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Mid-Year Report

US CONGRESSMAN

TJ COX

CALIFORNIA'S 21ST DISTRICT

I work for you.

2020 has been challenging, to say the least. A once in a century pandemic has upended life for every one of us here in the Central Valley and across America. Today, our businesses can't open, children can't go to school, and our parents are locked in their homes. But in the face of adversity, we know that by working together, by looking out for one another and by embracing the advice of our public health officials, we're going to make it through this crisis - just like America has met every challenge it has ever faced.

The world is a lot different than it was when the 116th Congress began in 2019 but today, I want to share a bit about how we've worked together to push through this crisis and have started to rebuild, with the goal of not just getting back to normal, but to build a better, more just, and more equitable society.

For the last two years, I've had the privilege of representing California's 21 District in the United States Congress. In that time, my colleagues and I have worked on - and passed - legislation on water, immigration, healthcare, lowering the cost of prescription drugs, education, jobs, veterans issues, environmental protections, COVID relief, and measures to get big money out of politics.

I'm not going to stop working until every Central Valley student has the same opportunities as any other kid in this nation. Not until every home in the Valley can trust the water coming out of its taps. Not until every citizen has access to not only a job, but a vocation that allows them to grow, provide, and thrive.

I don't have to tell you that we've still got a lot more work to do. But I want to use this report to show you what we have delivered and how smart policy can help our Central Valley families and communities.

I never forget, I work for you.

In your service,

Representative TJ Cox

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Coronavirus

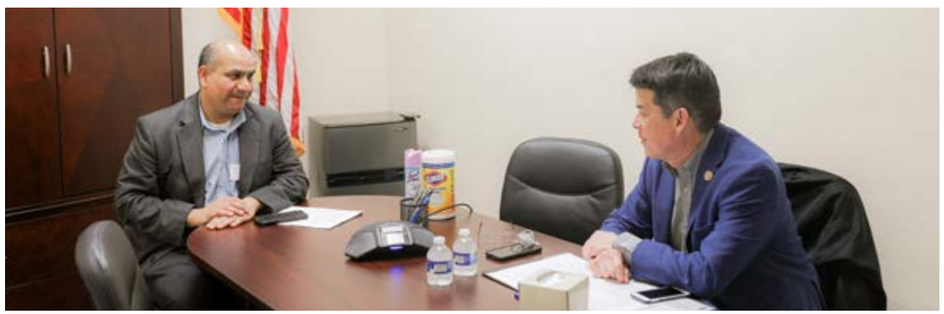
Outreach

As the United States began implementing containment procedures to stop the spread of COVID-19, Representative TJ Cox, working in concert with local health officials in Fresno, Kern, Kings, and Tulare Counties and the State of California began outreach efforts to inform Central Valley families with the best information available about the evolving crisis and the federal, state, and local resources being made available. Cox also invested in other means of outreach, including telephone robo polls, web advertisements on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and across the web; direct mail; email updates to over 100,000 constituents; text messaging; as well as regular updates to local press on developments in policy.

Representative Cox also launched the Central Valley Coronavirus Information Center at Cox.House.gov/Coronavirus (in Spanish at Cox.House.gov/Coronavirus-es) as a resource to provide fact-based, up to date information.

Through a Spanish-language telephone poll conducted in March 2020, Cox found a significant number of respondents said access to food during the crisis was a major concern, and so the page was updated with a comprehensive list of available food drives within California's 21st Congressional District.

In addition, the Coronavirus Information Center includes more resources and links to find COVID-19 testing sites, instructions on obtaining the direct impact payments, help for small businesses, help for Veterans, resources for students, and the latest personal health and safety information updated live from the Centers for Disease Control.



Recovery Legislation

In response to the pandemic, **TJ Cox and House Democrats pushed immediately for U.S. policy to follow science and prioritize health and safety**, while also acting to protect working families and small businesses by providing comprehensive relief packages to address an economic downturn that brought the American economy near the breaking point in a fraction of the time it had during the Great Depression.

The House, with Representative Cox's support, has passed 5 major pieces of legislation to address the crisis but the most recent, the Heroes Act, has been blocked by Mitch McConnell and President Trump

- **March 4** - Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2020
- **March 14** - Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- **March 27** - CARES Act
- **April 23** - Interim funding package to replenish Paycheck Protection Program
- **May 15** - Heroes Act (blocked by Donald Trump and Mitch McConnell)

Representative TJ Cox also worked urgently on concerns specific to Central Valley families, as necessary but flawed legislation failed to fully address the crisis

The arbitrary exclusion of some Central Valley crops, including Pima cotton, from Coronavirus Food Assistance Program by the Department of Agriculture

The poor implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) led to most small businesses missing out on forgivable loans, but not before large employers, including a famous national steakhouse chain which received $20 million.

Cox successfully pushed the Department of Agriculture to extend a waiver program that allows schools to provide free meals while students are learning from home.

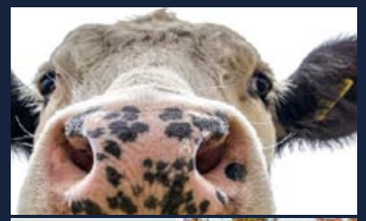
On July 30, Cox led a letter to Congressional Leadership along with 36 county supervisors, local mayors, and city officials in California's 21st district, urging that the next emergency coronavirus package includes direct funding for local governments regardless of population size.

Cox voted to protect the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), which the Trump Administration has deliberately sabotaged to slow mail in ballots for the November 2020 election, but also has the effect of slowing and losing lifesaving medications being sent through the system. Due to the pandemic, more and more seniors and vulnerable people are getting medications delivered via USPS.

