

Ninth District News

Congressman Adam Smith



Talking with Guard members in Adam's Tacoma office

Improving South Sound Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve

Every year, Adam renews his efforts to help businesses work effectively with the National Guard and encourage companies to employ more American servicemen and women. Positive employer support enhances retention rates in the Armed Services and in the end, strengthens our national security.

Adam signed the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Statement of Support on August 17th. Members of ESGR also visited the congressman's Tacoma office to talk about their collaboration with local companies, like Microsoft, who have improved their support for employees who also serve in the Guard.

Groundbreaking for new home of Raisbeck Aviation High School

On a cloudy day in August, hundreds of students, parents, teachers and supporters gathered at an empty lot on East Marginal Way to watch the next phase of Pacific Northwest education take flight. Construction has begun on the new home of Raisbeck Aviation High School, which aims to teach local young people science, engineering, and mathematics in the context of aviation.

RAHS is a public school that has been operated by the Highline School district since 2004. Attendees come from as far away as Olympia, Everett, and Bremerton. Until now, students and teachers have held classes at South Seattle Community College or Des Moines Middle School.

The new location, adjacent to the Museum of Flight, offers a wealth of resources for students eager to learn



Students attend the Aug 23rd ceremony

about the science and mathematics of flight. Administrators also hope every student has the chance to connect with a mentor in the aerospace industry, thanks to the school's proximity to Boeing Field.

"I am pleased to participate in the groundbreaking for this promising institution. The Pacific Northwest is home to some of our country's premiere technology-driven companies. The Aviation High School will help ensure we also continue to lead in producing highly skilled workers who are equipped to succeed in a competitive global economy," said Adam, on attending the August 23rd ceremony. "The next generation of scientists, researchers and engineers will get their start here. We must continue to invest in education and support opportunities for young people to reach their full potential."

The 3-story, \$43.5 million building, the result of state, federal, and private funds, is slated to open in 2013.



Adam speaks before the RAHS groundbreaking

Smith holds budget town hall in Burien

Adam held a town hall meeting at the Burien City Council Chambers on Thursday, August 25th, to discuss the national budget and America's economic policy.

"I believe it is my job to listen to the people of the Ninth District and engage with them in open public forums. I will do my best to represent my constituents and do what I feel is best for the country," said Rep. Smith.

During the meeting, Smith heard from concerned citizens who highlighted the need for job growth, addressing our mounting national debt and deficits, regulation of Wall Street, and worries about the future of programs like Social Security.

One small business owner was concerned about the extension of the Federal Aviation Administration's funding bill, due to expire in September. Rep. Smith assured her that he supports passing a long-term bill that will protect workers and grow jobs by allowing infrastructure improvements to move forward.



Town Hall attendees were encouraged to join the discussion

Before opening the floor to questions and comments, Rep. Smith emphasized the need for a balanced, comprehensive approach to fixing our fiscal and economic challenges. "A complete debt-reduction plan will have to address revenue and cut spending in a responsible and balanced way," said Smith.

Global 'Reforming Aid' seminar draws experts on international development

In August, local development organization Global Washington hosted a discussion between policymakers and experts on foreign assistance and effective modes of reforming aid to meet today's global challenges. Adam joined a panel at the University of Washington's Kane Hall that included Paul Weisenfeld of USAID's Bureau for Food Security; Kent R. Hill Senior Vice President, International Programs, World Vision; and Sophia Belay, Microinsurance Program Coordinator, Oxfam America.

Adam talked about the importance of foreign assistance during today's dire budget situation. "Global Stability," he said, "is important for national security, further economic interests in terms of access to foreign markets and global health, as diseases do not recognize national boundaries."

He also applauded the efforts made by USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah to make the case for funding of more efficient aid programs, but pointed out some improvements that could be made to the structure of America's aid delivery. The congressman drew a comparison between UK's Department for International Development, (DFID) and USAID. He pointed out that DFID, as an independent ministry, prioritizes the

goal of reducing poverty and controls 95% of the budget. Meanwhile, USAID exists as one of the 37 agencies responsible for foreign assistance delivery with limited control over the budget. Adam strongly recommended the DFID model, saying "We need to have a clear set of goals, focused on reducing poverty, and one person in charge."

Adam finished by arguing that the public needs to send a clear message to their elected officials, including two key points: "1) Foreign aid is not a lot of money, and 2) it does impact all of us, both the moral obligation and from the view of countering instability in the world."



Global Washington's Reforming Aid Seminar

Adam calls for a long-term solution to FAA and Surface Transportation Funding

On September 13th, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2887, the Surface and Air Transportation Programs Extension Act of 2011.

This bill authorizes Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) programs through January 30, 2012 at current funding levels. The legislation also authorizes federal highway, transit and highway safety programs through March 31, 2012 at current funding levels. Both FAA and Highway funding were due to expire by the end of September. This is the 22nd FAA extension and 8th surface transportation extension in four years.

"I support the passage of this bill to avoid a repeat of the harmful August Federal Aviation Administration

shutdown that cost 4,000 federal employees and 70,000 construction workers part of their paychecks," said Adam.

"Extending funding for Surface Transportation programs will also mean needed upgrades to America's roads and bridges, infrastructure projects that will create jobs now.

"However this is still only a short-term solution, buying us a few more months before the same debate returns. It is time to remove political obstacles and pass a long-term bill.

"Congress must act to pass a long-term extension that fully funds the air and surface transportation needs of our country. This action is a critical piece of improving our economy for both the short and long term."

Tacoma

2209 Pacific Ave, Suite B,
Tacoma, WA 98402
253.593.6600

Washington, D.C.

2402 Rayburn House Offices
Washington, DC 20515
202.225.8901

Visit Adam's Online Office

<http://AdamSmith.house.gov>

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