

Rep. Scott Peters' (CA-52) Wish List for a New Year and a New Congress

Foster San Diego's Innovation Economy to Create Jobs

Too many Americans are working harder than ever before yet still struggling to make ends meet, afford a home, or send their kids to college. The best way to make the American Dream attainable for all is to create an environment that encourages economic prosperity, particularly in our technology and innovation sectors, which are central to San Diego's future growth. To do this, I will continue to pursue legislation that supports their growth such as increased funding for the National Institutes of Health. And I will continue to look for ways to simplify, streamline, or remove overly burdensome federal regulations that stifle their growth, such as the Medical Device Tax.

Reform Congress & Campaigns to Increase Efficiency, Transparency

The American people are exasperated by the lack of progress in Congress. We must get government back to working for our constituents by increasing efficiency and transparency at all levels, including strengthening and making permanent 'No Budget, No Pay' that says Congress doesn't get paid if it can't pass a budget. It is also time for commonsense reforms that reduce the influence of money in politics, such as reversing *Citizens United*, and repealing the misguided rider in the recent government funding bill that hugely increased the ability for individuals to contribute to political parties.

Make College Affordable for the Middle Class

A college education is increasingly out of reach for middle-class families across the country. According to the College Board the cost of college has increased 225 percent in the last 30 years. In an increasingly brain-powered world we will need the best and brightest students and workers. That starts by passing legislation to reduce the federal student loan interest rate to a similar rate the government borrows; we should not be making a profit on the backs of our students. We must also stop cuts to Pell grants and instead increase funding to the program and others like it that gives students a chance to succeed.

Support our Military and Keep Our Promises to Veterans

I'll continue to fight for a smarter, more strategic military budget that improves readiness, advances the DOD's strategic pivot to the Pacific, and protects and provides for our servicemembers, their families, and our veterans. For example, this year I will reintroduce the 'Department of Defense Energy Security Act' (DODESA) which will speed the development of advanced defense energy technologies and save military lives. And I will continue to fight to end the scourge of veterans' homelessness by renewing my push for a new homelessness funding formula at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Reintroducing my 'Shelter Our Servicemembers Act' will be another big step.

Funding to Fight Wildfires

As fire seasons expand, and we face prolonged droughts across the country, our current funding system to fight fires cannot keep pace. In 8 of the last 10 years we have exceeded the funds set for firefighting efforts, and the Department of Interior has been forced to pull funds from future years' prevention or other unrelated accounts. Instead of raiding prevention to pay for current years, we should change the way we fund federal firefighting. Passing legislation similar to last term's 'Wildfire Disaster Funding Act'

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in this Congress would be a good start. We should also be working with state and local agencies to increase resiliency efforts that prepare communities for wildfires.

Tax Reform

The current tax code is riddled with outdated exemptions and spending that is causing economic inefficiency and not incentivizing job creation here at home. The complex code is making it expensive and difficult for small business to comply, and the high corporate rate is hurting American competitiveness while trapping billions of profits from American companies overseas. Last year, former-Rep. Dave Camp put forward a serious proposal that should have at least spurred a real dialogue on action. I hope that moderate, pro-growth majorities in both parties will work toward a simpler, more efficient tax code that incentivizes companies to bring overseas profits home so it can be invested here.

Comprehensive Action on Immigration

Our country's immigration laws are muddled, confusing, and a hindrance to economic growth. President Obama took action last year because the House failed to act, but we can all agree that Congressional action is necessary. This broken system is forcing many of the best and brightest from around the world to return home after we educate them in American universities. It is time for a comprehensive solution that increases efficiency and the use of technology as we secure our border, reforms our high-skilled visa program, and brings families into the open so that they can fully contribute to the economy.

Aggressive Action to Curb Climate Change

Climate change is real and is being caused by human actions. If we do not act to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions, extreme weather will be more intense and more frequent, to the detriment of our communities. We must support efforts to reduce carbon emissions at power plants, reduce our use of super pollutants including methane and black carbon, make investments in research and development for renewable energy sources including algae, and improve information sharing and infrastructure to prepare our communities for the harmful impacts of extreme weather to come.

Equal Pay for Equal Work

In 2014, in many places across the country women are not receiving equal pay for equal work. That kind of pay discrimination harms our economy and must end. Despite past efforts, including the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, more action is necessary. We must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to ensure pay equity, while also working to improve opportunities for women in the workplace by in part by enhancing STEM education programs for women and girls.

Infrastructure for the Future

Across the country, roads and bridges are crumbling and costing our economy billions of dollars each year in inefficiency. We need to be making investments in infrastructure at border crossings and our ports to facilitate trade, and we must work toward bipartisan, long-term, forward-thinking solutions on the highway trust fund that put it on the path toward sustainability.