116th Congress BY THE NUMBERS

26 Bills Introduced	**8,796** COVID-19 Tele-Town Hall Attendees	**$2.8M** Returned to Constituents
243 Constituent Cases Closed	US CONGRESSMAN TJ COX CALIFORNIA'S 21ST DISTRICT	**1,379** Calls/Letters/ Emails about COVID-19 recovery
23,965 Letters responded to	**1K+** Books Donated to 27 different organizations	**20K** Visits to Coronavirus Information Center

TJ'S TOP NINE

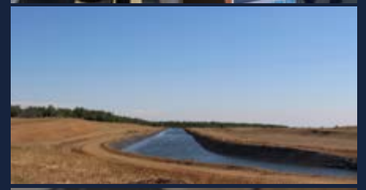


FAMILY FARMS

President Trump signed Representative Cox's Family Farmer Relief Act

CLEAN DRINKING WATER

Passed Disadvantaged Community Drinking Water Assistance Act



WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Passed bill to fix Friant-Kern Canal

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS IN OUR TROOPS

Got $10 M appropriated for the Department of Defense to research post-traumatic stress

VALLEY FEVER

Introduced End Valley Fever Now Act

FARM LABOR

Helped lead and pass a first-of-its-kind bipartisan agriculture-labor bill that benefits both farmers and farmworkers

VETERANS

Introduced bills to make sure rural veterans can get to their VA appointments and make the VA accept more digital records

EDUCATION

Introduced legislation to invest $1 billion in facilities for federally impacted schools, like Akers Elementary school at NAS Lemoore

ASTHMA

Inhaler Coverage and Access Now (I CAN) Act, to make inhaler medication more accessible for families with a high-deductible health plan (H.R. 4716) **This bill passed the House in January.**

Better Respiration through Expanding Access to Tele-Health (BREATHE) Act, to help respiratory therapists provide telehealth services to those with Asthma and COPD (H.R. 2508)

Asthma Care and Prevention in Rural Communities Act, to help those in rural communities with Asthma get access to critical care and services (H.R. 4548)

Elijah E. Cummings Family Asthma Act, which is the Asthma and Allergy Caucus flagship bill, that expands federal, state, and local efforts to improve care for individuals with asthma. (H.R. 5230)

Constituent Services

Representative TJ Cox's full-time staff continues to serve constituents across the Valley while the physical offices in Selma and Bakersfield work remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our in-district team is dedicated to providing constituents with a large number of services.

The Congressman's district team has had significant success, helping constituents obtain or keep over $2,851,197.88 by expediting immigration cases, working with the Social Security Administration, the Veterans Affairs Administration, and other federal agencies to cut through red tape and get constituents the benefits they've earned.

- Help with federal agencies such as: Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration and Medicare Benefits, IRS, Immigration, Federal Workers' Compensation, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, other federal agencies
- Service Academy Nominations, Veterans History Project, and Holiday Cards for Heroes
- Federal Grants and Small Business Assistance
- Surplus Books Program through the Library of Congress
- District Competitions: Art Competition, App Challenge
- Purchasing a Flag flown over the U.S. Capitol
- U.S. Capitol Tours

$3,034,037.27
Returned to Constituents

Constituent Stories

Here are just some of the 100+ people helped by the Office of Congressman TJ Cox:

"My experience with Congressman Cox's office was beyond my expectations. They were very helpful, and informative throughout the process. They worked with me step by step and helped me to get the best result. I don't think I would of gotten the result that I did without their assistance." - **Ali, Bakersfield**

"They were very attentive with my case. After contacting them my case was approved that same week. I want to thank them for taking the time to help out with my case." - **Ana, Delano**

"Me and my family are happy that we are finally together. My son loves his school and so does my daughter. My wife loves being here in the United States. Thank you so much TJ Cox for making this possible." - **Anter, Shafter**

"If it wasn't for the help from the office of Congressman Cox, I would not have received the money that Social Security owed. Their persistence in getting answers and resolving the issue for me was greatly appreciated." - **Barbara, Lemoore**

"Me and my husband Robert approached Congressman Cox's office to ask for assistance because I am in dire need to start work. With my job offer to support my request to expedite, the team did not hesitate to accommodate us [...] To say that we are awed on her quick response, and enthusiasm to help us is an understatement." - **Chona, Lemoore**

"Thank you to Congressman TJ Cox and his office staff for tirelessly fighting to help resolve our issue. [...] We are proud to continue serving all patients at our clinics and helping immigrant communities with their USCIS green card medical physical needs. We are grateful to Congressman TJ Cox and his staff for providing a voice for positive leadership in Kern County." - **Manbir, McFarland**

"My top priority is to help you cut through Washington's red tape.' - Representative TJ Cox. When I read this quote I decided to put Congressman TJ Cox to the test with all the red tape I was getting from the U.S. Postal Service. He delivered on his promise in cutting through red tape in my situation." - **Elvia, Reedley**

"The Office of TJ Cox [...] helped speed the process of my husband's visa application. He successfully arrived to America and we are now able to enjoy our lives together as a complete family. Thank you for your assistance." - **Helwan, Shafter**

"En unos cuantos meses logre tener a mi hijo conmigo. Gracias a ellos lo que duro este proceso fue la mitad de tiempo de lo que normalmente dura. No dudaría en recomendar su oficina." - **Javier, Parlier**

"I honestly feel like with your support on my side the process to my situation went a lot faster." - **Jesus, Bakersfield**

"Muy amable me atendió el personal del Congresista Cox, me explicaron lo que iban hacer. Estuvo muy atenta a mi caso." - **Jhoana, Orange Cove**

"I went through 3 agencies trying to get these records after two months. Special thanks to [Representative Cox's constituent services team]. Great job! Thank you." - **John, Sanger**

"Yo declaro que el Congresista TJ Cox hizo un excelente trabajo lo cual estoy muy agradecido y le doy gracias por haberme ayudado con mi problema legales que yo tenia con la oficina del IRS y el Social Security lo cual ellos me resolvieron mi problema dandome un resultado en poco tiempo lo cual estoy muy agradecido lo cual yo les recomiendo a la ciudadanilla que si tienen algun problema ellos le pueden ayudar son muy professionales." - **Jose, Bakersfield**

"The post office kept giving us excuses until our representative got involved." - **Horace, Lemoore**

"I was told by a technician that I no longer qualified for Supplemental Security Income and that I would be required to pay back all the SSI I had received during the past two years. I was told that rules had changed and I no longer qualified. I contacted my Congressman, TJ Cox, and his staff immediately started working on my case. It was determined that no rules had changed and that I indeed, still qualified." - **Lori, Hanford**

"Hello once again. I want to say thank you so much for your hard work and assistance helping me out getting a pass to attend my son's graduation from the Air Force. If it wasn't for you and Mr. TJ Cox my dream to see my son graduated from the Air Force, it wouldn't become true. [...] Mr. TJ Cox thank you for taking the time to talk to me. You are an amazing human being!" - **Roy, McFarland**

