

By Kevin McCarthy May 20, 2011 [Link](#)

This week, I was home in the district spending time with many of you in our community. On Tuesday, I traveled to Lancaster to present Merit Awards to students from East Kern and Los Angeles Counties. This year, I've presented these awards to a total of 38 high-school students in California's 22nd Congressional District to honor their hard work, dedication to academics and commitment to their communities.

These students, as well as those who were recently awarded admission into U.S. Service Academies, continue to prove that our communities produce some of the best and brightest young people in the nation. For example, sixteen-year-old Heidi Yi is graduating with honors from Burroughs High School and is a recent graduate of Cerro Coso Community College. She maintained a 4.0 GPA and received a nearly perfect score on her SATs while still finding time to be a tutor and volunteer at the library. Another stand-out student is Mathew Prasser from Highland High School, who not only was a merit award recipient but also organized and developed the now-annual 'Turkey Trot' to benefit the Bakersfield Homeless Shelter. I'm proud to have these students in our communities.

On Wednesday, I had the chance to participate in an assembly at Centennial Elementary School in Bakersfield where I talked with students in the 3rd-6th grades about government, the importance of civic participation and how they can help shape our community, nation and world. Each time I visit a school, I'm reminded of how important it is to reinvigorate our economy so these kids can have more opportunities than we did.

That's why I am co-sponsoring legislation with Congressmen Devin Nunes and Jeff Denham to get water flowing in our communities again. Our region has suffered for too long from California's man-made drought. The lack of water due to government overregulation has contributed to the double-digit unemployment and lackluster economic recovery in our region. This legislation would bring tens of thousands of acre-feet of water to Kern County, has the potential to create up to 30,000 jobs in our region and could save taxpayers close to \$1 billion. This is common sense action that we need now.

Another barrier to job creation is government overspending, and that's something my colleagues and I are continuing to tackle back in Washington. The United States hit its debt

ceiling this week, meaning we've essentially maxed out our credit card. Now, the President is asking us to raise the debt limit without spending reforms, and I'll tell you right now that won't happen. We borrow 40 cents of every dollar, predominately from China, and it is simply unsustainable. We have to change the way Washington does business. We must take serious action to address our spending addiction and put real caps and reforms in place that will put us on the path to fiscal prosperity.

My colleagues and I in the House are committed to this and we'll continue to fight for common sense Washington spending policies.