



At a press conference the week before Thanksgiving, Congressman Becerra spoke to concerned mothers from all across the country about the large budget cuts targeting the neediest of Americans.

ATTENTION SENIORS!

The new Medicare prescription drug program begins January 1, 2006. The deadline to apply is May 15, 2006. After that, seniors must pay a penalty fee to sign up. There are over 58 Medicare Advantage plans of varying quality and options offered by 16 companies in Los Angeles County. In addition, there are 47 stand-alone prescription drug plans offered by 19 companies serving the state of California. Please take the time to learn and evaluate each plan to see what, if anything, might benefit you. For more information, visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov> or call 800-633-4227.

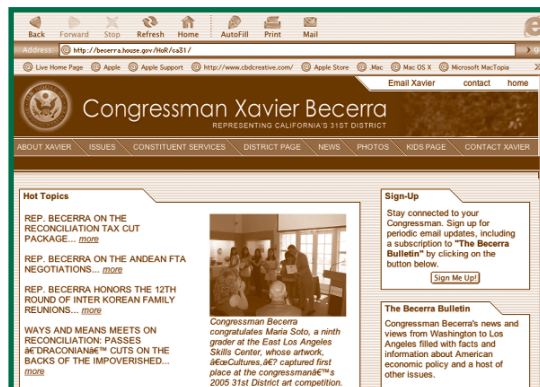
Si desea esta información en español, por favor llame al (213) 483-1425.

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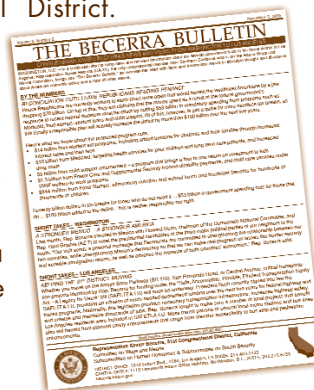
ARE YOU CONNECTED TO YOUR CONGRESSMAN?



Log on to Congressman Becerra's Web site (<http://becerra.house.gov>) to read the latest news from Washington, D.C., and about the 31st Congressional District.

Learn about the various ways his office can be helpful, email him, and also sign up for periodic email updates, including a subscription to the "Becerra Bulletin."

Log on to <http://becerra.house.gov> and sign up!



CONGRESSMAN XAVIER BECERRA THAT'S SERIOUS!

December 31, 2005



Dear Friend:

I got a chuckle out of this "top three" list of how to tell if 2006 will be a challenging year:

3. Your twin sister forgets your birthday.
2. You see a "60 Minutes" news team waiting in your office.
1. Your income tax refund check bounces.

A good joke always lets you laugh. But as I thought about the bouncing tax refund check, my breathing paused. And guess what ... this is serious!

We are witnessing the largest annual federal budget deficits our nation has ever experienced. In five years, President Bush has borrowed **three times** the amount that the first 39 presidents in the nation's first 191 years (1789 - 1980) borrowed (read more inside). That's serious!

What's more, we are engaged in a dubious war with no end in sight at a cost of thousands of precious lives and a bill that totals \$357 billion to date and increases by \$6 billion every month. That's serious!

Never in the history of this country had a president or a congress looked to cut taxes for the wealthy during a time of war until President Bush did in 2003. And now he's looking to do it again. The centerpiece of these proposed tax cuts - relating to capital gains and dividends on investments - targets the lion's share (nearly 53 percent) to the richest one-fifth of one percent (say it again so that it sinks in!) of the American taxpaying population. Those who are sacrificing for us in Iraq and Afghanistan would see little benefit from these tax cuts. That's serious!

In the House of Representatives, Republican leaders have chosen to dramatically cut dollars from foster care programs (\$600 million), health care for modest income Americans who are aged, blind or disabled (\$11 billion), student loans for college (\$14 billion) and child support enforcement (think deadbeat dads) programs (\$5 billion). Are these cuts proposed to reduce the massive budget deficit? No. To pay for the ongoing costs of the Iraq war? No. To aid the recovery from Hurricanes Katrina or Rita? No.

Then why? To pay for part of the cost of the tax cuts benefiting mostly America's wealthiest people. My friends, that's serious!

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy, in a speech about individual prosperity, said, "A rising tide lifts all boats." Today, we face not a rising tide of broad and shared prosperity, but a rising tide of debt, which I fear may sink all boats.

I think you'll agree - that's serious!

Sincerely,

XAVIER BECERRA
Member of Congress



Congressman Becerra met with students from Jefferson High School this past August. Read more about that visit inside.

CONGRESSMAN BECERRA'S ANNUAL SURVEY ON GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Help me best represent you. Please take a moment to fill out the attached survey and mail it back to my office. Many thanks for your time and consideration (especially to you frequent responders)!