"I used to have to drive 40+ miles and wait 60+ days to see a doctor. Than after contacting Representative TJ Cox, I was assigned a 'hometown' doctor. Now I get all the help I need within days. Life is good! Thank you TJ Cox!!" - **William, Delano**

"Thank you for sticking by me through all this with me and making it happen for me. You made me feel so comfortable through all of this. Whenever I had any questions and my case worker wasn't able to get to the phone they made sure to call me back." - **Irene, Hanford**

"I was receiving medical bills that were supposed to be taken care of by the VA. I turned to Congressman TJ Cox for help. Congressman Cox and his staff diligently and quickly assisted me in getting those medical bills paid by the proper institutions." - **Daniel, Hanford**

"I am highly thankful to Congressman Mr. TJ Cox and his associates who helped me to get my U.S. passport. Thanks all of you." - **Hardyal, Bakersfield**

"[My Social Security income] has been reinstated because of your helping me resolve this mess. Again thank you and continue with your good work." - **Alexandra, Kerman**

"My honorably discharged Veteran son was mired in red tape which has stalled the benefits he was entitled to. [...] The eventual outcome for my son was nothing short of a miracle and was resolved in his favor. Veterans, TJ Cox will stand behind you not just with words but with his actions. His commitment to the needs of the men and women who have served this country is heartfelt and sincere. Our Veteran family will be forever grateful to him." - **Susan, Selma**

"Cox's staff "was awesome with communicating and helping us get our, stimulus, unemployment, and SBA loan. It is because of TJ Cox and his staff that we were finally able to get help during these difficult times. Thank you again for all your continuous help and follow up, we really do appreciate it." - **Cindy, Arvin**

"I became separated from my family when the country they were visiting initiated severe lockdown restrictions due to COVID-19. Officials overseas had to be convinced to allow my mother-in-law to accompany my wife and two year old child. Sunday night my family was allowed to board a plane and have returned to the US. My mother-in-law was at first prevented from passing through local customs because they did not believe she would be allowed into the US. [...] My wife was able to show them a copy of a letter from your office and after initially denying the travel, it convinced them to call US Customs and verify that my whole family was cleared to board the plane." - **Kelly, Shafter**

Landmark Legislation Passed by the House in the 116th Congress

Lowering Rx Drug Prices

Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act

Bold, major legislation to strengthen the health and financial security of America's seniors and families by making sure Americans don't have to pay more for their medicines than what Big Pharma charges for the same drugs in other countries.

Improving and Passing the USMCA

Representative Cox joined together with bipartisan group of colleagues, fought for and won a deal that strengthens vital markets for our farmers and ranchers and protects American jobs & the environment.

Protecting DREAMers & Farmworkers

The American Dream and Promise Act

Provides a pathway to permanent legal status for our nation's DREAMers, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) holders.

Stopping Gun Violence

The Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019

Closes dangerous gun show loophole and requires background checks for all gun sales. The vast majority of guns used in criminal acts are obtained without a background check.

Equal Pay for Equal Work

Paycheck Fairness Act

Makes it harder to discriminate against women and elders in pay and benefits.

Cleaning Up Government

For the People Act

Ends the influence of special interest and "dark" money in our elections, promotes national redistricting reform, and makes it easier for everyone to vote.

And 275+ other BIPARTISAN bills passed by the House that Mitch McConnell refuses to let the Senate consider.

District Events

Latino Inspire Awards

- In October 2019, to honor the many exceptional people in the Central Valley Latino community who give selflessly to make their communities stronger, healthier, and more equitable, Representative Cox hosted the first Latino Inspire Awards in October at Selma City Hall. State Senator Melissa Hurtado joined Representative Cox in honoring 10 individuals and 3 organizations for their ongoing contributions to the Central Valley.

Valiant Awards

- In August 2020, in honor of Women's Equality Day, Representative TJ Cox hosted a virtual awards ceremony to present the first ever Valiant Awards, which recognizes exceptional women who live or work in California's 21st Congressional District. These awards were especially significant this year, as yesterday marked 100 years since the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was certified giving women across the nation the right to vote.

Unveiling of the Disadvantaged Community Drinking Water Act

- In December 2019, Representative Cox held a press conference in in Parlier to announce a new bill that brings clean drinking water to California's 21st Congressional District and small communities across the country, many of which are currently ineligible for existing funding programs

Report on Diabetes in CA-21

- In November 2019, Representative Cox held a press conference in Bakersfield to release a new Congressional report on the out-of-control costs of insulin to treat diabetes in California's 21st Congressional District. Joining him was Vicki Jones, a local patient advocate from Lemoore, CA, and health experts from Dignity Health Memorial Hospital - Bakersfield, including Endocrinologist Dr. Harshit Shah.

Legislative Wins

✓ PASSED HOUSE

2021 Funding Wins

In August, the House of Representatives passed a series of key Fiscal Year 2021 funding bills, also called "minibus" bills. Here is how the Central Valley benefitted.

- Representative TJ Cox Secures Nearly $3.4 Billion to Secure Greater Access to Clean Drinking water in Underserved Rural Areas Like the Central Valley. The funding would go toward combating tainted water and repairing aging water systems. It includes $1.64 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and $1.126 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

- Representative TJ Cox Secures Millions in Appropriations for Water Projects. This includes $71 million to repair the Friant-Kern Canal, which has lost 60 percent of its carrying capacity due to land subsidence, $225 million in the House funding bill for repairs of canals including the Friant-Kern and Delta-Mendota Canals, and $79 million for other water storage projects that will provide water supply benefits in the Central Valley.

- Representative TJ Cox Ensured Billions of Dollars goes to Improving Health in the Central Valley. Representative Cox secured $1.65 billion, an increase of $25 million, for Community Health Centers to help more rural or underserved areas like those in the Central Valley, as well as $3 million to the National Asthma Control Program. The increase in funding will help combat the detrimental effects of poor-quality air, a major problem in the Valley.

- Representative TJ Cox Garnered Bipartisan Support for Research and Response Funding to Support Agriculture in the Central Valley. This funding included $69.5 million dollars for citrus disease research to protect citrus farming in the Valley, as well as $1 million in funds for USDA Agriculture Research Service stations like the one in Parlier which study postharvest losses caused by diseases and physiological disorders.

- Representative TJ Cox Secures $32 Billion to Help Children Obtain Equal Opportunities to Succeed in America. This funding will go to childcare programs, the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program, and Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG).

