agri-Energy Ethanol Plant Tour, Golden Prairie Industrial Park

## **Atchison County**

*In my visits to Atchison, I hosted two Congress on Your Corners, met with city and county officials, and toured the Atchison Casting Corporation (pictured at right). I was pleased to work with the Atchison County Sheriff's Department to request \$94,000 for public safety equipment from the U.S. House Appropriations Committee. The funds were included in the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill, which passed Congress in December.*



- 07/08/08 - Visit to MGPI, Atchison
- 06/14/08 - Bike Across Kansas, Atchison
- 04/22/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Atchison Heritage Conference Center
- 10/09/07 - Atchison Casting Corporation Tour
- 06/03/07 - Veterans of Foreign Wars Family Appreciation Picnic, Potter
- 05/31/07 - Meeting with Atchison Public Officials
- 05/31/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Atchison Heritage Conference Center
- 05/31/07 - Atchison Rotary Club #430

## **Bourbon County**

*Because Bourbon County is mostly rural, its residents face unique issues regarding their access to high-quality health care. To explore health care needs in Bourbon County, I joined representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to host a forum at the Buck Run Community Center in Fort Scott. Together, we listened to ideas from local seniors and offered suggestions on how to make the most of their Medicare benefits.*

- 03/29/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Uniontown Community Center
- 03/29/08 - Disabled America Veterans Commanders Reception, Fort Scott Inn
- 11/28/07 - Medicare Enrollment Forum, Buck Run Community Center, Fort Scott
- 05/28/07 - National Moment of Remembrance, Fort Scott Historical Site
- 01/20/07 - VFW District Two Winter Meeting, VFW Post 1165, Fort Scott

## **Brown County**

*The success of Brown County depends on the strength of the highways connecting it to other towns and communities across Kansas. One major highway area highway is K-20, and at my request, the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill included \$245,000 to improve K-20 in Brown County. I firmly believe that improvements to K-20 offer great potential to strengthen the local economy.*

- 02/09/08 - Mission Lake Project Discussion, Horton
- 02/09/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Horton Senior Citizen Center

## **Brown County (continued)**

05/12/07 - Plum Creek Landowners Meeting, Fairview United Church of Christ

04/07/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Morrill Public Library, Hiawatha

## **Cherokee County**

*In the early 20th century, Cherokee County was known far and wide as the world's leading producer of lead and zinc ore. The last mining operations stopped in 1970, but the effects of over 60 years of mining can be seen for miles around in the form of mountains of milling waste. Below these mountains and in surrounding areas are enormous holes and hidden shafts that represent a daily threat to the safety of area Treece residents. Together with Sen. Pat Roberts, I introduced legislation last year that would authorize \$6 million for a voluntary federal buyout of certain properties and the relocation of residents of Treece.*

08/06/08 - Visit to Treece and Galena

05/16/08 - US Geological Survey Stream Gage Dedication, Baxter Springs

05/16/08 - Mid-America Pipeline Company Visit, Scammon

02/23/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Josie's Ristorante, Scammon

11/28/07 - Medicare Enrollment Forum, Columbus Community Center

03/31/07 - Treece Environmental Forum, Picher City Hall

02/10/07 - Meeting with City Officials and Tour of Superfund Sites, Galena City Hall

## **Coffey County**

*As America's debate on our national energy policy intensifies, we are increasingly looking to non-fossil-fuel sources of energy, such as nuclear power. In July 2007, I hosted a Congress on Your Corner event at Coffey County Hospital, where area residents shared their views on the nearby Wolf Creek nuclear facility and discussed the possibility of opening a second nuclear plant nearby.*

07/07/08 - Tour of John Redmond Logjam, Burlington

04/19/08 - Congress on Your Corner, New Strawn Community Center

01/08/08 - Coffey County Commission Legislative Meeting, Coffey County Courthouse

08/15/07 - Visit to Wolf Creek Generating Station, Burlington

07/14/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Coffey County Hospital, Burlington

## **Crawford County**



*Pittsburg is home to one of my three Congressional offices. In the picture at left, I joined over a hundred southeast Kansas residents to officially open my Pittsburg District Office. Pittsburg State University is also one of the best-kept secrets Kansas: a remarkable four-year school that is producing skilled leaders in science, technology, and engineering.*

## **Crawford County (continued)**

*At the university's request, I secured \$263,310 in late 2007 to support the school's efforts at the Pittsburg State University Technology Center. The same appropriations bill included \$980,000 for improvements to U.S. 69 in Pittsburg.*

- 08/06/08 - Grand Opening of Labette County Community College Cherokee Campus, Pittsburg
- 08/06/08 - Kansas Housing Conference, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg
- 05/28/08 - No Child Left Behind Forum, Greenbush, Girard
- 04/28/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Celebrity's, Girard
- 02/22/08 - Pittsburg District Office Open House
- 02/22/08 - Pittsburg Tax Workshop, Pittsburg State University
- 02/21/08 - Pittsburg State University visit
- 11/10/07 - Gift of Freedom Veterans Appreciation Program, Franklin Community Center
- 10/27/07 - Pittsburg State University Homecoming Tailgating and Game
- 09/13/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Cornerstone Village, Pittsburg
- 04/02/07 - Tour of Pittsburg State University Campus
- 04/02/07 - Tour of Pitsco Facility, Pittsburg
- 04/02/07 - Tour of Eagle Picher Facility, Pittsburg
- 04/02/07 - Tour of Discovery Program Facility, Pittsburg
- 04/02/07 - Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce Luncheon
- 04/01/07 - Congress on Your Corner Town Hall, Pittsburg State University
- 04/01/07 - All-Star Basket Ball Tournament, St. Mary's-Colgan High School, Pittsburg
- 02/22/07 - Videoconference with Southeast Kansas School Superintendents, Greenbush Education Service Center, Girard
- 02/10/07 - Tour of Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas, Pittsburg
- 02/10/07 - Pittsburg District Office Open House, Rep. Boyda's Pittsburg District Office
- 02/10/07 - Meeting with Pittsburg City Officials, Pittsburg City Hall

## **Doniphan County**



*For over a decade now, I have participated in the annual Bike Across Kansas ride, a week-long bicycle tour of our beautiful state. For the past two years, I have been unable to join the ride due to my Congressional duties, but I was thrilled to help celebrate the end of both journeys, last year in Doniphan County, this year in Atchison County.*

- 05/09/08 - Highland Community College Commencement, Highland Community College
- 02/09/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Highland Senior Center
- 02/09/08 - 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration for Highland Community College, Highland Community College

## **Doniphan County (continued)**

08/31/07 - Dedication of Wathena Historic Garden

06/16/07 - Bike Across Kansas Kickoff, Elwood Park, Elwood

05/31/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Troy Community Center, Troy