1. Do you approve of the way Congress is handling its job? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
- No opinion

2. Do you believe the United States is winning the war on terrorism? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
- No opinion

3. What phrase or phrases best describe your personal feelings about the war in Iraq? (circle all that apply)

- We should stay the course
- The president has a clear, cohesive strategy for winning the peace
- The president does not have a clear, cohesive strategy for winning the peace
- We should consider redeploying our troops, maintaining a sufficient regional presence to offer training, security assistance and rapid response capabilities
- We should immediately withdraw our troops
- Other: _____

4. Do you feel that you have benefited from the president's tax cuts in 2001 and 2003? (circle one)

- Yes, I benefited a great deal
- Yes, I saw a benefit, but it wasn't substantial
- No, my benefit was marginal and was not worth the consequences
- No, I did not benefit at all
- No opinion

5. Should Congress enact a tax cut, which gives 53% of the financial benefits to 1/5 of 1% of the American taxpaying population? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
- No opinion

6. Should Congress cut domestic programs to (select "Yes" or "No" for each option):

- Reduce the deficit?
Yes ___ No ___
- Pay for Hurricane Katrina relief?
Yes ___ No ___
- Pay for the Iraq war (approx. \$6 billion/month bill)?
Yes ___ No ___
- Pay for tax cuts that primarily benefit America's wealthiest?
Yes ___ No ___

CONGRESSMAN XAVIER BECERRA
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515



This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

M.C.
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KEEPING LOS ANGELES MOVING

Angelenos are no strangers to congested roads and dangerous intersections. That is why I fought to secure federal funds for the following transportation improvements in our neighborhoods:

SOUTH LOS ANGELES – Central Avenue Historic Corridor project addresses pedestrian safety and traffic problems along one of Los Angeles’ most historic (it’s home to L.A.’s legendary jazz district) and congested routes between downtown Los Angeles and the harbor.

GLASSELL PARK and CYPRESS PARK – San Fernando Road Corridor economic redevelopment project will reconfigure San Fernando Road from Fletcher Drive to the I-5 Freeway and improves community access to the exciting up-and-coming recreational space at the Rio de Los Angeles State Park SRA (formerly Taylor Yards) by widening the road, and adding sidewalks and a traffic light intersection.

PICO UNION – Los Angeles Trade-Tech College Metro Blue Line and bus stop project improves safety, mobility, and access between the college and nearby transit links at one of Los Angeles’ most heavily traversed pedestrian and traffic epicenters by adding crosswalk, lighting and signage improvements.

HISTORIC FILIPINOTOWN – Temple Boulevard project widens sidewalks at critical intersections, and introduces gateway signage and streetscape improvements in one of Los Angeles’ vibrant cultural neighborhoods.

OPTIMIST HIGH SCHOOL OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services commemorates 100 years of service to Los Angeles’ at-risk youth. In a recent effort to better serve its students, OYHFS opened a new learning center building thanks to the generous contributions of several private and public partners, including a federal grant that I helped secure. The new Everychild Foundation Youth Learning Center opened its doors November 17. The building provides space for state of the art classrooms, a multi-media art center, dance, drama, theater space, and a computer lab. Congratulations to Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services, and I wish you all the best in your new facility!



Congressman Becerra and Optimist Executive Director Sil Orlando chat with Optimist students during the congressman's recent tour of the new Everychild Foundation Youth Learning Center.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL – EARLY AND OFTEN

In a special effort to serve the 47,453 young people ages 15-19 that reside in the 31st Congressional District, I tour local high schools in the district each year. The theme of each school visit has ranged from talking to students about a career as an elected official, conducting a mock congressional hearing, and discussing local issues. On a special visit to Jefferson High School this past August, I was joined by Councilwoman Jan Perry to address over 100 students who were in turn, able to speak directly with their city and federal representatives on issues of importance to them, such as school uniforms and school safety.



This past November, I spoke at the California Library Association's 107th annual conference where we discussed my legislation establishing student loan forgiveness for college graduates who become librarians in underserved neighborhoods. I succeeded in getting my proposal included in the Higher Education Reauthorization Act, which will be taken up in the House of Representatives in early 2006. From left to right: Margaret Todd, Director of the L.A. County Library System; Congressman Becerra; Barbara Pearson, Director of the Altadena Library District; and Mark Mariscal, President of the Board of Trustees for the Altadena Library District.

PRODUCTIVE PATHS FOR OUR YOUTH

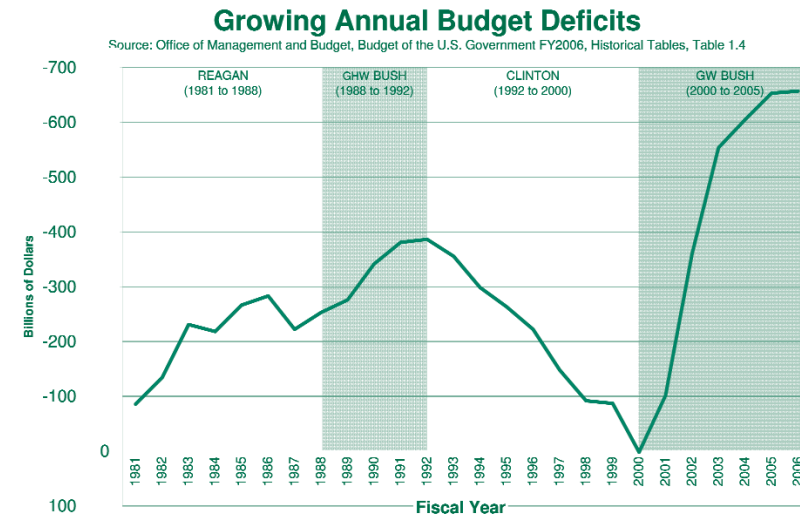
Though filled with amazing, eclectic neighborhoods and over 640,000 hardworking, kind and generous women, men and children, the 31st Congressional District is still unfortunately, one of the poorest districts in the nation. Included, Los Angeles is home to over 400 gangs while services offered to students after class is dismissed are minimal.