- Representative TJ Cox Secured Funding for Persistent Poverty Counties. Language was added to the minibus bills directing 10% of the total funding for Economic Development Administration Public Works Grants be allocated to communities who experience persistent poverty by using the "10-20-30" rule. The rule instructs the agency to direct at least 10% of these funds to counties that have had at least 20% of their population living in poverty over the past 30 years. This formula will ensure that federal funding is invested in the Central Valley communities that need it most.

- Representative TJ Cox Ensured Rural Small Businesses Have Access to the Assistance That the Small Business Administration (SBA) is Meant to Offer. Included in the appropriations bill is Representative TJ Cox's request for a report on the mission, strategic plan, and administrative requirements of the SBA Office of Rural Affairs. The decision helps small businesses access administrative assistance and other Congressional programs they'll need to survive the current economic crisis.

- Representative TJ Cox Secured $1.4 billion for the procurement of aircrafts, including 91 F-35C's which will be produced in Lemoore.

- Representative TJ Cox Ensured Better Care for Veterans With Traumatic Brain Injuries. These injuries require intensive, long-term care that is often inaccessible, especially in rural communities. Compounding the issue is a lack of knowledge of available facilities. To combat the lack of access to appropriate care, Representative Cox pushed for language that directs the VA to ensure that veterans have knowledge of and access to an adequate number of long-term residential care facilities.

✓ BECAME LAW

2020 Funding Wins

In December, the House of Representatives passed a pair of key Fiscal Year 2020 funding bills (H.R. 1865 and H.R. 1158), also called "minibus" bills. Here is how the Central Valley benefitted.

- Representative TJ Cox Secures $134 Million for Water Storage, $20 Million for Conveyance, and Funding to Advance New Projects. The bill funds $20 million in new construction funding to repair critical Bureau of Reclamation canals where land subsidence has seriously impaired carrying capacity, such as on the Friant-Kern and Delta-Mendota Canals located in the Central Valley.

- Representative TJ Cox Helps Central Valley Get Fair Share of Federal Dollars. This amendment updates the 30-year portion of the formula by updating 1980 Census data with more recent 2010 Census data to more accurately direct investment into communities that have been left behind, such as the Central Valley.

- Representative TJ Cox Secured Energy Tax Incentives to Strengthen The Valley Economy. This bill will help Small businesses get tax credits extended, generating investment and creating jobs in our nation's rural economies.

- Representative TJ Cox's $10 Million for Post-Traumatic Stress Research In Our Troops Amendment Passes In Budget Bill. This Amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2020 would tackle the crisis of post-traumatic stress among Americans who served our nation.

- Representative TJ Cox Delivers $8 Million Increase For Citrus Greening Research After Representative Barbara Lee Visit. This bill would secured funding for agriculture priorities that will help the Valley family farmers and ranchers of California's 21st District from the devastating effects of Citrus Greening.

- Representative TJ Cox Secures Additional Investments In Asthma and Health Care. The bill funds $33 million for the National Asthma Control Program to help those with Asthma

Health

Quality, affordable health care that addresses the unique health challenges our communities face should be accessible to everyone in the Central Valley.

- Representative TJ Cox has focused on supporting preventive health measures, including introducing H.R. 7510, the Assimilating Health and Equity Assessments into Decision-making (AHEAD) Act, to solve population health challenges. The bill's goal is to study the use of tools that assess a policy's impact on population health and well-being. The bill encourages the use of Health Impact Assessments and other tools focused on identifying the root causes of poor health through social determinants of health, including education, safe environments, housing, transportation, economic development, and access to nutritious foods. It emphasizes the importance of preventative health solutions for future cost-savings. The language was included in the House-passed LHHS appropriations bill this year.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced two bills, both of which call on the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to fund public and private awareness campaigns to spread factual information about the COVID-19 pandemic.

  - One bill led with Representative Gus Bilirakis (R-FL-12) would help communities raise public awareness about health resources at local community health centers. Since the beginning of this crisis, multiple sources have tried to take advantage of the confusion caused by the pandemic to spread misinformation, some of which has been harmful to public health and minority communities.

  - Cox's second bill, H.R. 6577, introduced with Representative Judy Chu (D-CA-27) also combats the crisis of anti-Asian American discrimination enflamed by this pandemic. Efforts to rename the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus" as well as campaigns to misinform the public about possible cures to COVID must be stopped so we can address this emergency and stand up to senseless anti-Asian discrimination in this country.

Representative TJ Cox, a member of the Congressional Asthma and Allergy Caucus, has introduced:

1. Better Respiration through Expanding Access to Tele-Health (BREATHE) Act, to help respiratory therapists provide telehealth services to those with Asthma and COPD (H.R. 2508)

2. Asthma Care and Prevention in Rural Communities Act, to help those in rural communities with Asthma get access to critical care and services (H.R. 4548)

✓ PASSED HOUSE

3. Inhaler Coverage and Access Now (I CAN) Act, to make inhaler medication more accessible for families with a high-deductible health plan (H.R. 4716)

4. Elijah E. Cummings Family Asthma Act, which is the Asthma and Allergy Caucus flagship bill, that expands federal, state, and local efforts to improve care for individuals with asthma. (H.R. 5230)

5. H. Res 957 The Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month Resolution, a bipartisan resolution that marked May as a month of awareness.

- Representative Cox secured $33 million for the National Asthma Control Program for fiscal year 2021, a $3 million increase. Increased funding for National Asthma Control Program was Representative Cox's number one request in LHHS appropriations and top five across all 12 spending bills.

