

Dear Neighbor,

Last month, I introduced the Immigrant Witness and Victim Protection Act to protect undocumented immigrant victims and witnesses working with local law enforcement to prosecute criminals.

The bill lifts arbitrary caps on the number of U visas available for undocumented immigrant witnesses and victims of violent crimes who cooperate with law enforcement. The bill also prevents U visa applicants and T visa human trafficking victim applicants from being detained or deported prior to obtaining visa protections. Finally, the bill allows applicants to receive work authorization permits within limited timelines.

U and T visa protections are critical to law enforcement and immigrant communities. Non-citizen victims and witnesses daring to come forward to support our criminal justice system deserve safeguarding. This bill promotes victims' safety and encourages their continued participation in our communities.



Left: Met with local organic farmers and researchers to discuss investment in programs like the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative; Right: Roundtable with Central Coast innovation leaders to learn about their priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill

I also had the opportunity to host Congressman Rodney Davis, my co-chair of our House Agriculture Research Caucus, in the district to talk directly with producers about mechanization, specialty crop innovation, and organics. We founded the Agriculture Research Caucus [in June 2017](#) to educate and engage with our fellow members of Congress on issues related to agriculture research.

This was our first Agriculture Research Caucus Tour, and I look forward to continuing to advocate for the farmers, shippers, farmworkers, and consumers living and working on the central coast of California.



Left: Touring innovative tabletop strawberry production to better understand agriculture practices on the Central Coast; Right: Congressman Davis' first time seeing strawberry plants grow, gaining an understanding of production for our work on the Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research Subcommittee

February Highlights

- [Click here to read more highlights from February](#), including the work done to serve our veterans, foster our agriculture industry, and protect our environment.

The Tragedy in Parkland

On February 14, 2018, 17 children and teachers were killed by a gunman in their high school in Parkland, Florida. It was one of the deadliest mass shootings in United States.

As a former prosecutor, I repeatedly saw first-hand the impact that gun violence has on our communities. Each year, about 30,000 Americans die in gun-related incidents, and twice as many are wounded, according to federal statistics. Nearly 35 percent of the gun-related deaths in this country are homicides, and over 60 percent of gun deaths are suicides.

It is incumbent upon Congress to act on this public health crisis. We can do so while still respecting our Second Amendment right to bear arms.

As a member of Congress, I support and am working to pass legislation that would address this epidemic. I have cosponsored the following pieces of legislation that would make a difference:

- H.R. 5087, the Assault Weapons Ban, to prohibit the sale, transfer, production, and importation of semi-automatic rifles and handguns and more.
- H.R. 4052, the Keep Americans Safe Act, to make it illegal to purchase or acquire magazines that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition.

- H.R. 3947, the Automatic Gunfire Prevention Act, to ban the manufacture, possession, transfer, sale, or importation of bump stocks.
- HR 4240, Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2017, to ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and provide a responsible and consistent background check process.
- HR 1478, Gun Violence Research Act. This bipartisan bill would repeal the Dickey amendment, which has long been a major roadblock preventing the CDC and other federal health agencies from sponsoring independent research into the causes of, and potential solutions to, gun violence.
- HR 1832, To authorize the appropriation of funds to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for conducting or supporting research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.
- HR 2598, Gun Violence Restraining Order Act of 2017, to provide law enforcement and family members of an individual who they fear is a danger to himself, herself, or others the ability to temporarily remove guns from individuals in crisis.
- HR 2670, Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act, to protect more victims of domestic violence by preventing their abusers from possessing or receiving firearms, and for other purposes.
- H.RES 367: Establishing the Select Committee on Gun Violence Prevention.

Congressional leadership must bring these important pieces of legislation to a vote. Americans deserve to feel safe at school, a concert, a place of worship, and at home. I will continue to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and fight to get something done.

March Mobile Office Hours:

Thursday, March 8 – Hollister

Veteran's Memorial Building

649 San Benito Street

Time: 10:00am-1:00pm

Wednesday, March 14 – Watsonville

Santa Cruz Immigration Project

406 Main Street Suite 217

Watsonville, CA 95076

Time: 10:00am-1:00pm

Thursday, March 15 – Gonzales

Gonzales City Hall

147 South First Street

Gonzales, CA 93926

Time: 10:00am-1:00pm

Congressional staff members will be available to assist with issues concerning Social Security, Medicare, federal employee retirement, immigration services, veterans' services, passports, searching for military records, and any other federal matters. Mobile office hours are an opportunity for members of the community to meet with Congressional staff, and are offered in addition to meetings in the Salinas and Santa Cruz Congressional offices. To schedule a meeting, please call our Salinas District Office: [\(831\) 424-2229](tel:8314242229).

If you would like to get similar updates in the future, please sign up for newsletters by clicking [here](#). Please call or contact our Congressional offices in Salinas, Santa Cruz, or Washington, D.C. or through <https://panetta.house.gov>, which also has more information about legislation, votes cast in the U.S. House of Representatives, and the legislative process. Please do not hesitate to reach out to let us know how we can be of service to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jimmy Panetta". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

JIMMY PANETTA
Member of Congress