Fortunately, the 31st District is home to many altruistic nonprofit organizations whose mission is to make the lives of our youth more fulfilling. Because these organizations are so vital to the well-being of our kids, I fought to secure federal funds of at least \$25,000 for each of the following organizations:

- Anahuak Youth Soccer Association
- Art in the Park
- Exodus Urban Academy
- Hollywood Beautification Team
- P.F. Bresee Foundation
- Ramona Hall Community Center
- Search to Involve Pilipino Americans
- Soledad Enrichment Action
- South Los Angeles Beautification Team

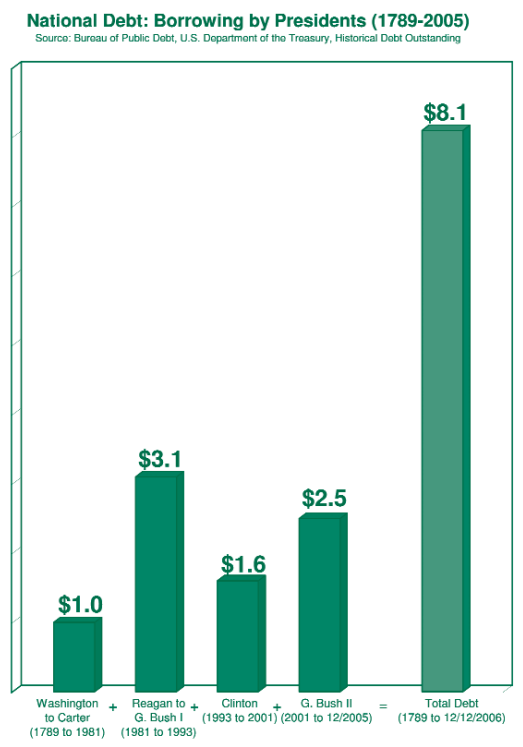
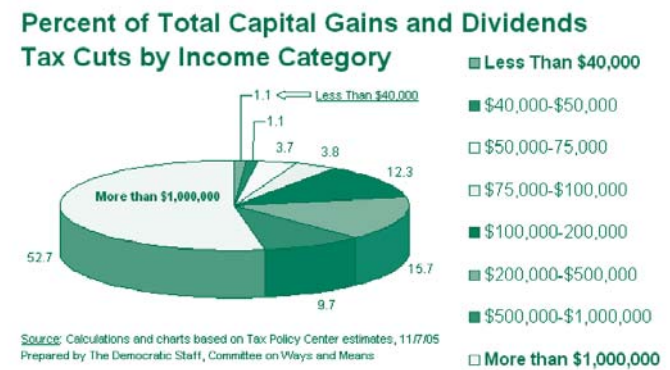
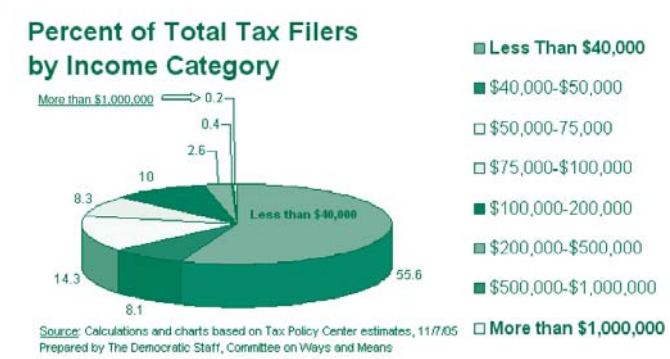
These organizations continually make us all so proud to call them friends and neighbors.

Throughout the first 191 years (1789-1980) of our nation's history, 39 presidents ran up a combined debt of approximately one trillion dollars. In the past five years alone (2001-2005), the Bush Administration has borrowed a staggering \$2.5 trillion to offset its record budget deficits. Today, the nation's total debt stands at \$8.1 trillion.



CUTTING TAXES IN A TIME OF WAR

As you can see from the charts below, millionaires (1/5 of 1% of the nation's taxpayers) receive 52.7% of the dividend and capital gains tax cuts. Americans who make up to \$40,000 a year (over half of the nation's taxpayers) receive 1.1% of these tax cuts. No president until President Bush had ever cut taxes, particularly for the wealthiest, during a time of war.



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