- Representative Cox introduced Valley Fever Bill after a Valley Fever Town Hall in Bakersfield. Last October, Congressman Cox hosted a Valley Fever Town Hall and heard from experts, patient advocates and families that have been impacted by valley fever. With stakeholder engagement, Congressman Cox introduced his bill, H.R. 5438, End Valley Fever Now Act, to increase awareness and education of valley fever, improve disease identification and diagnosis and remove barriers to increase access to clinical trials.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced bold, bipartisan legislation to expand telehealth respiratory health services to patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. This bipartisan Better Respiration through Expanded Access to Tele-Health (BREATHE) Act will designate a three-year pilot program allowing qualified Respiratory Therapists to serve as telehealth practitioners to deliver disease management services to Medicare patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

- Representative TJ Cox passed an amendment to focus funds to help people from areas with high unemployment navigate the health care exchanges. The bill itself restored funds Republicans cut in order to sabotage our healthcare system. This amendment added areas with high concentrations of unemployment to the list of areas targeted by the Marketing and Outreach Restoration to Empower Health Education Act of 2019.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox passed an amendment that focuses funds to help people from areas with high unemployment navigate the health care exchanges. The bill itself restored funds Republicans cut in order to sabotage our healthcare system. This amendment added areas with high concentrations of unemployment to the list of areas targeted by the Marketing and Outreach Restoration to Empower Health Education Act of 2019. (§ H. Amdt. 243 to H.R. 987)

  - Representative Cox also passed an amendment to the same bill that improves transparency and accountability in administration's collection and use of ACA user fees for outreach and enrollment activities. (§ H. Amdt. 242)

- Representative TJ Cox Releases Congressional Report on Diabetes in 21st District. Representative Cox commissioned a report to investigate the impact of high insulin cost on Central Valley families. The report found 1 out of 4 people have been forced to ration their insulin to save money.

- Representative TJ Cox led fifteen letters on health, coronavirus, and rural issues this spring and summer.
(3/18 Letter to House Leadership on the Importance of Rural Healthcare and Telehealth; 3/23 Letter to Leadership expressing CA Delegation Support for Gov Newsom Priorities; 4/09 bipartisan letter for Secretary Azar and Deputy Secretary Hargan on Rural Health Centers: Formula, Prioritization; 4/09 Letter to the Administration on Dangers of County Designations without Accurate Testing (this letter noted concern about the Administration's early plans to determine mitigation strategies based on testing, and highlighted a lack of testing across the country that could also be potentially higher in low-income and rural communities. This sounded the alarm that there could be certain geographic areas that may not be getting adequate testing. The covid relief bill includes a report on testing data based on demographic characteristics, including geographic region); two letters, to NIH and to Gov. Newsom, on farmworker testing; 4/23 Letter to Sec. Azar on asthma drug shortages signed by over 50 of his colleagues; 5/08 a bipartisan & bicameral Letter to Leadership advocating for more funding for rural STEM education; 5/08 letter to Governor Newsom on rural education with Reps. Costa and Harder; 6/29 letter to HHS on respiratory therapists and telehealth; 7/23 letter to Fresno County; 7/23 letter to Congressional Leadership along with 36 county supervisors, local mayors, and city officials on coronavirus funds; 7/31 letter to the state about CDBG funding.)

Clean Drinking Water

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox further secured increased investments in clean drinking water in House-passed funding bill
    - $1.126 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund - the primary federal program for ensuring the safety of public drinking water—with an additional $3.86 billion in emergency spending. The Fund finances improvements to community water systems to reach compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and protect public health.
    - $1.64 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund with an additional $6.36 billion in emergency spending.
- Last year, Representative TJ Cox successfully fought for increased investments in clean drinking water by winning a $245 million increase for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and a $262 million increase for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund in the final spending bill signed by the President.
- Representative TJ Cox has cosponsored a bill to promote water infrastructure investments and water sustainability technology, especially in rural communities. The Save Water Resources Act would promote water infrastructure investments, spurring innovation for sustainable water technology, and increasing water storage would also re-authorize the Rural Water Supply Act, a program directing the Department of the Interior to work with rural communities in the West to assess drinking water supply needs and identify options to address rural water needs through appraisal and feasibility studies.

Agriculture/Nutrition

A new law, introduced by Representative Cox, will help family farmers and ranchers weather a farm economy put in even more danger by a reckless trade war.

✓ BECAME LAW

- Representative TJ Cox passed a bipartisan bill through the House to allow more family farms to weather the farm economy downturn. The Family Farmer Relief Act restructures the Chapter 12 bankruptcy rules to make more farms eligible for protection amid a continued downturn in the farm economy. The bill, approved by the Senate and now awaiting the signature of the President, would expand the debt cap that can be covered under Chapter 12 bankruptcy from $3,237,000 to $10,000,000. The changes reflect the increase in land values, as well as the growth over time in the average size of U.S. farming operations and is meant to protect the vital agriculture economy of the Central Valley.
- Representative TJ Cox successfully pushed the Secretary of Agriculture to include walnuts in the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), which will assist producers as the effect of Trump's trade taxes continue to batter Central Valley agriculture.
- Representative TJ Cox sent a letter to Secretary Perdue expressing serious concerns about USDA's proposed rule to eliminate broad-based categorical eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The proposed rule would remove access to food assistance to approximately three million people, including working families in the Central Valley with children, veterans, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox was a lead co-sponsor of the bipartisan Farm Workforce Modernization Act. The bill was introduced with the strong bipartisan support of 24 Democrats and 20 Republicans. The Farm Workforce Modernization Act, which was negotiated over several months with input from agricultural stakeholders and labor organizations, makes meaningful reforms to the H-2A agricultural guest worker program and creates a first-of-its-kind, merit-based visa program specifically designed for the nation's agricultural sector.
- Representative TJ Cox introduced the Allowing Steady Savings by Eliminating Tests, or ASSET Act, with Reps. Kim Schrier, M.D. (WA-8), and Jimmy Gomez (CA-34). This bill has the potential to lift more families out of poverty and encourage working families to save money and build wealth by eliminating asset limits as a means of eligibility for three vital public assis-

tance programs and raise asset limits for a fourth program. U.S. Senators Chris Coons (DE) and Sherrod Brown (OH) introduced companion legislation in the Senate. The bill presents an alternative vision for vital public assistance programs. Rather than shredding the safety net by imposing new bureaucratic hurdles for families, as proposed by President Trump in his budget, the ASSET Act would increase the financial security of low-income families by helping them save for the future and move towards self-sufficiency.

