

Jo Bonner

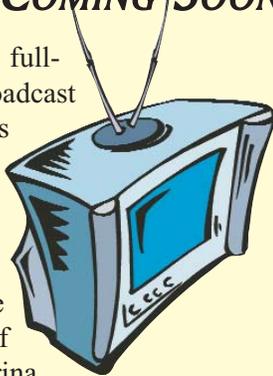


THE WASHINGTON CYBER REPORT

422 Cannon House Office Building ★ Washington, DC 20515 ★ (202) 225-4931 ★ July 2008

BIG CHANGES FOR TV COMING SOON

Starting February 17, 2009, all full-power television stations must broadcast exclusively in a digital format. This means stations will no longer broadcast in analog and some traditional receivers will no longer work.



The decision to transition to analog was due in large part to the lessons learned in the wake of September 11th and Hurricane Katrina. First responders must be able to communicate with each other in times of disaster, and switching to digital will free-up bandwidth for use by first responders.

If you use an antenna or “rabbit ears” to watch television – and you do not subscribe to cable, satellite, or any other pay television service – you will need to upgrade to digital television by February 17, 2009, in order to continue to have television reception.

Approximately 85 percent of American households have cable or satellite television service. However, the other 15 percent of households will require a digital converter box.

There are three options to continue your television reception:

- Purchase a digital television (DTV) converter box for your existing television set;
- Purchase a television set with a built-in digital tuner; or
- Subscribe to cable, satellite, or some other pay television service.

A DTV converter box hooks up to your analog television set, and each box is expected to cost between \$40 and \$70. The U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is issuing each household up to two \$40 coupons to help cover the cost of the converter boxes.

You can apply online for a coupon at www.dtv2009.gov/ApplyCoupon.aspx. For more information, you can call the Coupon Program 24-hour hotline at 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009) or visit www.dtvanswers.com.

12 TOWN MEETINGS NEXT MONTH

The upcoming August district work period will afford me the opportunity to hold town hall meetings in all six counties of Alabama’s First District.

Listed below are the times and locations for our next series of town meetings:

Monday, August 11

- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Bay Minette, City Hall
- 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Atmore, Municipal Auditorium
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Brewton, City Hall
- 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Monroeville, City Hall

Tuesday, August 12

- 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Grand Bay, Senior Center
 - 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. Creola, City Hall
 - 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Chatom, Town Hall
 - 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.* Jackson, City Hall
- *Our newsletter incorrectly listed this time as 5:30-6:30 p.m., but due to council business, it will begin at 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 13

- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Semmes, Community Center

Thursday, August 14

- 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Fairhope, City Hall
- 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Foley, City Hall
- 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Lillian, Community Center

I look forward to visiting in a town near you.



We are proud to offer an internship program in our District Office. Pictured (l to r) are: Hannah Chappelle, Candace Barnes, Marissa Stabler, and Ashley Nichols.



I took a picture in the Cannon House Office Building with my second group of summer interns. Pictured with me (l to r) are: Brooks Zimmermann, Amanda Kistler, Brandi Morgan, Marianna Hyland, and Pace Petrouson.



My district staff recently had the opportunity to tour the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, the 7,000-acre treasure that is home to nesting sea turtles, the Alabama beach mouse, and migratory birds. While at the refuge, my staff had a tour of one of the walking trails along Little Lagoon that extended all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, and they learned about the important role the refuge plays in protecting our migratory birds as well as a number of endangered and listed species. Pictured above with my staff is Refuge Manager Jereme Phillips.

New Travel Requirements Now in Effect

New travel requirements are now in effect for United States citizens returning from any part of the Western Hemisphere.

Now all persons, including U.S. citizens returning to the United States by air, land and sea, are now required to present proof of citizenship at U.S. ports of entry.

The new travel requirement, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), was mandated by Congress in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 to strengthen border security and facilitate entry into the United States for citizens and legitimate international visitors.

The new passport requirement does NOT apply to U.S. citizens traveling to or returning directly from a U.S. territory. U.S. citizens returning directly from a U.S. territory are not considered to have left the United States.

Complete information on how to apply for a passport is available at the Consular Affairs website, <http://travel.state.gov>.

If you have applied for your passport, you can monitor the status of your application on the Department of State's website <http://travel.state.gov/passport> and within one week of applying, you are able to track the progress of your application.

If it is within two weeks of your departure date, and the website does not indicate your passport is completed, you should call the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) toll-free at 877-487-2778 for assistance in arranging to have your passport ready in time for your trip.



From the mailbox...

*Dear Congressman Bonner,
I do appreciate how rapidly you responded to my staff's concerns regarding timely Medicare payment for medical services. As you know, I'm a pulmonary and sleep physician. More than half of my patients are Medicare patients. Without a consistent and dependable payment system from Medicare, it's impossible to perform appropriate business planning.*

I've had problems with Medicare payments twice since founding my business in early 1998. The first time I requested help you performed admirably as Congressman Callahan's Chief of Staff. Again, you've justified my support in you as my Congressman.

Thank you so much for your help in this matter.

*Sincerely,
A satisfied constituent
March, 2008*

