

CONGRESSMAN XAVIER BECERRA

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Congressman

Xavier Becerra

CALIFORNIA'S 31ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
VICE CHAIR OF THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS



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Congressman
Xavier Becerra

REPRESENTING CALIFORNIA'S 31ST DISTRICT
AND SERVING AS VICE CHAIR OF THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS



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<http://BECERRA.HOUSE.GOV>: CONNECT WITH YOUR CONGRESSMAN

It's my job to stay connected with you, in person and online, as your representative in Congress. If you want to learn about the next Coffee With Your Congressman, find out how I voted on a particular issue, or plan a trip to Washington, D.C., you can do it all on my website: <http://Becerra.House.Gov>.

YOU CAN ALSO FOLLOW ME ON THESE SOCIAL MEDIA SITES:

- FACEBOOK** <http://www.facebook.com/XavierBecerra>
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WOULD YOU LIKE A 2012 WE, THE PEOPLE CALENDAR?



In years past you may have received a *We, the People* Capitol Historical Society calendar from me. I sent calendars to constituents who contacted my office, or attended a Coffee With Your Congressman meeting as a way to help them stay connected to my office and our nation's capital. Due to budget constraints this year, I will mail calendars only to those who request one.

TO REQUEST A 2012 CALENDAR:

Simply call my office at 213-483-1425 between the hours of 9am and 5pm and let my staff know that you would like a calendar.



A SIMPLE CHOICE: BUILD UP OR TRICKLE DOWN

Most Americans sit down at the kitchen table, pay the bills and responsibly balance their checkbooks. They pay the mortgage, utility and credit card bills, save for retirement and their children's education, and cut out unnecessary spending everywhere else. Budgeting is not always easy but it's a straightforward process of setting priorities.

In Congress, we must make the same choices in the interest of our nation's future. Do we help put millions of Americans back to work or continue to shelter the wealthiest Americans from paying their fair share? Do we strengthen the social contract made between generations – guaranteeing Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security will be there for our kids and grandchildren – or do we slash these services in the guise of deficit reduction?

As I write this letter, Congress is debating the extension of President Obama's payroll tax cut for middle class working Americans. This tax cut expires at the end of the year. If we don't act, 160 million Americans could see their taxes increase by an average of \$1,500, and as a result, economists say 400,000 Americans could lose their jobs. So far, Republicans in Congress are blocking this legislation in order to protect 300,000 millionaires and billionaires from paying their fair share.

It's a simple choice: do we build up or do we trickle down? Do we pursue an agenda to strengthen the middle class or one that continues down the same path of primarily benefiting the wealthiest among us? Over the past 12 months, this Republican-led Congress has made its priorities clear:

- Instead of passing the President's American Jobs Act to help put up to 2 million Americans workers back on the job, the majority in Congress voted to protect tax breaks for Big Oil and loopholes that benefit millionaires and billionaires.
- Instead of holding accountable the policies that drove us into record deficits, the majority in Congress voted to end Medicare as we know it.
- Instead of building upon the historic health care reform law that has helped 2.6 million seniors each save an average \$569 on their prescriptions just this year, the majority in Congress voted to force seniors to pay twice as much for their health care.

Though the challenges before us are great, the path forward is clear: we can no longer afford to keep doing the same thing time and again expecting a different result. It's time to get serious about putting Americans back to work and dealing with the budget deficit in a responsible way that doesn't hurt our seniors or working families. It's time for Washington to take a lesson from the folks back home and start prioritizing the things that matter most.

Sincerely,

Xavier Becerra

XAVIER BECERRA
Member of Congress

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

DROP BY THE OFFICE OR GIVE US A CALL

Sign up for email updates at:

Becerra.House.gov

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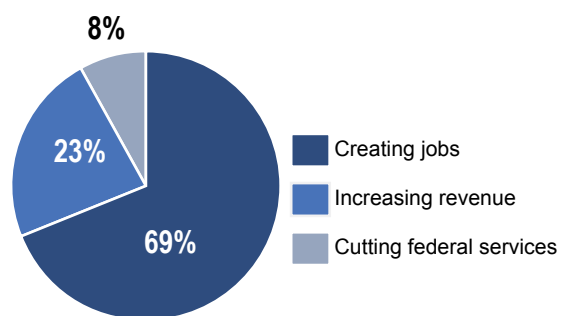
CAPITOL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND AROUND WASHINGTON, D.C.



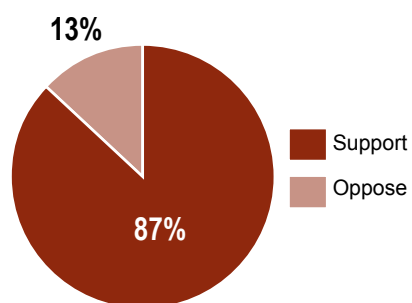
THE PEOPLE ARE AHEAD OF THE POLITICANS

In August I was appointed to serve on the 12-member Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. We were tasked with finding a way to reduce the nation's federal budget deficit and put our economy back on track. As your representative in Congress I asked for your ideas and priorities for deficit reduction in a survey. I received more than 1,900 responses and the chart below demonstrates the results:

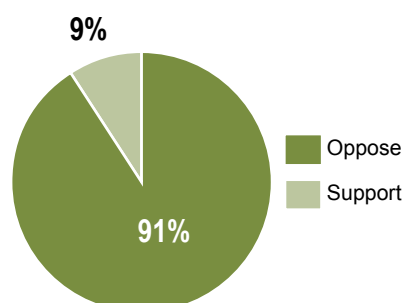
What Should be a Higher Priority?