## **Douglas County**

*Douglas County received essential new funding from several appropriations I requested in 2007, including \$414,000 for high throughput screening at the University of Kansas, \$2.8 million for Army Corps of Engineers projects at Clinton Lake, \$94,000 for the Douglas County Sheriff's Department, and \$61,100 for the Lawrence Police Department. I visited Douglas County frequently to learn about research at KU, to speak with the Chamber of Commerce, and to attend community events. In the picture at the right, I joined Provost Richard Lariviere to tour the new Structural Biology Center and discuss KU's investments in infrastructure.*



08/27/08 - Visit to Lawrence Free State High School

08/19/08 - Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast

05/05/08 - Arts Competition/Lawrence High School Visit

04/18/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Baldwin City Public Library

03/26/08 - University Forum, Ecumenical Christian Ministries, Lawrence

01/08/08 - Douglas County Farm Bureau 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Board Meeting & Legislative Dinner, Kansas University Memorial Union

01/08/08 - Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast, Eldridge Hotel

12/02/07 - 83rd Annual Holiday Vespers, Lied Center

11/17/07 - 30th Annual Bishop's Round-Up for Hunger, 4-H Fairgrounds

11/04/07 - Blintz Brunch, Lawrence Jewish Community Center

10/26/07 - Tour of Structural Biology Center, University of Kansas

10/21/07 - An Evening with Congressman John Lewis, Lied Center

09/11/07 - 9/11 Memorial Candlelight Vigil and Memorial Service, University of Kansas

08/16/07 - Lawrence Chamber of Commerce Breakfast, Lawrence Arts Center

08/16/07 - A Community of Hope Rebuilds, Greensburg Film Screening, Liberty Hall

08/11/07 - Midland Railway Historical Society 20th Anniversary, Baldwin City

07/07/07 - 100th Birthday Celebration for Charles Doudna, Baker University

07/03/07 - Military Officers Association of America Dinner, Lawrence Country Club

06/23/07 - Meet the Chatauquan Lunch, Three Sisters Inn, Baldwin City

06/23/07 - Lecompton Constitution 150th Anniversary, Lecompton Territorial Museum

05/30/07 - IdentiGEN North American Grand Opening

05/30/07 - American Chemical Society Competitiveness Forum, Dole Institute of Politics

### **Douglas County (continued)**

- 04/09/07 - 21st Annual Pioneer Celebration of Bert Nash, Maceli's, Lawrence
- 04/05/07 - No Child Left Behind Public Meeting, Lawrence School District Office
- 02/23/07 - KU School of Pharmacy Dean's Club, Dole Institute of Politics
- 01/27/07 - Dole Institute of Politics Legislative Reception, Dole Institute of Politics
- 01/22/07 - VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic Ribbon Cutting

### **Franklin County**

*Franklin County is the fifth fastest-growing county in Kansas. As the county evolves to support its rapidly rising population, it needs the help of both the federal and state governments. At my request, the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill included a \$294,000 earmark for the Ottawa Industrial Park, which will strengthen the local economy and provide a foundation for future growth.*

- 03/21/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Pomona Community Center
- 11/30/07 - Williamsburg Community Library Tour
- 11/20/07 - Medicare Enrollment Forum, Ottawa Middle School
- 11/20/07 - East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corporation Annual Dinner, Ottawa High School
- 10/26/07 - Visitation for SPC Michael Dean Brown, Dengel & Son Mortuary, Ottawa
- 07/07/07 - The Davidson Family Project, Williamsburg Park
- 06/02/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Potter's Wheel Coffee House, Ottawa

### **Geary County**

*Geary County hosts much of Fort Riley, a rapidly growing military base that serves a critical role in the war on terror. In 2007, I was a leading advocate in Washington for restoring Base Realignment and Closure funding cut by the previous Congress, and I requested and received earmarked appropriations of \$1.9 million for the new Military Working Dog Facility at Fort Riley. I also toured the base several times to visit new MILCON projects and learn about Fort Riley's strategic needs.*



## **Geary County (continued)**

- 10/07/08 - Kansas Association of Homes and Services for the Aging Fall Meeting, Junction City
- 04/07/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Fort Riley
- 03/07/08 - Visit to Fort Riley's Soldier Family Assistance Center
- 01/14/08 - Fort Riley and Irwin Army Hospital tour and Wounded Warrior Transition Battalion overview
- 08/21/07 - Visit to Ware Elementary, Fort Riley
- 08/21/07 - Congressional Briefings at Fort Riley
- 04/04/07 - Old Trooper Regiment, Inc. Staffer's Day Banquet, Junction City
- 03/10/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Fort Riley Post Exchange
- 02/23/07 - Tour of Irwin Army Hospital, Fort Riley
- 02/23/07 - 10th Engineer Deployment Ceremony, King Field House, Fort Riley

## **Jackson County**

*In late July 2007, Jackson County Conservation District board members and staff provided me with a brief and helpful overview of their "filter strip" program and their desire to allow "incidental grazing" on fields adjacent to the grassland filters during the dormant season. They then took me out to the land of a local producer, Leroy Recheck, to show me this conservation tool in practice. Shown here is a beautiful picture of us all at the site – just before the storm looming on the horizon hit and we had to jump back in our trucks! While I have not yet been able to get the legislative changes they seek enacted, I will continue to work on the issue alongside Rep. Jerry Moran.*



- 06/13/08 - Visit to Soldier to assess tornado damage
- 04/05/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Prairie Band Pottawatomie Bingo Hall in Mayetta
- 07/23/07 - Jackson County Conservation District Tour, Holton
- 05/25/07 - Holton Sesquicentennial Celebration Glory Days Hamburger Feed
- 05/12/07 - State Association of Kansas Watersheds Meeting and Tour
- 05/12/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Buzzard's Pizza, Holton

## **Jefferson County**

*In early April 2007, I toured several independent farms in Jefferson County to hear about the problems facing Kansas farmers and ranchers today. Afterward, I joined a group of agriculture producers for a roundtable discussion the local American Legion. Their input would later prove invaluable in the U.S. House Agriculture Committee's debates on reauthorizing the Farm Bill.*

## **Jefferson County (*continued*)**

08/27/08 - Tour of Top Step Family Fitness, Meriden

05/03/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Kendall State Bank Community Hall, Valley Falls

04/09/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Oskaloosa Public Library

