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Dear Friends,

As Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Intelligence subcommittee, I have been briefed on the recent terror plots in Dallas, Illinois and New York.

### Terror Plots

In summary, both the Dallas and Illinois suspects appear to have acted as lone wolves with no formal ties to a terrorist organization. However, both arrests are a tribute to the perseverance of the Department of Homeland Security, FBI and our intelligence community. Without their efforts these plots could have been carried out, and the human loss would have been devastating. I am most concerned about the plot to attack New York's rail system similar to attacks against London and Madrid. We know the prime suspect, Najibullah Zazi, has ties to al Qaeda and received terrorist training in Pakistan's tribal areas. We believe others were involved and need to be brought to justice. This wave of threats against the United States speaks volumes to the need for us to continue the successful military, national security and counter-terrorism policies that have protected Americans for eight years since 9/11.

### IN THE NEWS – McCaul on terror plots

[New York Times: Terror Suspect Is Transferred to New York for Trial](#)

"The big question they're trying to figure out is who's part of the bigger network."

[Ft. Worth Star-Telegram: Suspect in Dallas terror plot makes first court appearance](#)

"We're seeing a more decentralized terrorist threat."

[Fox News Channel: Terrorism Interview](#)

[Dallas Morning News: Dallas skyscraper bomb plot suspect says he understands charges](#)

[KLBJ Austin: Interview on NYC Terror Plot](#)

[KLBJ Austin: Interview on Afghanistan Policy](#)

### Healthcare Update

Last week, the Senate Finance Committee was busy marking-up Senator Baucus' \$865 billion healthcare bill, which is currently the primary vehicle for healthcare reform in Congress. While we have not seen the exact language, I remain concerned about ensuring access to affordable quality care regardless of income or pre-existing condition, without mandates and increased tax burdens on individuals or businesses. It has already been determined by the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation that Baucus' bill will indeed increase taxes

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on those whose incomes fall below \$250,000 totaling more than \$400 billion in tax increases. Despite these tax hikes, the bill will substantially decrease seniors' Medicare Advantage benefits. I remain supportive of reform but not an overhaul that destroys the best healthcare system in the world.

### **More Unemployment Benefits**

Last week the House voted to extend unemployment benefits to Americans who've lost their jobs by another 13 weeks. While I believe the government should play a role helping those who've lost their jobs get back on their feet, I voted against this bill because it extends those benefits to an unprecedented 92 weeks. Further, Texans would not qualify for the benefits because the bill applies only to states with unemployment rates above 8.5 percent. Under this bill, Texas becomes a donor state and is essentially penalized for our economic success. Instead of incentivizing Americans to live off the government for nearly two years, we should be cutting taxes on businesses and giving incentives to create more jobs.

### **Highway Funding Extension**

The House passed a 3-month extension of federal highway funds for states to maintain funding at current levels. I voted in favor of this bill so Texas will continue to receive an uninterrupted stream of funding. However, I am disappointed that the majority did not offer an 18-month extension that would give states a more predictable funding stream. I remain opposed to any increase in the gas tax, which Democrats have proposed to pay for an 18-month extension.

### **Medicare Premium Fairness Act**

The House overwhelmingly passed, and I voted for H.R. 363, which would protect seniors on Medicare from rising premiums. Specifically, it would prevent any Medicare beneficiary from receiving a Part B premium increase in 2010 in light of preliminary indications that seniors may not receive an annual cost-of-living adjustment in their Social Security benefits next year.

### **Small Business Budget Extension**

Last Wednesday the House passed, and I voted for HR 3614. This bill extends any program, authority, or provision, including pilot programs, under the Small Business Act until October 31st, 2009 - until the FY'10 budget is passed, a month longer than intended. Furthermore, this bill expands on those eligible to qualify under the Business Stabilization Program (BSP) of the American Reinvestment Act to include SBA loan guarantees made before the legislation was enacted.



Congressman McCaul meets with Dr. Larry Kaiser, UT Health Science Center President.



Congressman McCaul meets with Patricia Brown, President and CEO of Travis County Healthcare District and Stacy Wilson, Director of Government Affairs.

With Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael T. McCaul".

Michael T. McCaul

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