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Report from Washington D.C. on status of critical issues facing Congress

Patricia F. Saiki Papers
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UNITED STATES CONGRESSWOMAN

PAT SAIKI

REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. — OCTOBER 1989

Aloha!

As Congress works toward adjournment, many vital and important issues will be debated.

Although many important policy decisions have already been decided, some of the most significant ones remain to be voted upon in both the House and the Senate.

Our nation's drug problem will receive the focus it needs as will other issues summarized in this newsletter.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office in Honolulu or Washington if you would like more information.

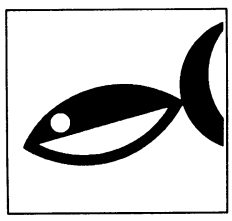
Sincerely,

Pat

Patricia Saiki
Member of Congress

Laverne Moore of the Hawaii State Teachers' Association calls on Congresswoman Patricia Saiki to discuss child care legislation.

STATUS OF CRITICAL ISSUES FACING CONGRESS



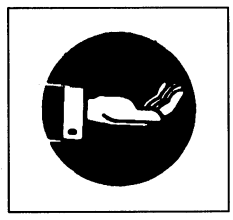
Saiki Amendment Passes — Tuna Would Be Protected

The House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries has approved an amendment offered by Congresswoman Pat Saiki to include tuna under the conservation and management provisions of the Magnuson Act. This action represents a major turnaround in a long-standing policy which many have felt discriminates against Hawaii fishing interests.

The amendment will, if enacted, help protect Hawaii's tuna fisheries from depletion by foreign and out-of-state fishermen. It will also help resolve problems in the management of other migratory fisheries, such as swordfish and billfish.

The Governors of Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands strongly supported this amendment as a way to protect Pacific fisheries as well.

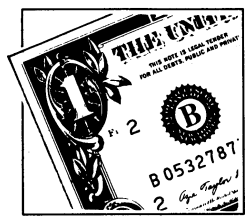
Saiki's amendment is now a part of the reauthorization of the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, which is expected to be considered by the full House shortly.



The Budget Deficit

Under the budget agreement passed by the Congress earlier this year, the budget deficit must be reduced to a maximum of $110 billion. In order to accomplish this, a "budget reconciliation" bill must be passed that will include spending reductions and revenue increases. This is often one of the most contentious bills which appear in the Congress, and this year involves debate over the capital gains tax, child care tax credits, and Medicare spending.

If the Congress fails to pass legislation to adequately reduce the budget deficit, then, under the Gramm-Rudman law, a "sequester" takes place in which across-the-board cuts are automatically made in the federal budget.



Capital Gains Tax

One of the top priorities for President Bush has been to see a reduction in the capital gains tax as a way to encourage investment. At issue here is the effectiveness of a reduction in

Continued on page 4

Crystal Methamphetamine
The New Threat

SAIKI DELIVERS FLOOR SPEECH TO ALERT COLLEAGUES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1989

MR. SPEAKER, our nation faces an insidious drug problem. But many don't realize we're on a dangerous new turn.

Crystal methamphetamine, an illicit drug known as "ice," is being heavily used and trafficked in Hawaii, and is spreading to the mainland. *Ice* is twice as lethal as cocaine, and more serious.

CBS News reported this drug resulted in six emergency room admissions a day in Honolulu. One out of four babies born addicted to drugs are addicted to *ice*. Virtually nonexistent 18 months ago, there have now been over 400 arrests for possession or sale of *ice* in Hawaii, according to the *New York Times* last week.

Experts predict it's the drug plague of the nineties.

Now, officials say Hawaii will be used by Asian *ice*-producers as the trans-shipment point for the mainland.

So, I have written to drug czar William Bennett urging him to designate Hawaii a high-intensity drug-trafficking zone, to provide new resources to deal with this.

I ask my colleagues to help stop this *ice*-trafficking now, before it spreads out of control.

Daniel Bent
United States Attorney

U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

District of Hawaii

Room C-242, United States Courthouse
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Box 50183
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850

COML (808) 541-2850
FTS 8-551-2850

September 23, 1989

Dear Congresswoman Saiki:

America is now engaged in its second civil war. Again the issue is slavery. While Hawaii was spared from the first such upheaval, smokable crystal methamphetamine --Ice-- has put us at the cutting edge of this second civil war. The slavery of past centuries used chains of iron to deprive the slave of freedom. Now it is chains of molecules that enslave drug users. Even more, drug use is now significantly affecting those who do not use illegal drugs.

Virtually unknown 20 months ago, smokable crystal methamphetamine has become an epidemic in Hawaii. In the past, this drug was only taken by injection. This provided a barrier to the spread of its use. Now like Crack, "Ice" is a smokable form of a highly addictive drug. For even the first time user the prospect of the slavery of addiction, brain seizures, heart and lung failure, psychosis and violence is near.

America's flirtation with drug use since the 60's has delivered us to where we are today. It has deprived us of much of the talent of several generations. Fortunately, the attitude that drug use is a victimless crime is changing. We now know that all of us are its victims.

Congress has recently given us important tools to take on drug dealers. In Federal Court in Hawaii we are now putting many of them in prison for very long terms without the possibility of probation or parole.

I strongly support your present efforts to have Hawaii declared a high intensity drug trafficking area. This will provide resources to more fully address "Ice" and, just as important, to address all other illegal drug use which has created the slippery slope to this current "Ice" epidemic.

Very truly yours,

DANIEL BENT
United States Attorney

SAIKI ASKS BENNETT FOR NEW DRUG WAR RESOURCES

Under the drug bill passed by Congress in 1988, the Director for National Drug Control Policy, William Bennett, has the authority to designate certain areas of the country as *high intensity drug trafficking areas.*

Congresswoman Saiki has written to Mr. Bennett (letter below) specifically requesting this designation for Hawaii.