04/09/07 - O'Trimble Farm Tour

04/09/07 - Nickels Farm Tour

04/09/07 - Farm Bill Roundtable, American Legion Post 225

## **Labette County**

*When the Army announced its plans to close the Parsons Army Ammunition Plant, Labette County faced the prospect of a crippling economic loss. Beginning before I was sworn into office, I met with community leaders to hear their ideas for limiting the damage. I have lobbied the Army to provide Parsons with a list of equipment that will remain with the community for the future, and I continue to work with the Office of Economic Adjustment to secure new funds. My other efforts on behalf of Labette County included a \$70,500 earmark for the Parsons Police Department to purchase public safety equipment, as well as two Congress on Your Corner events, such as the one held at the Parsons Recreation Center in July 2007 (pictured at right).*



05/16/08 - Cardinal Citation Award Reception, Carnegie Arts Center (Labette Community College)

05/16/08 - Labette Community College Commencement

02/24/08 - Pecan Tour, Oswego

02/23/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Buckboard Café, Chetopa

02/23/08 - SEE-KAN & RC&D Annual Meeting, Oswego Community Building

10/06/07 - 3rd District Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary Meetings, Parsons

07/06/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Oswego

07/06/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Chetopa

07/06/07 - Public Meeting with Keith Eastin, Assistant Secretary of the Army

07/06/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Parsons Recreation Center

07/06/07 - Kansas Army Ammunition Plant Tour, Parsons

05/26/07 - Mound Valley Monument Dedication, Mound Valley Cemetery

05/26/07 - Katy Days Bluebonnet Banquet, Parsons

04/02/07 - Meeting with Kansas Hospital Association, Labette County Medical Center

## **Leavenworth County**

*Leavenworth County secured critical federal funding from several appropriations I requested in 2007, including \$70,500 for public safety equipment for the Leavenworth Police Department and \$95,302 in matching funds for the proposed Kansas Regional Prison Museum in Lansing. The 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill also provided significant financial support to Fort Leavenworth, including \$55 million for the construction of a new barracks complex, \$11.6 million for the first phase of construction of a new chapel, and \$2.4 million for Parents as Teachers Heroes at Home. I visited Leavenworth County numerous times since taking office, including one visit (pictured at right) with Rep. Dennis Moore to tour the U.S. federal penitentiary.*



- 08/28/08 - “We the People” presentation, Easton High School
- 08/18/08 - Fort Leavenworth Chapel Groundbreaking Ceremony and Community Open House at Carnegie Center
- 07/13/08 - 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Welcome Home Ceremony, Warren Middle School, Leavenworth
- 05/26/08 - Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony
- 05/03/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Bichelmeyer’s Steakhouse, Tonganoxie
- 04/14/08 - Leavenworth High School Visit
- 03/28/08 - Annual Women’s Conference, Frontier Conference Center
- 03/18/08 - Lansing Lions Club Meeting
- 03/08/08 - Leavenworth Tax Workshop, Leavenworth Public Library
- 03/04/08 - Visit to Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center, Leavenworth
- 03/04/08 - Fort Leavenworth Equal Opportunity Women’s History Luncheon, Frontier Conference Center
- 02/12/08 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Visit, Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center
- 02/05/08 - Reception for Under Secretary of the Army Pete Geren, Lewis & Clark Center
- 01/15/08 - Tour of Fort Leavenworth
- 12/15/07 - Remarks to the Kansas State Prison for Men Banquet
- 12/15/07 - Holiday Reception with Lt. Gen. William Caldwell, Fort Leavenworth
- 11/12/07 - Leavenworth County Veterans Day Parade
- 08/13/07 - Northrop Grumman Visit, Leavenworth
- 08/13/07 - MPRI Visit, Leavenworth
- 08/13/07 - Lewis and Clark Center Dedication Ceremony and Lunch, Fort Leavenworth
- 08/13/07 - Cubic Applications, Inc. Visit, Leavenworth
- 08/13/07 - Community Leaders Breakfast, Riverfront Community Center

## **Leavenworth County (continued)**

- 08/13/07 - Booz-Allen-Hamilton Visit, Leavenworth
- 08/12/07 - Lewis and Clark Center Reception, Fort Leavenworth
- 08/10/07 - Visit with Leavenworth Veterans Service Officers, Eisenhower VA Hospital
- 08/10/07 - Veterans and Military Affairs Advisory Council Meeting, Leavenworth
- 08/10/07 - Congressional Briefings at Fort Leavenworth
- 07/26/08 - Visits to Richard Allen Cultural Center and Alliance Against Family Violence, Leavenworth
- 07/26/08 - David Unger Walk to Remember, Leavenworth
- 07/13/07 - Welcome Dinner for Gen. Caldwell, Leavenworth Country Club
- 07/03/07 - Tour of Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary
- 07/03/07 - Press Conference on Federal Prison Funding, Riverfront Community Center
- 05/04/07 - First Missionary Baptist Church 150th Anniversary Celebration, Leavenworth
- 02/24/07 - A Taste of Leavenworth, First City Museum
- 02/21/07 - Military Hall of Fame Distinguished Graduates Ceremony
- 02/21/07 - Meeting with Leavenworth-Lansing Chamber of Commerce
- 02/21/07 - Lunch with Fort Leavenworth Representatives, Eisenhower Hall
- 02/21/07 - Fort Leavenworth Information Exchange, Combined Arms Library
- 02/21/07 - Fort Leavenworth Briefing, Combined Arms Library
- 02/12/07 - Fort Leavenworth International Flag Ceremony, Fort Leavenworth

## **Linn County**

*In June, shortly after Linn County suffered severe flooding and shortly before the county was declared a federal disaster area, I hosted a Congress on Your Corner event in Pleasanton. I was joined by staffers from my office who had extensive expertise in the federal disaster relief system, and together we offered area residents advice on navigating the disaster relief process.*

- 04/25/08 - Congress on Your Corner, La Cygne Public Library
- 11/21/07 - Funeral Services for Sergeant Jeffery S. Mersman of Parker, Kansas
- 06/30/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Austin's Cafe, Pleasanton

## **Miami County**



*The 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill included a \$94,000 earmark for Miami County public safety equipment that I requested on behalf of the local sheriff's department. To hear about other community needs and concerns, I visited the Paola Community Center in mid-August 2007 (pictured at left), where I spoke with community members about legislative issues and offered assistance in resolving their problems with federal agencies.*

### **Miami County (*continued*)**

- 03/21/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Whistle Stop Café, Osawatomie
- 11/20/07 - Visitation for Sergeant Jeffery S. Mersman of Parker, Kansas
- 08/18/07 - Paola Congress on Your Corner, Paola Community Center
- 07/21/07 - Meeting with City Officials and Tour of Flooding, Osawatomie High School
- 07/02/07 - Aerial Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Osawatomie