Education

Every kid deserves an equal shot, regardless of their ZIP Code.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced H.R. 6109, the Inspiring New STEM Professionals by Investing in Renovation of Education Spaces (INSPIRES) Act. The INSPIRES Act would establish competitive grant programs for schools to build, modernize, renovate, or repair STEM classrooms and labs. The Act would also seek to close the STEM education gap that disadvantages many of the rural, remote, and under-served communities of the Central Valley by providing access to high-speed internet for STEM classrooms—especially important in light of the pandemic--updating or replacing special technical equipment, and providing clean and efficient learning spaces for STEM students and faculty. Senator Brian Schatz (HI) introduced companion legislation in the U.S. Senate.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced bipartisan legislation to provide $1 billion in construction grants for education facilities. Lemoore Union School District used the same program for major renovations completed this year. H.R. 3647, Impact Aid Infrastructure Act would provide temporary impact aid construction grants to eligible local educational agencies, and for other purposes. This bill is aimed at investing in education facilities needing modernization.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative Cox secures $1.44 billion for the Impact Aid program in FY20. This will help schools on federal lands like Central Union School District with schools at NAS Lemoore.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced the Remedial Improvement Act with his colleagues, which would provide competitive grants to a geographically diverse set of colleges and universities. The grants would be available to colleges and universities of various sizes to develop or improve remedial education based on five models that have shown success during small-scale implementation. Students in programs funded under this grant would also be able to use federal student aid dollars to support up to two years of remediation, removing another barrier to on-time degree completion for remedial students. The legislation would also require evaluation of program effectiveness in order to determine the best systems of support that lead to college degree completion.

Water Infrastructure

The Valley needs more safe, sustainable water for its communities and family farms.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox secured $225 million for conveyance repairs in the FY21 House funding bill to support repairs of critical Bureau of Reclamation canals like the Friant-Kern and Delta-Mendota. https://cox.house.gov/media/press-releases/representative-tj-cox-s-provisions-repair-friant-kern-canal-other-conveyance
  "Representative TJ Cox is a tireless advocate for the people of California's Central Valley. As a direct result of his efforts, the fiscal year 2021 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill includes significant federal funding for the Bureau of Reclamation to repair critical California water infrastructure and projects throughout the West. I look forward to continue working with him on legislation to ensure a reliable and resilient water supply for the hard-working families and communities in the Central Valley," said Representative Marcy Kaptur, Chairwoman of the House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox again secured additional funds for several Central Valley water projects in FY21 House funding bill:
  - Friant-Kern Canal Capacity Correction Resulting from Subsidence: $71 million
  - Sites Reservoir Project: $4 million
  - Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project: $7.845 million
  - Delta Mendota Canal Subsidence Correction: $3 million
  - Pacheco Reservoir Expansion: $1.7 million
  - Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir Project: $1.5 million

  Fully building out these projects would benefit the Central Valley by providing up to 2.2 million acre-feet of additional storage capacity.

- The House passed two of Cox's Central Valley water bills in the Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2), the House infrastructure package:

✓ PASSED HOUSE

  - H.R. 5347, the Disadvantaged Community Drinking Water Assistance Act, which would authorize $100 million in funds for technical support and clean drinking water projects in small, low-income towns in the Western United States that are currently suffering from tainted drinking water.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

  - H.R. 5316, the Move Water Now Act, which would authorize $200 million in investments to repair the Friant-Kern Canal and $200 million for related river restoration infrastructure.

✓ BECAME LAW

- Last year, Representative TJ Cox secured $134 million for water storage, $20 million for conveyance, and funding to advance new projects in the final spending bill signed by the President.

✓ BECAME LAW

- Representative TJ Cox secured funding to advance four important water storage projects in the Central Valley. These include $1.5 million for Del Puerto Reservoir, $2.155 million for expanding Los Vaqueros Reservoir, $6 million for Sites Reservoir, and $2.5 million for Friant-Kern Canal Capacity Correction. Funds will be used to complete project feasibility studies, which are important steps for moving these projects forward. When completed, these projects will benefit South of Delta water users by providing more storage capacity and greater operational flexibility for the Central Valley Project.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced the Western Water Storage Infrastructure Act, which authorizes $800 million for surface and groundwater storage and conveyance projects, more than double what was previously available. Investing in badly needed water storage projects will provide increased storage capacity and, in conjunction with flexible water management, will improve water supply reliability by banking more water in wet years for use in dry years. The bill also extends the operational and environmental authorities of the WIIN Act to provide continued water supply benefits without adverse impacts to listed species.

- Representative TJ Cox brought House Committee on Natural Resources Chair Raul Grijalva to the Central Valley to show him the need for increased water allocations and infrastructure for both clean drinking water and agriculture.

- Representative TJ Cox successfully pushed the United States Bureau of Reclamation to properly allocate water resources to the Central Valley. Representative TJ Cox along with Congressman Jim Costa and Senator Dianne Feinstein sent multiple letters urging the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to e-evaluate precipitation values in order to assure water allocations to Central Valley communities reflect the most recent precipitation data. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ultimately increased water allocations by 70% and 95% of their historical value to agricultural water service contractors and municipal and industrial contractors respectively thus increasing water access to rural communities.

- Representative TJ Cox provided testimony on the dire need for increased water infrastructure funding to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The Congressman's testimony stressed the need for investments in water infrastructure in the Central Valley.

- Representative TJ Cox chaired a hearing regarding the Reclamation Fund and the Bureau of Reclamation's future infrastructure funding needs. The Reclamation Fund provides essential funding for water infrastructure projects, however, in the past, as much as $1 billion from the fund have not been appropriated by Congress. The Congressman stressed the unacceptability of this fact and the need for meaningful investment in water infrastructure.

Defense

We must make sure our people in uniform, like the sailors at NAS Lemoore, have the resources and support to keep us safe.

✓ BECAME LAW

- Representative TJ Cox introduced and passed through the House an amendment to increase funding for post-traumatic stress research through the Department of Defense's Health Program by $10 million. This Amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2020 would tackle the crisis of post-traumatic stress among Americans who served our nation.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox introduced and passed an amendment to improve the way the Department of Defense currently handles the transportation of fallen soldiers to their next of kin creates undue hardships for surviving families. The amendment mandates the following reports from the Department of Defense: For every airport across the U.S. is there a full database/report of which airports accept remains and how that information is relayed to Casualty Assistance Calls Officers (CACOs), and answers to how the Navy has changed their CACO/returns process, updates on procedures for CACOs/returns across all service branches.

