

## Social Security, Medicare and Paying Down the National Debt

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND PAYING DOWN THE NATIONAL DEBT

The House and Senate recently passed a spending plan that Congressman Fletcher has been working on for the past several weeks. Fletcher, a member of the House Budget Committee, has always been a strong advocate of paying down the debt and protecting 100% of the Social Security and Medicare surpluses. For the second year in a row this very important goal has been achieved.

"Since arriving in Congress, I have had the privilege to play a role in the historic process of finally paying down the publicly held debt and working to preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare," said Fletcher.



Discussing Seniors' issues with Bert Sisk and other members of the First Franklin County OARP.

## Tax Fairness

SUPPORTING TAX FAIRNESS FOR ALL

Congressman Fletcher has made it one of his priorities to work toward a simpler, fairer tax system for all Americans. Recently, he has worked with his colleagues in the United States Congress to address this issue and strongly believes we have taken several steps to achieve this important goal. While there is much work to be done in this area, he is pleased that we have started correcting some of the unfair burdens within our tax system.

"For too many years we have penalized our youth for getting married, our farmers for trying to preserve and protect their farming heritage, our Seniors for choosing to work, our small businesses



### Protecting 100% of the Social Security Surplus

- Just last year, Congressional Democrats wanted to spend \$57 billion of the Social Security surplus.
- Under the Republican plan, every penny of the \$161 billion Social Security surplus is off limits to fund other government programs.
- For the 2nd year in a row Congressman Fletcher worked to protect the Social Security surplus.

### Strengthening Medicare with Prescription Drug coverage

- Dr. Fletcher is the original co-sponsor of a bi-partisan prescription drug plan.
- Dr. Fletcher strongly believes we need an affordable and voluntary plan that is available to all folks in need or with high drug costs.
- Dr. Fletcher has voted to set aside \$40 billion to help needy Seniors afford their prescription drugs and has rejected the \$18.2 billion Clinton administration Medicare cuts.

### Paying Down the Debt

- Retires the Public Debt by 2013.
- Developed a plan that will pay off about \$1 TRILLION of public debt over 5 years.
- During the past several years, the publicly held debt has been reduced \$302 billion.

for trying to succeed and millions of working Americans for trying to save for their retirements," said Fletcher.

This is why Congressman Fletcher recently voted for a series of measures that empower folks - instead of penalizing them with unfair and unnecessary taxes. He believes that these important reforms address many of the worst burdens within our tax system and am pleased that this Congress is working together - at the beginning of the 21st Century - to ensure tax fairness for all working Americans.

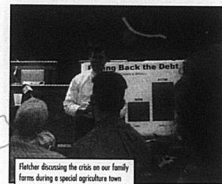
- Ended the Seniors' Earning Limit
- Provided for Marriage Penalty Relief
- Improved Retirement Security for Working Americans
- Provided for Death (Inheritance) Tax Fairness
- Ensured affordable health insurance for the self-employed

## Agriculture - Tobacco

WORKING TO ADDRESS THE CRISIS ON FAMILY FARMS THROUGHOUT CENTRAL KENTUCKY

Congressman Fletcher has been addressing the crisis facing our family farmers throughout Central Kentucky. He has been a strong voice on the House Agriculture Committee and continues to work each day toward finding short term and long term solutions to the many issues facing family farms in the 6th District and throughout Kentucky.

"Since my first day in the United States House of Representatives, I have fought on behalf of tobacco farmers and small family farms throughout Central Kentucky," said Fletcher. "I strongly believe there is much work to be done as our farmers are facing a 45% cut in income, rising imports, direct contracting - a recovery from one of the worst droughts in Kentucky's history and adverse policies from the Clinton Administration."



Fletcher discussing the crisis on family farms during a special agriculture town hall meeting in Richmond, Kentucky.

THIS IS WHAT CONGRESSMAN FLETCHER HAS BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE FOR FAMILY FARMERS THROUGHOUT CENTRAL KENTUCKY.

- FOUGHT THE ADMINISTRATION WHICH HAS WORKED HARD TO ELIMINATE THE TOBACCO PROGRAM AND FARMING HERITAGE.

Fought the Clinton administration's attempts to fund new spending on the backs of our tobacco farmers. Congressman Fletcher helped stop President Clinton's plan to increase tobacco excise taxes by 55 cents per pack. He has pledged to do the same with the President's misguided 25 cent per pack tax increase in his FY 2001 budget proposal.

- Fletcher supported legislation that ensured President Clinton's federal lawsuit against the tobacco companies would not be funded.
- CONTINUES TO FIGHT THE TOBACCO COMPANIES TO ENSURE THAT THEY WORK WITH -- NOT AGAINST OUR FAMILY FARMERS.

- WORKED WITH THE IRS COMMISSIONER, CHARLES ROSSOTTI, TO CLARIFY THAT PHASE II INCOME COULD BE REPORTED IN EITHER 1999 OR 2000. Technically Phase II money should have been reported in 2000,

however farmers will not be penalized for filing in 1999, nor will they have to amend their taxes.

- BROUGHT THE AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TOBACCO TO CENTRAL KENTUCKY TO DISCUSS THE CRISIS FACING FAMILY TOBACCO FARMERS. The hearings provided an excellent forum for farmers to communicate directly with members of the Agriculture Committee on how to alleviate the strain facing our farmers.

- URGED THE USDA TO REIMBURSE FARMERS FOR CLEANING UP THEIR PONDS DURING ONE OF KENTUCKY'S WORST DROUGHTS.

Cost share assistance for pond clean up is not available to many farmers who acted in an emergency situation and cleaned ponds filled with siltation before the Emergency Conservation Program was implemented. Fletcher is working to resolve this problem.

- WORKED TO ASSURE AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS BILL INCLUDED IMPORTANT ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY FARMS. The funding bill provided \$1.2 billion for weather related disaster: \$325 million in livestock and dairy assistance; \$328 million in tobacco farmer assistance and \$5.4 billion in market loss payments for grains.

- USING INFORMATION FROM HEARINGS IN LEXINGTON AND WASHINGTON, THE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE PASSED THE AGRICULTURAL RISK PROTECTION ACT.

This legislation, which is in House Senate conference, would make crop insurance more accessible by reducing farmer premiums, protecting producers against price and production volatility, increasing producers' insurable yields, and initiating new risk management for livestock producers.

- INTRODUCED THE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS ACT, DELIVERED \$328 MILLION TO TOBACCO FARMERS FOR THE 1ST TIME EVER. THIS YEAR \$125 MILLION WILL GO DIRECTLY TO CENTRAL KENTUCKY TOBACCO FARMERS.

Congressman Fletcher is proud of this important support because other segments of agriculture such as grain, sugar and other crops have received disaster money in the past, but this is a first for our tobacco farmers.

- INTRODUCED LEGISLATION TO EXEMPT PHASE II MONEY FROM FEDERAL INCOME TAXES - TOBACCO FARMERS RELIEF ACT.

- THIS YEAR FLETCHER WORKED WITH THE BUDGET COMMITTEE TO INCLUDE OVER 7 BILLION FOR EMERGENCY FARM ASSISTANCE.

- WORKING WITH FAMILY FARMERS AND THE BURLEY STEERING COMMITTEE TO MAKE SURE THAT TOBACCO FARMERS ARE ONCE AGAIN COMPENSATED FOR THEIR ECONOMIC LOSS. ■



Discussing tobacco issues with Jim Mayhew and Frank Finn of the Fayette County Farm Bureau.