### **Nemaha County**

*Since taking office in 2007, my staff and I have held three Congress on Your Corner events in Nemaha County. At each of these, I met one-on-one with constituents to discuss their legislative concerns, answer questions about the issues before Congress, and offer assistance with federal agencies. The first Congress on Your Corner was held at the Goff Community Center in July 2007, then Wetmore City Hall September 2007 (pictured at right), and most recently, the Centralia Community Center in late March 2008.*



- 03/22/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Centralia Community Center
- 09/22/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Wetmore City Hall
- 07/29/07 - Nemaha County Fair, Seneca
- 07/02/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Goff Community Center

### **Neosho County**

*Neosho County Community College is a leading educator of Kansans who want to work in the biofuels industry. To support the college's efforts, I asked the House Agriculture Committee to insert into the new Farm Bill a provision to create a new National Rural Information Program. The program would provide grants to help rural community colleges develop alternative energy programs. Such initiatives are essential in decreasing our dependence on oil while furthering rural educational institutions, and I will continue to fight for funding these innovative programs.*

- 04/26/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Brick Haus, Erie
- 07/14/07 - Old Soldiers and Sailors Reunion Day, American Legion, Erie
- 07/05/07 - SE Kansas Regional Planning Commission Meeting, Chanute Country Club
- 07/02/07 - Aerial and Ground Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Chanute
- 05/05/07 - Neosho County Community College 70th Anniversary, Chanute
- 04/03/07 - Tour of Westhoff Interiors, St. Paul
- 04/03/07 - St. Paul Economic Development Tour, St. Paul City Hall
- 04/03/07 - Meeting with Chanute and NCCC Officials, Chanute City Hall
- 04/03/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Grain Bin Restaurant, Chanute

## **Osage County**

*Even before I was sworn into office, I knew that my top priority must be to stay in touch with constituents. Only by hearing about the day-to-day concerns of Kansans can I hope to avoid "going Washington." That's why I decided to launch a series of town halls called "Congress on Your Corner," and in February, my staff and I hosted the first-ever Congress on Your Corner at the Copper Oven in Osage County. Since then, we held another Congress on Your Corner in late March 2008.*

03/25/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Lyndon Community Center  
08/11/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Overbrook  
07/04/07 - Overbrook Gas and Convenience Station Grand Opening  
07/01/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Quememo  
02/24/07 - Osage City Congress on Your Corner, Copper Oven

## **Pottawatomie County**

*Over the Thanksgiving holiday, I met with Pottawatomie County officials to discuss their concerns regarding the effects of Fort Riley's growth on their infrastructure, land use, and work force. Specific concerns they raised included the need for upgrades to the Highway 24 corridor and Green Valley Road, the need for expanded public transit, and needs at libraries and the jail. Importantly, Pottawatomie County, in partnership with surrounding counties, is taking a proactive approach to addressing potential concerns – a process that will result in a comprehensive Flint Hills Regional Growth Plan. I will work to make sure that the federal government continues its involvement in this process and steps up to assist Flint Hill counties and communities in its implementation.*

05/13/08 - Wamego Middle School Visit  
03/22/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Onaga Senior Center  
01/10/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Sunflower Room, Westmoreland  
11/27/07 - Meeting with Pottawatomie County Commissioners, Westmoreland  
11/27/07 - Medicare Enrollment Forum, Onaga Senior Center  
08/14/07 - Visit to Jeffrey Energy Plant, St. Marys  
07/04/07 - Wamego's 136th Annual Independence Day, Wamego  
06/01/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Columbian Theater, Wamego

## **Riley County**

*I visited Riley County numerous times, including a late August tour of Manhattan's Nanoscale Corporation (pictured at right) to learn more about their work and about the needs of the Kansas bioscience industry. Riley County is anchored by two of the most significant institutions in the Kansas Second District: Kansas State University and Fort Riley. Since I was sworn into office, I have fought hard to support these remarkable organizations. For K-State, I secured \$500,000 for the Leadership for Leaders Program,*



## **Riley County (continued)**

*as well as an additional \$2.3 million for research programs. For Fort Riley, I was a leading advocate in Congress to restore BRAC funding cut by the previous Congress, and I secured \$1.9 million for the new Military Working Dog Facility. Other appropriations successes for Riley County include \$1.4 million for runway improvements at the Manhattan Airport and \$134,808 for a levee study.*

- 09/13/08 - Kansas National Guard Live Fire Exercise, Fort Riley
- 08/26/08 - Visit to Fort Riley Middle School
- 08/20/08 - Army Community Covenant Signing, Fort Riley
- 06/12/08 - Visit to Manhattan to assess tornado damage
- 06/02/08 - Community/Military Partnership Dinner, Manhattan
- 04/21/08 - Kansas National Guard Welcome Home Ceremony, Manhattan
- 04/08/08 - Veterans Center Grand Opening, Manhattan
- 04/07/08 - Manhattan Chamber Congressional Breakfast, Holiday Inn
- 04/07/08 - Manhattan Technical College Visit
- 04/07/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Ogden Community Center
- 01/14/08 - Lunch with Manhattan Military Leaders, Riley Conference Center
- 01/11/08 - Kansas State University Tour
- 01/10/08 - Agriculture Meetings, Kansas Farm Bureau
- 11/27/07 - Medicare Enrollment Forum, North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging
- 11/26/07 - Landon Lecture: Defense Secretary Robert Gates, K-State
- 11/16/07 - 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division Headquarters Dedication Ceremony, Fort Riley
- 11/11/07 - State of Kansas Veterans Cemetery Groundbreaking, Fort Riley
- 11/02/07 - Civics and Civility Summit, K-State Alumni Center
- 10/23/07 - Manhattan Chamber Breakfast, Kansas Farm Bureau Building
- 09/21/07 - Stoneybrook Assisted Living Congress on Your Corner, Manhattan
- 09/13/07 - Community Bridges Radio Show, Manhattan
- 08/21/07 - Visit to Pawnee Mental Health Clinic, Manhattan
- 08/21/07 - Visit to Flint Hills Job Corps, Manhattan
- 08/21/07 - Meeting with Riley County Board of Commissioners, Riley County Courthouse Plaza
- 08/21/07 - Meeting with Manhattan City Commission, City Commission Chambers
- 08/20/07 - Tour of the Nanoscale Corporation, Manhattan
- 08/20/07 - Tour of the Biosecurity Research Institute, Pat Roberts Hall
- 08/20/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Riley County Senior Service Center, Manhattan
- 04/10/07 - League of Women Voters Annual Meeting, K-State Hale Library
- 04/10/07 - 100th Federal Depository Library Anniversary, K-State Hale Library
- 04/04/07 - Manhattan Chamber of Commerce Military Relations Committee Meeting
- 03/26/07 - Congressional Delegation Visit to Fort Riley
- 02/19/07 - Tour of Manhattan Head Start
- 02/19/07 - K-State vs. KU Men's Basketball Game, Bramlage Coliseum
- 02/19/07 - Farm Bureau Producer Panel, Manhattan
- 01/15/07 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast, Manhattan
- 01/15/07 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration, Manhattan Town Center