- Representative TJ Cox led a bi-partisan letter with over 100 co-signers to Sec. Wilkie regarding Assisted Living Pilot Programs for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury

Veterans

Rural veterans have earned their VA care and it's our job to make sure they get it.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced a bipartisan bill that would give permanent authorization for the Veteran Affairs (VA) Grant Program for Transportation of Highly Rural Veterans. Currently every two-year Congress must reauthorize this vital program that appropriates $3 million dollars in grants each year to aid in transportation of highly rural veterans to medical care. This bill would permanently extend authority of this program.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced a bipartisan bill: Modernizing VA's Records Management Program Act. In recent years, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has moved to process over 99 percent of compensation claims electronically since the implementation of the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). This transition has been key to reducing the backlog of claims, as it allows routing of claims between all 56 regional offices based on available capacity and reduces the time spent on the claim by

each claim processor.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced the bipartisan Forgotten Vietnam Veterans Act This bill is to extend wartime veterans benefits, including the Veterans Pension and health care, to the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG). This was a group of nearly more than 3,000 officers, and enlisted people who served our nation during the Vietnam War but are currently ineligible for many of these benefits.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced the bipartisan Caring for Survivors Act The act would increase dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) for surviving dependents and lower the threshold of eligibility to allow certain survivors to receive this benefit who currently do not meet the requirements. The rate of compensation paid to survivors of service members who die in the line of duty or veterans who die from service-related injuries or diseases was set in 1993 and has been minimally adjusted since then. The DIC also has rules that can drastically decrease the benefits survivors receive if they remarry or if the period the veteran was disabled before their death was less than 10 years. Other federal survivor programs do not have such stringent rules for decreasing or withholding survivor benefits.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced the bipartisan Ensuring Veterans Access Act This bill is to improve transparency for veterans attempting to access their claims file (C-File). A C-File is created when a veteran submits a claim for benefits to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). A veteran may want to view their C-File to ensure all the information it contains is accurate before the VA makes a decision.

- Representative TJ Cox sucessfully passed amendments in the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act to improve transparency from teh Veterans Administration. The amendments to the NDAA pushed for by Rep. Cox also require the VA to report on: How much discretionary funding has been unclaimed for projects, and making sure every penny spent on the VA is used appropriately, holding the VA accountable for their fiscal responsibility, and the cost of providing TRICARE to every individual currently in the Health Professions Scholarship Program run by the Army, Navy, and Air Force which allows servicemembers to enter the healthcare industry. These students are making the ultimate sacrifice to serve as medical personnel in the military and should at least be given healthcare in medical school.

Immigration

Our immigration system is broken and we must fix it in order to keep the American Dream alive.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox joined colleagues in the introduction and passage of the Dream and Promise Act of 2019. This bill provides a pathway to permanent legal status for our DREAMers, people with Temporary Protected Status, and Deferred Enforced Departure holders.

✓ BECAME LAW

- Representative TJ Cox has voted in favor of legislation to provide $4.5 billion in emergency funds to address the dire humanitarian situation on our Southern border.

- Representative TJ Cox has voted in favor of adding Venezuela to the list of qualifying countries for Temporary Protected Status through the Venezuela TPS Act of 2019.

- Representative TJ Cox led a letter to Congressional leadership on eliminating immigrant restrictions on COVID-19 testing

Culture

The Central Valley's diversity is its strength and we should honor every contribution that enriches our culture.

- Representative TJ Cox is a cofounder and vice chair of the American Sikh Congressional Caucus. He introduced a bipartisan resolution recognizing the contributions of Sikh Americans to the United States.

- Representative TJ Cox introduced the first ever House resolution for the designation of June as Portuguese National Heritage Month.

- Representative TJ Cox co-introduced a resolution to designate October 2019 as "Filipino American History Month". This resolution is intended to honor the rich history and culture of Filipino Americans and celebrate their significant contributions to the United States.

Foreign Affairs

Strong foreign relations keep our country strong and make our world more just and peaceful.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox passed an amendment through the House to ensure the U.S. continues to aid demining efforts in the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). The amendment prioritizes funding that is allocated for the ongoing demining projects in the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh), and supports regional rehabilitation services for infants, children, and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities. Karabakh has one of the highest civilian casualty rates from land mines and unsolicited remnant of war and the amendment will secure continued funding. The Congressman is committed to working with his colleagues on the Armenian Caucus, Armenian National Committee of America, and HALO Trust to restore communities, and ensure the region is landmine free in the near future.

- Representative TJ Cox co-lead a letter to Administrator Green of USAID to encourage the maintenance of funding for demining in the Republic of Artsakh. To ensure the funding for demining efforts is not cut short, Congressman Cox worked with Congressman Brad Sherman to keep this issue on Administrator Green's radar.

- Representative TJ Cox co-sponsored and helped pass the House Resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide. For the first time in American history, the US House of Representatives officially recognized the Armenian Genocide through H.Res. 296.

Economy

Put rural small businesses first and communities can thrive.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox introduced a bipartisan bill to bring more opportunity for rural small businesses. The legislations introduced would study why the Office of Rural Affairs within the Small Business Administration (SBA) was dismantled.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox's pro-rural, pro-small business, pro-Ag Amendment to the Raise the Wage Act passed the House of Representatives. The amendment mandates a Government Accountability Office study following the second scheduled wage increase in the Raise the Wage Act. This will ensure that the Raise the Wage Act does not negatively impact rural communities, small businesses, and farmers and ranchers in the Central Valley.

Reforming Democracy and Getting Big Money Out of Politics

We must take back our democracy for the people.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox Cosponsored the For the People Act to help create a more transparent government. H.R. 1 has passed the House of Representatives and would fundamentally transform our politics by taking power back from corporations and special interests, ending the era of big money, reducing gerrymandering, and tearing down barriers when voting for all Americans.

Equality

All Americans deserve the opportunity to thrive and live free from discrimination.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox has voted in favor of reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act. The Act reauthorizes the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and also addresses gaps in the existing law to further protect victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored the Equality Act. The Equality Act would prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in a wide variety of areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored the and the Paycheck Fairness Act. The Paycheck Fairness Act would address wage discrimination on the basis of sex by restricting the use of the bona fide factor defense to wage discrimination claims, enhancing nonretaliation prohibitions, making it unlawful to require an employee to sign a contract or waiver prohibiting the employee from disclosing information about the employee's wages, and increasing civil penalties for violations of equal pay provisions.

- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored the Every Child Deserves a Family Act. This bill would amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act put in place in 1974 to strengthen support for LGBTQ youth who are at risk of or have suffered child abuse. The Act also calls on government agencies to research ways to protect vulnerable LGBTQ youth from abuse and neglect.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020 This bill would increase transparency and accountability in policing.

