

[Update from U.S. Senator John Cornyn](#)

November 14, 2003

George Washington once compared the future U.S. Senate to a saucer, where legislation would be allowed to cool. Unfortunately, partisan debate has been extremely hot in the Senate this fall, perhaps because we're approaching next year's Presidential elections.

Confirming Judges

This week, in an effort to dramatize the plight of several unconfirmed judicial nominees, the Senate met in a rare all-night, around the clock session that lasted some 40 straight hours. The goal was to put the national spotlight on unprecedented Democratic misuse of Senate rules to prevent an up-or-down vote on six highly-qualified federal judge candidates nominated by President Bush. Some Senators believe the all-night session will not change any minds. I believe it may cause a new look at abuse of Senate rules, particularly the filibuster, perhaps leading to a new majority vote requirement for the President's nominees. I continue to battle for a fresh start for civility and mutual respect in the Senate, but I recognize that it will be a long battle.

Iraq Supplemental

After some foot-dragging, Congress finally approved a supplemental appropriation supporting our troops and their efforts to rebuild Iraq. I was greatly encouraged by President Bush's visionary speech last week expressing our long-term security interest in promoting democracy in areas of the world that have never known freedom as we know it.

Veterans

I was pleased that we approved important legislation this week - appropriately, very close to Veterans Day - to allow "concurrent receipt" for many veterans. It was an important step in honoring our commitment to those who have sacrificed to protect our freedoms and I hope we will soon be able to expand concurrent receipt to 100 percent of disabled veterans. In addition, I have been working actively along with Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison to protect existing VA facilities in Waco and Big Spring.

Partial Birth Abortion

By an overwhelming vote in both the House and Senate, the Congress has banned a late-term abortion procedure that a great majority of Americans find repugnant. President Bush signed the new law last week. Although legal challenges began immediately, I believe we're well on the way to bringing some rationality to this area of the law.

Economic News

The spate of positive economic news in recent days - 7.2 percent growth in the third quarter, reduction in unemployment, high incidence of home ownership, and a revised forecast for the first quarter of next year - is a strong indication that we are finally on the road to economic recovery. The numbers prove that President Bush's economic policies, especially tax reductions, are working. In my view, the Congress now has a further duty to contain federal spending so that the economic recovery has its best chance of continued success.

Come See Me

If you're traveling to Washington for business or pleasure, I would greatly appreciate the chance to say hello while you're here. I have an open house in my office, Hart Senate Office Building, Room 625, from 9:00 to 9:30 AM every Tuesday while Congress is in session, so I can greet and talk with Texans who are here. Please call Denise Pleasant in my office at (202) 224-2934 to let me know you'll be coming.

Best regards,

Senator John Cornyn