## **Shawnee County**

*Shawnee County is the most populous county in the Kansas Second Congressional District, and in many ways it is the district's economic backbone. To meet the needs of such a large population, the county needs investments in infrastructure and public projects from the federal government. The 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill included several major investments in Shawnee County at my request, including \$735,000 for an I-70 viaduct realignment study, \$98,000 for Great Overland Station Park, \$196,800 for the Army Corps of Engineers for the Topeka levee study, \$294,000 for Topeka Transit bus fleet replacement, \$61,100 for public safety equipment for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department, and \$65,800 for public safety equipment for the Topeka Police Department.*



*The same bill included noteworthy support for the Kansas National Guard, which is headquartered in Topeka: \$1.6 million for Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center safety equipment, \$500,000 for Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center radios, and \$1 million for the Defense Command Integration Center.*



*I returned to my home in Shawnee County nearly every weekend, and while in town, I was privileged to participate in over 100 public events. Among my favorite were my monthly appearances on The Jim Cates Show, where I learned about callers' concerns and answered their questions about pending legislation. To my mind, the show is a monthly town hall meeting with Shawnee County. Anyone can participate; they need only to turn on their radio or pick up their telephone.*

- 09/20/08 - Freedom Salute for the 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Nickell Armory, Topeka
- 09/02/08 - Visit to Bishop Elementary School, Topeka
- 08/27/08 - Visit to Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, Topeka
- 08/15/08 - South Topeka Rotary, Washburn University, Topeka
- 08/10/08 - Kansas National Guard Commander Change of Command, Kansas National Guard Museum, Topeka
- 08/03/08 - Topeka Boulevard Bridge Grand Opening, Topeka

## **Shawnee County (continued)**

- 07/21/08 - Goodyear Leisure Club Dinner, Aboud's, Topeka
- 06/14/08 - "The Reading", Topeka
- 06/08/08 - Citywide GED Graduation Ceremony, Topeka West High School
- 05/26/08 - All Veterans Memorial, Memorial Day Ceremony, Great Overland Station
- 05/18/08 - Washburn Rural High School Commencement
- 05/17/08 - Armed Forces Day Celebration, Heartland Park
- 05/12/08 - National Reading is Fun, State Street Elementary School
- 05/12/08 - Topeka Independent Business Association Meeting, Blind Tiger
- 05/10/08 - Annual Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Day, Topeka
- 04/27/08 - 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church
- 04/26/08 - Celebrity Pancake Feed, Combat Air Museum
- 04/12/08 - Congressional Art Contest, Brown v Board of Education National Historic Site
- 04/12/08 - Kansas Committee Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve Annual Conference, Ramada Inn
- 04/05/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Rossville Community Center
- 03/25/08 - Topeka Tax Workshop, Docking Office Building
- 03/20/08 - Downtown Topeka Rotary, Ramada Inn
- 03/19/08 - Opening Ceremony for Eisenhower Center for Homeland Security Studies Research, State Defense Building Complex
- 03/07/08 - Topeka Chamber Quarterly Meeting, Federal Home Loan Bank
- 03/07/08 - 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Kansas Prayer Breakfast, Ramada Inn
- 03/03/08 - Topeka District Office Open House
- 02/20/08 - Kansas Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting, Kansas ExpoCentre
- 02/11/08 - National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Visit, Colmery O'Neil VA Medical Center
- 01/25/08 - Kansas Chamber of Commerce Congressional Summit, Ramada Inn
- 01/24/08 - Topeka Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting, Ramada Inn
- 01/21/08 - Topeka's Annual Community Soup Dinner, First Methodist Church
- 01/14/08 - Colmery O'Neil VA Medical Center Visit & Briefing
- 01/09/08 - Meetings with agriculture industry representatives, Topeka District Office
- 12/10/07 - Visit to Capper Foundation to Craft Holiday Cards for Troops, Topeka
- 12/07/07 - Veterans and Military Affairs Advisory Commission Meeting, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1650, Topeka
- 11/30/07 - UKanTeach Grant Announcement Press Conference, Capitol Plaza Hotel
- 11/30/07 - Topeka Police Department Media Day
- 11/30/07 - Juvenile Diabetes Meeting, Rep. Boyda's Topeka Office
- 11/23/07 - Toy Safety Press Conference, Topeka Shawnee County Public Library
- 11/20/07 - Voting Equipment Demonstration, Secretary of State's Office
- 11/19/07 - Tour of the Forbes Field Combat Air Museum
- 11/12/07 - Kansas Second District Veterans History Project, Topeka High School
- 11/11/07 - Gage Park Veterans Day Memorial Service, Gage Park Veterans Memorial
- 11/11/07 - 2007 Veterans Day Observance, All Veterans Memorial
- 11/04/07 - Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Ramada Inn
- 11/04/07 - Diwali Festival, Topeka Performing Arts Center

