

Jo Bonner

THE WASHINGTON CYBER REPORT

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“THE CONGRESSIONAL REPORT” RATES NO. 1

Beginning in 1973, three members of Congress — Bob Sikes of Florida, Jack Edwards of Alabama, and Trent Lott of Mississippi — sat down in front of a television camera and spent thirty minutes discussing current events in Washington, D.C., and how those events might impact their constituents on the Gulf Coast.

With that, “The Congressional Report” was born, and over thirty years later it stands as the longest-running public affairs program of its kind in the country. Much of the success of this program is a result of the support provided by WKRG-TV 5 in Mobile and their efforts to provide timely and civic-minded programming for the Gulf Coast viewing area.

I was recently informed that “The Congressional Report” is the number one program in its Sundays at 10:00 a.m. time

period, and has higher ratings than programs aired on the other major networks at that same time! I certainly want to thank every one of you who takes time out of your busy weekend schedules to watch the program and who have made it the number one Sunday show in Mobile.

Along with the guests who appear on “The Congressional Report” and the topics we discuss, I look forward to continuing to provide you with regular updates on events in our nation’s capital through my weekly news column, my weekly radio broadcast, my monthly e-mail “Cyber Report,” and my twice-yearly newsletter. If you would like more information on any of these programs or newsletters, or to offer critiques or suggestions on future guests or topics, I encourage you to visit my web site at www.house.gov/bonner or call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.

TOWN MEETINGS WILL BE
HELD IN APRIL.
CHECK MARCH CYBER
REPORT FOR SCHEDULE.



Following the President's State of the Union Address, I had the opportunity to discuss some of the points he made with a C-SPAN reporter.

TAX CODE CHANGES FOR 2003

With April 15 just around the corner, everyone is thinking about the inevitable: assembling our W-2s, receipts, mortgage interest forms, and every other bit of financial information accumulated during the last year in order to complete our annual federal tax forms. It’s certainly a burden on anyone who has to endure the hours of reading the instructions and preparing their returns, and I can’t think of anyone who enjoys this process.

However, there are several positive things to keep in mind when filling out this year’s tax forms. The Jobs and Growth Tax Reconciliation Act of 2003 made several changes in the tax code that will provide great benefit for millions of Americans. Below are just a few examples of these changes and how they will potentially impact you and your families:

Reduction of Individual Tax Rates: Marginal tax rates above 15 percent have been reduced across-the-board by two points to 25, 28, and 33 percent. The top rate has been reduced

3.6 points to 35 percent.

Marriage Penalty Tax Relief: The standard deduction for joint filers and qualified widows has been increased to \$9500, an increase of \$1650 from the previous level.

Increase in the Child Tax Credit: The Child Tax Credit has been increased by \$400 to a new rate of \$1000 per child.

Increase in the Child and Dependent Care Credit: Under the revised tax code provisions, up to \$3000 of expenses for one qualified person, or \$6000 for two or more qualified persons, can be used to calculate the Child and Dependent Care Credit. This credit is also applicable for anyone who paid for care of a spouse or a dependent incapable of self-care.

If you have more questions on these or other revised provisions of the tax code, I would encourage you to visit the website of the Internal Revenue Service, www.irs.gov. And as always, please feel free to contact my office if you would like additional information on how these provisions may affect you.