Environmental Protection and Climate Change

Our land and air are our most valuable resources and must be protected.

✓ BECAME LAW

- Representative TJ Cox Introduced the Bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act. Representative Cox introduced this bill with a dozen bipartisan House colleagues to permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and reduce our public lands maintenance backlog. The Land and Water Conservation Fund protects natural areas, public parks, and cultural heritage. Previous recipients of funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund include Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks, Pixley National Wildlife Refuge, Heritage Park in Lemoore, and Hanford Sports Complex, Hanford. This law passed the House and Senate with broad bipartisan support and was signed by President Trump. It is a major victory for America's outdoors and protecting our public lands.

- Representative TJ Cox led a letter successfully urging the Select Climate Committee to prioritize support to help agriculture be part of the solution on climate change. Representative TJ Cox urged the Select Committee to include recommendations in its report recognizing the needs of agriculture and the contributions farmers and ranchers can make to reduce greenhouse gas emissions if given the proper tools and adequate resources. Several of Cox's recommendations were incorporated in the Committee's report.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

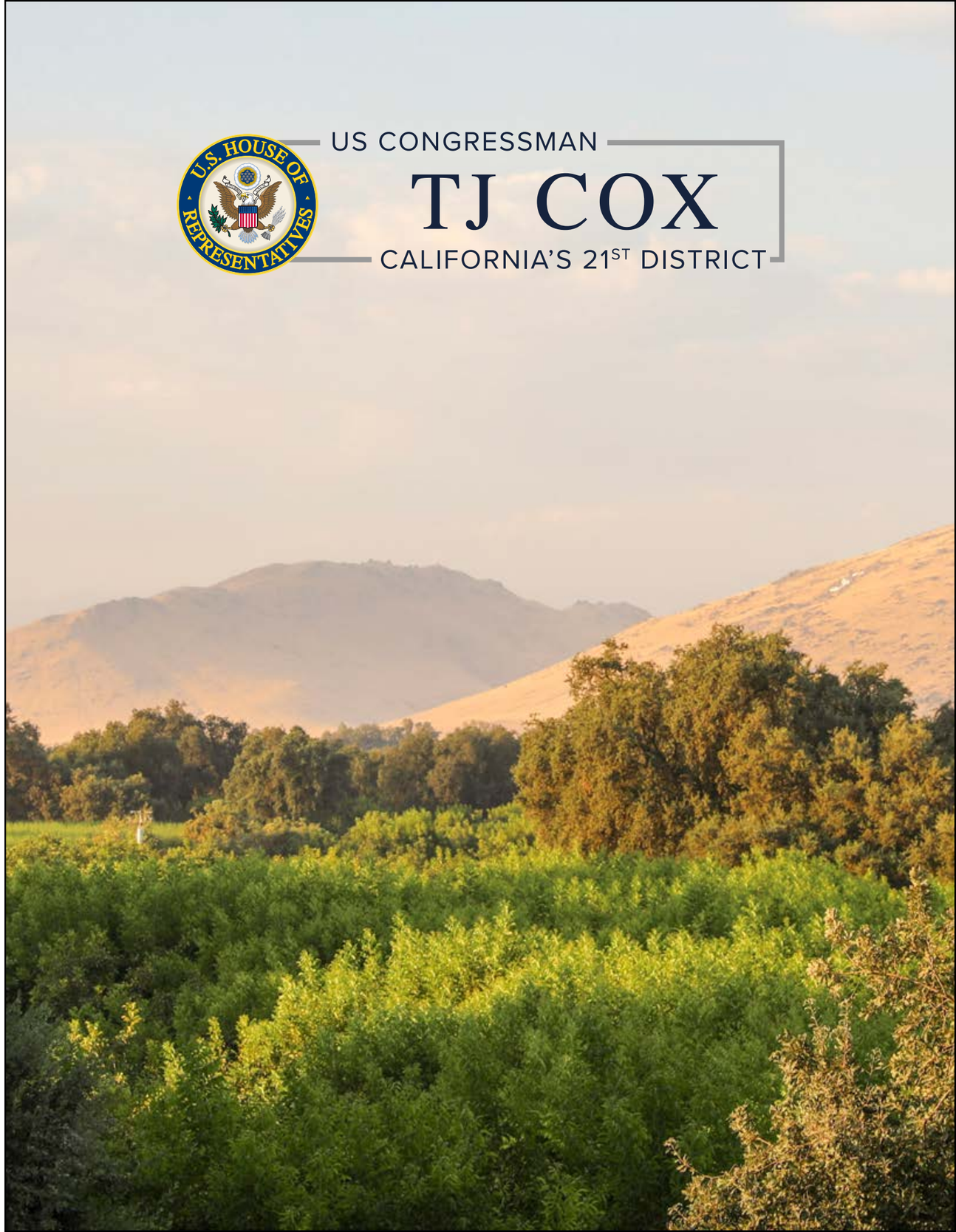
- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored a bill to require the President to develop a plan for the United States to meet its Paris Agreement carbon reduction goals. The Climate Action Now Act requires that the president develop a plan that describes steps to (1) cut greenhouse gas emissions by 26%-28% below 2005 levels by 2025, and (2) confirm that other parties to the agreement with major economies are fulfilling their announced contributions.

- Representative TJ Cox supports action on climate change by cosponsoring the 100% Clean Economy Act. This bill would set a national goal of a carbon neutral economy by 2050 and requires each federal agency to create a plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to achieve that goal.

Animal Welfare

Animals are integral to the Central Valley's economy and culture and they deserve protection.

- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored the Providing Responsible Emergency Plans for Animals at Risk of Emerging Disasters (PREPARED Act). This bill requires facilities regulated by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA)—such as commercial animal breeders (puppy mills), zoos and research institutions—to create response plans for protecting animals in their care during disasters. This requires those who use animals commercially to demonstrate a level of readiness to protect animals under their care.

✓ PASSED HOUSE

- Representative TJ Cox cosponsored and voted on the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act. This PAST Act cracks down on the abusive practice of "soring" to prevent unnecessary pain and injuries to the hooves and legs of Tennessee Walking Horses and related breeds. This passed with strong bipartisan support with a vote of 333-96 in the House.