## **Shawnee County (continued)**

10/29/07 - Atria Hearthstone Congress on Your Corner, Topeka  
10/08/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Silver Lake Senior Citizen's Center  
10/08/07 - No Child Left Behind Forum, Topeka High School Auditorium  
10/08/07 - Breakthrough House Luncheon, Topeka  
09/14/07 - Kansas National Guard 1st Battalion Welcome Home, Kansas ExpoCentre  
09/14/07 - Naturalization Ceremony, Franklin Carlson United States Courthouse  
09/12/07 - College Cost Reduction Act Press Conference, Topeka High School Library  
09/12/07 - Brewster Place Congress on Your Corner, Topeka  
09/11/07 - Eastern Kansas Health Care System Town Hall, Comery-O'Neil VA  
09/03/07 - Remarks to the Topeka Labor Day Rally, Kansas Statehouse  
09/02/07 - Grove Community Picnic, Grove  
08/22/07 - UniCare Health Plan of Kansas Community Resource Center Open House  
08/22/07 - Teacher Tax Relief Press Conference, Meadows Elementary School  
08/22/07 - 25th Anniversary of the United States Coast Guard Personnel Service Office  
08/20/07 - Funeral Ceremonies for Capt. Tony Cox, Kansas ExpoCentre  
08/18/07 - Annual Topeka AIDS Project Gala, Topeka  
08/11/07 - Topeka Active 20-30 Club #524's Fourth Annual Children's Charity Gala  
08/09/07 - Visit with Veterans Service Officers, Rep. Boyda's Topeka District Office  
08/09/07 - BNSF Facility Tour, Branner Trafficway Facility  
08/07/07 - Social Security Administration Open House, Topeka  
08/07/07 - Lunch with Blue Cross Blue Shield Employees, Topeka  
08/07/07 - Goodyear Plant Tour, Topeka  
08/06/07 - Save Our Community Pharmacies Press Conference, Jayhawk Pharmacy  
08/06/07 - Kansas Hospital Forum, Stormont-Vail Hospital  
08/06/07 - Hill's Pet Nutrition Center Tour, Topeka  
08/06/07 - Gerald Ferguson Medal Ceremony, Rep. Boyda's Topeka Office  
07/28/07 - Shawnee County Fair, Kansas Expocentre  
07/21/07 - 74th Annual Fiesta Mexicana, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church  
07/20/07 - Pauline Summer Reading Program, Velma Paris Community Center  
07/20/07 - Quarterly Topeka Chamber Luncheon, Topeka Chamber of Commerce  
07/10/07 - Survivors of Earl John Roney Medal Ceremony, Rep. Boyda's Topeka Office  
07/05/07 - Stormont-Vail Laboratory Tour and Congress on Your Corner, Topeka  
07/04/07 - Potwin Place Neighborhood Association Independence Day, Topeka  
07/04/07 - Holliday Park Neighborhood Independence Day Celebration, Topeka  
07/04/07 - Collins Park Independence Day, Topeka  
07/03/07 - Visit to Topeka Family Service and Guidance Center  
06/23/07 - Kansas National Guard Family Readiness Picnic, Forbes Field  
06/18/07 - Support for Veterans Press Conference, VFW Auxiliary Post 1650  
06/17/07 - Topeka Big Read Presentation, Topeka Public Library  
06/17/07 - 31st Annual Juneteenth Celebration, Big Gage Shelter House  
06/01/07 - Tour of Coast Guard Personnel Service Center  
05/30/07 - Payless Shoesource Tour, Payless Shoesource World Headquarters  
05/25/07 - Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP, Gage Park  
05/21/07 - YWCA Leadership Luncheon, Ramada Inn, Topeka  
05/18/07 - Reception by Topeka Transit Authority and Lawrence Transit System

### **Shawnee County (continued)**

05/14/07 - UPS Ride-Along, Topeka UPS Center  
05/14/07 - Mexican Trucking Press Conference, KTA Trailer Staging Area  
05/07/07 - Visit to Red Cross Staging Area, Topeka Expocentre  
05/05/07 - Congressional Art Contest, Brown v. Board National Historic Site  
05/04/07 - Visit to PTMW, Inc., Topeka  
05/04/07 - Federal Home Loan Bank Tour and Employee Forum, Topeka  
05/04/07 - 190th Refueling Wing Visit, Forbes Field  
04/22/07 - Foster Parent Press Conference, Topeka and Shawnee Public Library  
04/21/07 - Kansas Independent Pharmacy Service Corporation Reception, Capitol Plaza  
04/12/07 - Address to Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, Bank of America Building  
04/09/07 - Feldkamp / Manville Farm Tour  
04/07/07 - Topeka / Shawnee County League of Women Voters Annual Meeting  
04/07/07 - 2nd Annual Black Law Student Association Recognition Banquet  
04/06/07 - Washburn Law School Forum  
04/06/07 - Congress on Your Corner, Breakroom, Topeka  
04/06/07 - Kansas Action for Children Press Conference, Capitol Plaza Hotel  
04/05/07 - 218th Brigade Deployment Ceremony, Topeka South Armory  
03/30/07 - Saint Francis Hospital Town Hall Meeting and Tour  
03/23/07 - National Symphony Orchestra Performance and Post-Concert Reception  
03/19/07 - Fourth Annual Kansas Legislative Conference, Capital Plaza Hotel  
03/17/07 - Topeka St. Patrick's Day, Downtown Topeka  
03/16/07 - Topeka Chamber of Commerce Business Leaders Lunch  
03/16/07 - Great Overland Station and All Veterans Memorial Tour  
03/12/07 - Visit with Miss Hodge's Third Grade Class, Avondale West High School  
03/11/07 - Reception for Kyle Obrosky, Topeka  
02/22/07 - USD 345 1st Annual State of the District Banquet, Sunrise Optimist Building  
02/22/07 - Tour of Colmery O'Neil VA Medical Center  
02/22/07 - Kansas National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility Task Force Inaugural Meeting, Hayden Building  
02/21/07 - Meeting with Adj. Gen. Bunting and Gen. Pierson, State Defense Building  
02/11/07 - Bishop's Conference on Mental Health Issues, First United Methodist Church  
02/10/07 - League of United Latin-American Citizens' 31st Annual Sweetheart Dance  
02/09/07 - Meth Remediation Research Act Press Conference, Kansas Statehouse  
02/05/07 - Topeka District Office Open House, Rep. Boyda's Topeka District Office  
01/26/07 - Unseen, Unforgotten Exhibit, Brown v. Board National Historic Site  
01/26/07 - Kansas Chamber of Commerce Congressional Summit, Topeka Country Club

### **Wilson County**

*Wilson County suffered significant property losses in the 2007 floods. It is critically important that the federal government provide help and support to prevent future flood disasters. Toward that end, I requested and received a \$200,000 earmark for Wilson County flood mitigation and design planning. The same bill also included \$98,000 for streetscape improvements in Fredonia.*

02/22/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Drake's Café, Buffalo

### **Wilson County (*continued*)**

10/06/07 - Golden Keys Nursing Home Congress on Your Corner, Neodesha  
10/06/07 - 84th Annual Fredonia Homecoming Festival, Fredonia  
09/14/07 to 09/16/07 - Kansas East United Methodist Mission Trip, Fredonia  
07/02/07 - Aerial and Ground Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Fredonia  
07/01/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Fredonia  
06/30/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Neodesha  
06/30/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Altoona  
05/19/07 - Gold Dust Days, Fredonia

### **Woodson County**

*Rural areas of Kansas, such as Woodson County, face unique challenges in providing police and public safety services to all of their residents. I was pleased to help the Woodson County Sheriff's Department secure a \$94,000 earmarked appropriation for public safety equipment in the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.*

04/19/08 - Congress on Your Corner, Yates Center Senior Center  
06/30/07 - Tour of Southeast Kansas Flooding, Yates Center  
05/26/07 - Yates Center Celebration, Yates Center High School

## **IV. Constituent Services**

I refer to constituent service as "customer service," and I believe it is of the highest priority. From helping veterans obtain the medical care they have earned, to ensuring that seniors receive their Social Security benefits, to assisting farmers struck by natural disasters, my office helped literally thousands of constituents since taking office. My staff and I work for Kansans, and we don't forget it for a minute.

