

By Kevin McCarthy February 4, 2012 [Link](#)

The health of our economy remains the No. 1 issue for many in our community. We're at a 17-year low with new start-ups and our unemployment remains above 8 percent. Where we are in the world today is very similar to the challenges we faced in 1979.

Instead of worrying about Japan, we worry about China and India. We had energy concerns and rising gas prices tied to the Middle East, and today Iran is threatening to close the Strait of Hormuz. Americans are asking themselves the same question: Will the next generation be better off than the generation before? Just like in 1980, we need to take action to unleash our nation's economic potential.

First, we must stop overregulation and can look to Mojave as a model. This week, the House passed legislation that included a provision I fought for to protect the commercial spaceflight industry from government overregulation.

Jobs in this industry have grown exponentially over the past decade, particularly at the Mojave Air & Space Port. From SpaceShipOne to Stratolaunch Systems, there has been major investment here. Already, 25 percent of all the jobs at the space port have to do with commercial spaceflight, and this week's action opens the door for continued investment, innovation and job creation here and around the country.

Second, we need to help small businesses with access to capital. I got tremendous feedback this week from Kern County residents through two teletown halls. One woman in east Kern expressed frustration about accessing capital for her small business. As a former small business owner, I know exactly how she feels, and I've been working to help address the problem.

Among a group of bipartisan bills that passed the House intended to help small businesses is a bill I introduced, the Access to Capital for Job Creators Act (H.R. 2940). This bill would modernize securities regulations to open a new door for businesses to obtain the funding they need to expand and hire. It passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, but lingers

in the Senate with 26 other job-creating bills. At a time when we're experiencing persistently high unemployment nationally and locally, we need to be doing everything in our power to put people back to work and help small businesses expand.

Third, we must expand our energy resources. The Keystone XL Pipeline project can do that and create jobs in America. This project would not only create 20,000 good-paying American jobs right away, it would also reduce our dependence on oil coming from an unstable Middle East.

I remain hopeful the president will start listening to the American people on this. Polls show that most Americans want this project, and more than 90 percent of participants in my recent telephone town hall meetings said they supported it.

I can assure you that I will not back down and continue pushing to move this project forward.

If we make the tough decisions, I know our small businesses and entrepreneurs will bring our economy back.