End Bush Tax Cuts for Wealthiest?



Cut Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid Benefits?



STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY



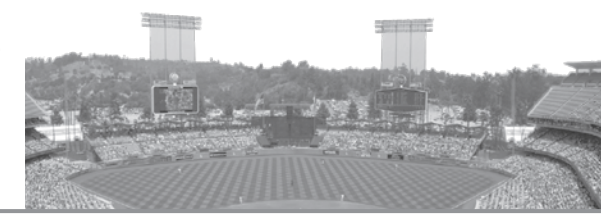
Ranking Member Becerra (right), seated next to Chairman Sam Johnson (left), holds a \$20 bill and a U.S. Treasury savings bond at a Social Security Subcommittee hearing to illustrate the solvency of the Social Security Trust Fund, July 8, 2011.

At the beginning of the year I was elected by members on my committee to serve as Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, which oversees what I consider to be the most effective and reliable program in our nation's history. In its 76 years, Social Security has eliminated poverty in retirement for the vast majority of American families. It also serves as a vital life and disability insurance policy that helps millions of working families make ends meet when a mother or father can no longer work or passes away. My mission as Ranking Member is to protect Social Security from any attempt to harm the program, or break the sacred bond that unites America across generations.

SOCIAL SECURITY'S \$2.7 TRILLION TRUST FUND

On May 13, the Trustees of the Social Security Trust Fund released their annual report that affirms Social Security is alive and well. In 2011 working Americans will add \$69 billion to the trust fund, which is projected to top \$2.7 trillion in reserves that can pay earned benefits in full and on time well into the future. Over its lifetime, Social Security has brought in over \$13 trillion in revenues, earned \$1.6 trillion in interest and paid out \$11.9 trillion in benefits, leaving \$2.7 trillion in surplus. The next time someone tries to tell you that Social Security is "broke," simply tell them that you have \$2.7 trillion that says it is not.

THE DISTRICT DIGEST DISPATCHES FROM THE 31ST



SENIOR CITIZEN TOWN HALL



Rep. Becerra (right) chats with a constituent at his Senior Citizen Town Hall event on May 20, 2011 at the Highland Park Senior Center.

Times are tough, especially for senior citizens living on a fixed income. That's why in May I hosted a town hall and resource fair for our local senior citizens to provide information on programs designed to assist them in day-to-day life. Agency representatives and local officials took questions and offered financial tips and information on city, state, and federal programs for seniors. Our nation made a promise to its seniors that after a lifetime of hard work, you deserve to retire with dignity and without fear of poverty. Even though we face tough economic times today we must stand firm behind that promise.

CASEWORK Corner

Having trouble dealing with a federal agency like Veterans Affairs, Social Security, or the IRS? If you are, I can help. My staff has over 30 years combined experience cutting through red tape on behalf of constituents just like you. This year, more than 30,000 constituents called, emailed or wrote a letter to my office on various issues and my casework staff helped over 400 residents close the file on their individual cases—including:

- A World War II veteran whose 9-year-old claim for service connected disability benefits was finally approved on appeal, with back pay.
- A cancer patient who wished to be reunited with her daughter, a citizen of El Salvador. Staff worked with the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador to expedite the review of the daughter's application for a visa to visit her mother, which was ultimately granted.
- A taxpayer from Highland Park who finally received the 2009 tax refund he was owed after staff worked with the Taxpayer Advocate and the IRS to resolve the issue.

To learn more, visit the "Helping You" section of <http://Becerra.House.Gov> or call the office at 213-483-1425.

JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR'S ARTWORK IN THE U.S. CAPITOL



Rep. Becerra (second from right) stands with, from left to right, art teacher Luis Garcia, art competition winner Brenda Barajas, and Mary Emmons, President and CEO of the Children's Institute, Inc., May 17, 2011.

Brenda Barajas, a senior at Jefferson High School in South Los Angeles, is the winner of this year's Congressional Student Art Competition for our congressional district. As this year's winner, Brenda was provided an all-expense paid trip to Washington, DC to see her artwork unveiled in the halls of the United States Capitol, where it will be on display for one year. "Not many people can say that they have their artwork in the Capitol. So many Congressmen and important people go and see it—it just makes me feel good," Brenda said after the ribbon cutting ceremony. Brenda will be attending California State University—Dominguez Hills next year. Congratulations Brenda!

Learn more about the Congressional Student Art Competition and see this year's artwork, see video of the Secure Communities press conference, and find out how Rep. Becerra can help you with your case... all this and more at <http://Becerra.House.Gov>.