## Constituent Service Highlights

*Since taking office in 2007, my office assisted with 3,403 constituent services cases.*

We fought hard to cut through red tape and ensure that Kansans received fair treatment from the federal government.

Of the 3,403 cases, 799 involved constituents dealing with passport problems, mainly impacted by last summer's severe backlog of passport applications. Because the passport crisis arose outside of the usual constituent services operations of my office, I have not included those cases in the percentage breakdowns below. A more detailed description of the passport problem may be found at the end of this document.

*Additionally, my office sent 108,418 letters in response to constituent concerns.* Each letter provided detailed, practical information on issues of importance to the Kansas Second District.

### Table of Contents

Military / Veterans: 752 cases, 22.3%.....	1
Grants: 184 cases, 5.5% .....	2
Social Security: 399 cases, 11.8% .....	2
Local Issues / Miscellaneous: 417 cases, 12.4% .....	3
Immigration: 192 cases, 5.7% .....	3
Health Care: 188 cases, 5.6% .....	4
Disaster Relief / Agriculture: 130 cases, 3.9% .....	4
Federal Employment: 72 cases, 2.1% .....	5
Financial: 104 cases, 3.1% .....	5
Housing: 35 cases, 1% .....	6
Postal Issues: 40 cases, 1.2%.....	6
Student Loans: 53 cases, 1.6%.....	6
Passports: 806 cases .....	7
Constituent Mail: 108,418 letters.....	7

## **Military / Veterans: 752 cases, 22.3%**

- *Veterans Health and Benefits*
- *Active Duty and Reservist Concerns*
- *Obtaining Medals*
- *FBI Inquiries*

**Example:** A Carbondale woman learned in early 2007 that the Burlingame Historical Society was seeking the military records of local veterans. She knew that her late father-in-law had served in the Navy in World War II, so she contacted my office for help in tracking down his service records.

My office often helps relatives learn more about their loved ones' military history, and sometimes, as we dig through decades-old records, we uncover long-buried stories.

The woman's father-in-law had enlisted in the Navy in December of 1939, and he was assigned to the USS Tennessee, a 32,300-ton battleship stationed in Pearl Harbor. Two years later, on December 7, 1941, he found himself in the midst of a defining moment in U.S. history -- the "date which will live in infamy," when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and triggered America's involvement in World War II. He served America honorably throughout World War II. On November 1, 1945, he received an honorable discharge, and he passed away many years later in 1998.

While reviewing this history, we also discovered that he was eligible for seven medals that he had never been formally awarded. We contacted the National Personnel Records Center, where staffers retrieved his hard-earned medals. In a moving and long-overdue ceremony in July 2007, I formally presented the medals to two of the soldier's surviving relatives.



*In July 2007, I presented a Pearl Harbor veteran's survivor with seven medals that he had never been awarded in life.*

## **Grants: 184 cases, 5.5%**

- *Grantwriting Assistance*
- *Research on Federal Grant Opportunities*
- *Announcements of Grant Awards*

**Example:** In the summer of 2006 in Galena, Kansas, a part of a downtown business called the Green Parrot suddenly collapsed into a sinkhole. It was a dramatic reminder of the dangers posed by subsidence from abandoned mining operations.

To help prevent future disasters, my office worked with community leaders to identify available grant money from the Economic Development Administration. My staff attended numerous meetings to shepherd the grant proposal through the application process, and eventually, the Economic Development Administration awarded \$250,000 for an engineering study to identify abandoned mine voids.



*The Green Parrot in Galena, Kansas, suffered severe damage following a sinkhole collapse. Photo by Kansas Department of Health and Environment.*

## **Social Security: 399 cases, 11.8%**

- *Disability Adjudication*
- *Lost and Delayed Retirement Applications*
- *Lost and Delayed Payments*
- *Overpayment Matters*

**Example:** A woman contacted my office in March of 2008 regarding a problem receiving her Social Security disability benefits. Her payments and backpay were being held because of a worker's compensation case with the state that had yet to be decided. However, her severe disabilities had little to do with the compensation case, and she badly needed assistance.

My staff contacted the Social Security Administration, Office of Disability Adjudication and Review to see if anything could be done. We discovered the hold on her disability was due to the possible outcome of her worker's compensation settlement. If her settlement was over a certain amount, it would be considered an asset and affect how much disability she could receive. However, if she signed a statement with the Social Security Administration, she could receive her backpay and begin monthly payments. After working with her attorney and the local Social Security office, our office was able to give her this information. While she understands that her benefits could change due to the outcome of her worker's compensation settlement, she has retrieved over \$28,000 in backpay and began receiving monthly payments.

### **Local Issues / Miscellaneous: 417 cases, 12.4%**

- *Connecting Constituents with Local Agencies*
- *Answering Questions Regarding State / Local Government*
- *Miscellaneous*

**Example:** We have all heard that the wheels of government turn slowly, but every once in a while, when it really matters, those wheels can turn rapidly in response to individual need.

A Second District constituent was diagnosed with pancreatic and lung cancers. In a very short span of time, he lost his job and, with it, his employer-provided health insurance. He was left unemployable and without access to health care. He had applied for Medicaid, but his application was tied up in red tape.

By the time this gentleman called my office, he was running out of options. He would likely have to cancel a fast-approaching chemotherapy appointment, and without chemotherapy, his odds of survival would be greatly diminished.

Upon learning about the problem, my office contacted representatives from the state government, which administers Medicaid in Kansas. We worked with the state agency to fast-track his application, and he was able to keep his scheduled medical appointments.

### **Immigration: 192 cases, 5.7%**

- *Immigrant / Non-Immigrant Visas*
- *Naturalization*
- *Permanent Residency*

**Example:** In late February of this year, I heard from a couple in the Second District who is currently in the process of adopting a child from Guatemala. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office requires potential parents to be fingerprinted, and those records stay valid for 15 months. The couple's fingerprints were set to expire in just a short time, and they were planning to leave for Guatemala to finalize the adoption. In an

attempt to preserve their hopes of having a child, they contacted our office to see if their fingerprints could be redone before leaving the country.

When my staff first contacted USCIS, it was still too early for the couple to get their fingerprints reprinted. So, my staff looked into other avenues, such as having the couple get fingerprinted in the US Embassy in Guatemala during their stay. However, after consistent communication with the local Kansas City USCIS office, we were able to provide the couple with an opportunity to have their fingerprints taken prior to their departure. They are currently in Guatemala, hopefully gaining another addition to their family.