If the Director determines that Hawaii should be so designated, he then has the following authority:

1. to temporarily re-assign federal personnel to deal with the drug problem: and,

2. to coordinate increased federal efforts with those of State and local governments.

Director Bennett is expected to make his recommendations later this year, or in early 1990.

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES

SUBCOMMITTEES:
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT
OCEANOGRAPHY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

September 20, 1989

The Honorable William J. Bennett
Director, Office of
National Drug Control Policy
Executive Office of the President
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I am writing to urge that you seriously consider designating the State of Hawaii as a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.

As you know, under PL:100-690, the Director for National Drug Control Policy is authorized to designate such areas based on the extent to which an area is a center for illegal drug production, manufacturing, importation, or distribution, as well as the extent to which the drug-related activities in that area have a harmful impact on other areas of the country.

Unfortunately, it is my considered view that Hawaii does meet these criteria. The massive production, distribution, and exportation of marijuana from Hawaii is well known. However, law enforcement officials now believe that Hawaii is at the forefront of what may become the drug plague of the 1990s, trafficking in crystal methamphetamine, or "ice."

Ice is a new smokable form of crystal methamphetamine, which is reportedly twice as lethal as crack cocaine. Recently, CBS News reported that the Queen's Medical Center in Honolulu was admitting six emergency room cases a day as a result of Ice. Although ice was virtually non-existent in Hawaii 18 months ago, in this year alone, there have been over 400 arrests for possession or sale of ice in Honolulu, according to the New York Times.

Apparently, this drug is being exported to Hawaii from laboratories in the Philippines, Korea, and Hong Kong. What is even more troubling, however, is that there are indications that Hawaii may become the trans-shipment point for exporting this drug to the U.S. mainland.

I believe the designation of Hawaii as a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area would be a great help to us and the nation in dealing with this problem. It would provide for increased federal assistance to Hawaii in waging war against this insidious drug crisis.

For that reason, I respectfully ask your consideration of this request. I hope you will not hesitate to let me know if you would like to discuss this issue further, or if you have any questions about the extent of this serious problem in Hawaii.

Sincerely yours,

Pat Saiki

Patricia Saiki
Member of Congress

. . . Issues Facing Congress *Continued from page 1*

the tax as a way to encourage investment, the fairness issues of whether poor people will be able to benefit equally in a tax reduction, and the impact of a reduction on revenues to the federal government.

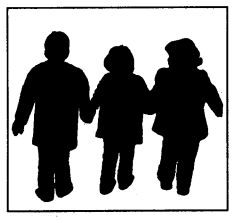
The House has approved a temporary reduction in the capital gains tax, which would also "index" the tax, so that taxpayers do not have to pay more taxes because of inflation. The House passed the measure 333 to 91 with Congresswoman Saiki voting "yes."

Catastrophic Care

Momentum continues to build for a revision or outright repeal of the catastrophic health insurance law passed by the 100th Congress. Many of those who were intended to be the primary beneficiaries of this law, seniors, are opposed to the plan. The major complaints against the law are the surcharges imposed on the elderly to pay for the plan, as well as the fact that some of the benefits of the plan are already available to some elderly through private plans.

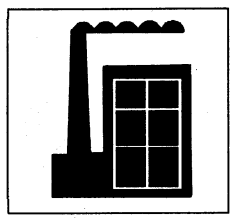
The House voted overwhelmingly, 360-66, to repeal the law, leaving in place only Medicaid provisions aimed at helping poor and low-income elderly. Congresswoman Saiki joined the majority voting to repeal.

Child Care



Both the House and the Senate have voted in favor of comprehensive child care legislation, making it likely that some legislation will be enacted into law this year. The proposals passed would expand federal support for child care services and increase tax credits for the working poor who have children.

The House passed the measure 333 to 91 with Congresswoman Saiki voting "yes."



Clean Air

Prospects have improved for House passage of the reauthorization of the Clean Air Act. However, Senate passage and final agreement on this issue still seem to be a long way off. President Bush has offered his own clean air package, which is likely to receive some consideration in the Congress.

The Drug War

The President's proposal to deal with the drug problem is expected to receive close scrutiny in the Congress. In addition, the methods of funding anti-drug programs already existing will be debated. Some have suggested raising income taxes as a way to fund the drug war, while others seek to take the money from other federal programs.

Oil Spill Protection

Following the Alaska oil spill, as well as several smaller oil spills, the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee has passed legislation to address emergency response capabilities, prevention, and liability laws concerning oil and hazardous substance spills. This legislation stands a good chance of enactment before the end of the year.

Reparations for Japanese-Americans

The House, by a vote of 258 to 165, approved $50 million for reparations for interned Japanese-Americans, which is considered less than the amount intended under the *Civil Liberties Act of 1988.* Congresswoman Saiki voted "yes" for the funding.

The Senate appropriated no money for reparations, but made a recommendation that the program receive automatic funding outside of the normal congressional budget process beginning in 1991.

STUDENTS' MILITARY "ACADEMY NIGHT"

Congresswoman Pat Saiki will sponsor an event for all interested high school students in Honolulu who wish to attend a military or service academy next school year.

Congresswoman Saiki's "Academy Night" will be held at 6:30 p.m., on Monday, November 6, 1989, at the Diamond Head Campus of Kapiolani Community College, in the Ilima Building, Room 105.

Representatives from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy will give a brief orientation of their school and answer students' questions about each academy.

Interested students are urged to attend this "Academy Night" presentation to better understand Congresswoman Saiki's nomination process and to become more familiar with the academy they wish to attend.

Congresswoman Patricia Saiki
United States Congress
Washington, D.C. 20515

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STATUS OF CRITICAL ISSUES FACING CONGRESS