

Legislative Update to Constituents

from U.S. Representative Bill Posey
Florida's 8th District

Dear Friend,

Many constituents I talk with feel that Washington just isn't listening to them. After years of divided government, massive budget deficits and ever-growing federal regulations that are choking job opportunities, it's understandable that Americans are distrustful of Washington and are frustrated with Congress's dysfunction.



Rep. Posey talks defense issues with employees of MARTAC in Melbourne.

I agree with their sentiment. Washington gridlock has made even the most basic functions of government like passing budgets and annual appropriations bills to fund the operations of the federal government virtually impossible.

Despite this challenging environment, I'm pleased to report that there are still opportunities to stand on principle and to be effective by working to find common-sense solutions. I would like to address some of those areas where we have passed important legislation to boost our commercial space efforts, spur economic growth, help our Indian River Lagoon, honor military veterans and hold Washington accountable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Posey".

Bill Posey

"Preparing young people to meet the challenges of the future is an important key to maintaining our competitive edge." -Rep. Bill Posey

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House Approves Bill to Promote Women Entrepreneurs in STEM Fields

The House recently passed the *Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act* (H.R. 4742), bipartisan legislation cosponsored by Rep. Posey to improve access to entrepreneurship programs in the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields by encouraging the National Science Foundation to recruit and support women. The bill also encourages participants in these programs to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the business world.

The House also passed the *Inspiring the Next Space Pioneers, Innovators, Researchers, and Explorers (INSPIRE) Women Act* (H.R. 4755) which directs NASA to do outreach to women and girls to encourage them to study and pursue STEM careers. The Space Coast has long been at the forefront of innovation, and Rep. Posey believes that preparing young people to meet the challenges of the future is an important key to maintaining our competitive edge.

Military Regiment Awarded Congressional Gold Medal

In a historic ceremony in Emancipation Hall in the U.S. Capitol, veteran soldiers of the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Borinqueneers," were formally recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award that Congress can bestow. On June 10, 2014, the President signed into law bipartisan, bicameral legislation introduced by Rep. Posey to recognize the service and sacrifices made by these brave American soldiers.

The 65th Infantry Regiment was created by Congress in 1898 as an all-Puerto Rican segregated unit. It was called upon to serve our nation in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War and became known as the Borinqueneers. During the now-famous Battle of Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War, the Borinqueneers fought alongside the First Marine Division, covering them through what is recognized as one of the greatest strategic withdrawals in military history.



Rep. Posey discusses the Congressional Gold Medal legislation during the ceremony in the U.S. Capitol.

UPDATE: Historic Commercial Space Legislation Signed into Law

In November the President signed the *U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act* which included several of Rep. Posey's key proposals to help promote future commercial space ventures and streamline the regulatory process to make the U.S., and Florida, more competitive for commercial launches.

The landmark space legislation includes Rep. Posey's bipartisan, bicameral bill to create a legal framework to protect property rights for American companies that obtain asteroid resources in outer space. Asteroids are excellent potential sources of highly valuable resources and minerals

that can be used here on Earth and to support future space missions. Posey said that, if Americans are willing to invest in asteroid mining, they will need legal certainty that they can keep the fruits of their labor.

Also included in the bill is Posey's Amendment to streamline the regulatory process and require greater cooperation among the Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of Defense and NASA – all of which have overlapping jurisdiction over commercial space launches.

Posey Bill Protecting Insurance Policyholders from Being Forced to Bail Out Financial Firms Becomes Law

Bipartisan legislation introduced by Rep. Posey to ensure that your personal insurance policies won't be raided in order to prop up failing financial institutions was signed into law last December. *The Policyholder Protection Act* guarantees state insurance regulators' authority to protect insurance funds or assets from being

used as a "source of strength" by an affiliated institution like a bank. Rep. Posey believes that it is wrong to force middle-class families to put their homeowners or life insurance policies at risk because some Wall Street firm made a bad bet.

Addressing Our Lagoon's Health is a Top Priority

Raising my family along the Lagoon and working in local real estate for many years has helped me to appreciate the importance of our Lagoon for our quality of life, for tourism and the economy, and for our property values. Collaborative efforts by individuals and local, state and federal governments are essential in restoring our Lagoon's health. On the federal level, I have worked with colleagues in Congress to advance bipartisan legislation that will improve the health of the Lagoon.