### **Health Care: 188 cases, 5.6%**

- *Medicare Problems*
- *Health-Related Concerns*

**Example:** Early last year, a Topeka woman discovered that she had been enrolled in Medicare Part D supplement without her knowledge. For a number of months, the program's premiums were withheld from her Social Security check, and all of her attempts to fix the problem met with failure and frustration.

In July 2007, she contacted my Topeka office to see if we could help find a solution. We asked Medicare to look into the matter, and they discovered that she was in fact enrolled in a program that she had not chosen. The problem was immediately fixed, and she received a prompt refund from Medicare for her premiums.

### **Disaster Relief / Agriculture: 130 cases, 3.9%**

- *Individual Disaster Relief Applications*
- *Community and Agency Disaster Relief Applications*
- *Advocating for Farmers to the Department of Agriculture*

**Example:** Between the floods, tornadoes, and ice storms that struck Kansas last year, every single county in the Second Congressional District was declared a federal disaster area. My office received numerous calls from constituents who had questions about the disaster relief process, and members of my staff attended numerous Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) briefings so that we could effectively advocate on behalf of Kansans.

One of our biggest concerns was ensuring that every Second District resident who was eligible for FEMA relief learned about the disaster declaration. After all, disaster relief funds do Kansans no good if they don't know they're eligible!

After the May 2007 floods, my staff walked door-to-door along flooded riverbanks to inform families about the disaster relief process. I also made wide-scale announcements over local radio.

The experiences of the last year have left my office with broad experience in navigating the federal disaster relief process. As Kansas weathers another year of potentially damaging conditions, we are ready to help.

**Federal Employment: 72 cases, 2.1%**

- *Assistance to Federal Employees with Work-Related Concerns*
- *Help to Retired Civil Servants*

**Example:** The Kansas Second Congressional District is home to tens of thousands of federal employees, including three military bases and one of the largest Coast Guard facilities in the country. When employees of these agencies encounter problems on the job or following their retirement, they often contact my office for help.

Among the cases we deal with are public employees who noticed inefficiencies in federal operations and retired civil servants who discovered unexplained changes in their retirement benefits. Often, our office provided the bridge that connected these individuals to solutions.

Not only can our office sometimes solve the problems of federal employees – we provide civil servants with a voice in the legislative process. These employees provide my office with a ground-level perspective on federal operations that is often overlooked in Congressional committee hearings.

**Financial: 104 cases, 3.1%**

- *Help with Tax-Related Problems*
- *Information on Consumer Rights*

**Example:** In April 2007, I hosted a *Congress on Your Corner* event at a Topeka coffee shop. Among the attendees was a gentleman who had noticed something odd in his Social Security statement. As a self-employed worker in 1977, he had properly filed his taxes and paid money into Social Security, but his benefits statement reported that he'd earned zero income that year.

My staff contacted the Internal Revenue Service and asked that they review the gentleman's records. They found that they had indeed made an error in reporting his income to the Social Security Administration. As a result of the omission of his 1977 income, his benefits had been miscalculated for years. He was eligible for a lump-sum payment of the accumulated benefits plus interest.

When the Social Security Administration refigured the constituent's payments, he received a check for over \$300.

## **Housing: 35 cases, 1%**

- *Advocating for Constituents Facing Housing Problems*
- *Connecting Constituents to Community Resources*

**Example:** Many Second District residents were impacted by the crisis in the housing market. Our office heard from numerous constituents who faced severe financial problems and were at risk of losing their homes.

While we are regrettably unable to intervene directly in a consumer's dealings with a mortgage company, we can provide important support through financial counseling. Toward that end, we often connect constituents with a federally funded credit counseling service.

Many of the Kansans who contacted our office discovered that, by adopting better financial practices and following the advice of a licensed credit counselor, they could keep their homes and begin restoring their credit.

## **Postal Issues: 40 cases, 1.2%**

- *Postal Service Delivery Issues*

**Example:** My office heard last year from a gentleman who was having problems setting up a post office box. As with many problems we hear about, the root cause was a simple breakdown in communication. Neither party was at fault; the problem was just a misunderstanding. We worked with the post office, and the constituent was able to set up his PO box.

My office's relationship with the U.S. Postal Service is important in many cases beyond those that directly deal with postal delivery. For example, during the passport crisis last summer, hundreds of Kansans contacted my office because their passports had been delayed after they were shipped in the mail. My staff worked closely with the post office to let constituents know exactly where their passports were and how long they might have to wait for delivery. On several occasions, members of my staff even picked up passports at the post office after hours and hand-delivered the documents to travelers the night before their early morning flights.

## **Student Loans: 53 cases, 1.6%**

- *Help with Repayment Problems*

**Example:** Many of the student loan problems my office addressed involved situations where a Kansan could not repay loans because of sudden health expenses or unexpected life changes. Quite often, we can work with the Department of Education to help constituents receive a temporary forbearance or reduced loan payments.

## **Passports: 806 cases**

**Background:** In addition to my office's normal casework operations, we responded last year to a passport crisis that affected millions of U.S. travelers.

In January of 2007, the U.S. State Department began requiring American citizens to present passports for air travel to several regions where, previously, no passport was required, including Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. As a consequence, the number of new passport applications climbed dramatically, creating a major backlog and increasing the average processing time from 10 weeks to nearly 18 weeks.

Our office worked with the State Department on behalf of nearly 800 constituents to ensure that their applications were completed in a timely manner. The vast majority of these constituents were indeed able to make their trips as planned.

**Example:** In the early months of 2007, the youth group at Topeka's Grace Episcopal Cathedral in Topeka began planning a pilgrimage to London and Canterbury. They raised funds, studied their history, and prepared for an exciting and educational trip – and they applied for passports well in advance of their trip. What they didn't count on, however, was the "Passport Crisis of '07."

The church contacted my office last summer after they heard about the passport crisis on the news. They provided us with a list of the travelers who still had not received their passports, and my staff went to work tracking down each and every one of their applications. Several were in the Charleston passport office. A few more were in Houston. One was as far away as New Hampshire.

We worked closely with the State Department to expedite their applications, and the last passport arrived in Topeka just days before the group's scheduled departure. All were able to make the journey.

## **Constituent Mail: 108,418 letters**

Kansans from the Second Congressional District wrote to my office about a wide variety of issues, and I strived to their questions as quickly and thoroughly as possible.

Most notably, my office responded to 5,280 letters within the course of three weeks regarding the financial bailout package. Of the letters that we received, only about 100 were form letters; the rest were individually crafted. A response of this magnitude regarding one issue is unprecedented in my office.

The three concerns I heard about most frequently were health care (12,052 letters), energy (11,161 letters), and immigration (10,035 letters). The thousands of letters I received on these issues provided invaluable guidance in my debates and votes in Congress.