- ✓ **Reauthorizing the National Estuary Program:** The House and Senate have passed legislation to reauthorize the National Estuary Program which includes my bipartisan plan to reprioritize existing federal funds so more money is available for estuaries with critical needs like our Lagoon.
- ✓ **Ten Mile Creek:** Washington's bureaucracy has delayed bringing online the Ten Mile Creek Preserve Restoration Project. Congress stepped in to advance this project, which will treat storm water run-off before it reaches the Lagoon. Our bipartisan plan empowers local authorities to take over this project to prevent further delays. This proposal was recently signed into law.
- ✓ **Fighting Algal Blooms:** Experts still have many questions about the root causes of algae blooms and how to fight them. I worked to get bipartisan algal bloom research legislation through the House and to the President's desk. The bill reauthorized research grants to look at the prevention, causes, and mitigation of algal blooms like the ones in our Lagoon.
- ✓ **Marine Mammal Research & Rescue:** It's common to read about stranded wildlife along the Lagoon, and time is short to rescue these creatures. That's why every year I have successfully fought to restore proposed funding cuts for the Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Program which matches local funding for stranded marine mammal response.
- ✓ **Repairing the Herbert Hoover Dike:** Heavy storm events often cause Lake Okeechobee – and its nutrient-laden discharge water – to overflow into surrounding rivers and eventually into our Lagoon. I recently cosponsored bipartisan legislation (H.R.4667) to expedite repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike to help alleviate further discharges.
- ✓ **Everglades Restoration Support:** Redirecting Lake Okeechobee's overflow away from the Lagoon will help improve its health while also naturally filtering this water. I have cosponsored bipartisan legislation authorizing the Central Everglades Planning Project, and I voted to fund the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan which will move this project forward and support our Lagoon.

House Passes Key Veterans Legislation

To continue the fight to improve benefits and services for our nation's military veterans, the House of Representatives passed several pieces of legislation supported by Rep. Posey which will reform construction of new VA facilities, rescue failing ones, and expand access to mental health services.

- ✓ Authorizing construction of new VA facilities and installing an Inspector General to investigate cost overruns and keep construction projects on schedule (H.R. 3106)
- ✓ Dispatching emergency teams to quickly rescue and turn around failing VA facilities (H.R. 3234)
- ✓ Providing better mental health care options for female veterans and expand access to mental health services for veterans who served in classified missions or sensitive units (H.R. 2915)



Rep. Posey talks legislative issues with WWII veterans during a recent Honor Flight.

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It is provided as a service to 8th Congressional District constituents.

House Passes Bill to Block Federal Officials from Abusing Their Authority

The House of Representatives passed important bipartisan legislation cosponsored by Rep. Posey to block the Justice Department and financial regulators from abusing their authority to target legal and law-abiding businesses they may not like. *The Financial Institution Customer Protection Act* (H.R. 766) is a continued effort to ensure the Administration's abusive tactics under a program known as "Operation Choke Point" do not happen again.

Through a program called "Operation Choke Point," the Justice Department and financial regulators teamed up to coerce banks and financial institutions into severing relationships with perfectly legal businesses because the Administration did not like these industries. Gun

and ammunition stores, tobacco shops, short-term lenders and payment processors are among some of the businesses that have been targeted by "Operation Choke Point."

The legislation prevents this abuse of power and requires federal banking agencies to provide banks with written justifications for any request to terminate or restrict a customer's account. By correcting the abusive tactics in "Operation Choke Point," the bill refocuses the mission of the Justice Department and Washington regulators to investigate fraud and other criminal acts. Posey said there is a difference between investigating criminal activity and unilaterally shutting down legal businesses and then denying them due process.

Rep. Posey's Personal Accountability Checklist

Rep. Posey believes that he should lead by example, and here's how he's doing it:

- ✓ Voted to block Congressional pay increases for 2010 to 2015
- ✓ Has returned the pay raise every year (that was approved before Rep. Posey came to Congress in 2009). Also returned full pay for service during federal government shutdown
- ✓ Introduced legislation requiring at least 72 hours for the public and Congress to review bills before a House floor vote can take place (Adopted as Three-Day Rule Reform, 2011)
- ✓ Cosponsored and voted for the STOCK Act to ensure that Members of Congress don't trade stock based on insider information (P.L. 112-105)
- ✓ Filed an amendment to stop sweetheart investment deals that enable Members of Congress to participate in Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) not available to the general public (H.R. 3606)
- ✓ Cut his own office budget by more than \$650,000 while in office
- ✓ Proposed ending the Congressional death gratuity so that Members of Congress are required to purchase their own life insurance rather than getting a taxpayer handout when they die (H.R. 3127)
- ✓ Introduced bipartisan legislation banning Members of Congress from lobbying for 5 years after leaving office (H.R. 318) and to eliminate their federal benefits if they choose to lobby (H.R. 319)
- ✓ Voted to cut Congressional pensions (H.R. 3630)

