

I hope that you were all able to spend time with family and friends over Thanksgiving. To our servicemen and women who spent their holiday separated from their loved ones, thank you for your dedicated service to this nation. Your patriotism and selflessness inspire me each and every day.

In the days after the Thanksgiving weekend, I was pleased to visit with high school students from the First District on several different occasions. On Monday, I visited with seniors studying government at King William High School, as well as students at West Point High School, which was celebrating its designation by the Department of Education as a "National Blue Ribbon School." Then later in the week, I was able to speak separately with groups from Kettle Run High School of Nokesville and King George High School who were visiting the Capitol with their teachers. All of these students asked extremely relevant and thoughtful questions, and I truly enjoyed being able to spend time with them and to discuss my own experiences and positions on issues.

As I interact with all of these students, I'm always struck by their intelligence and excitement, as well as their interest in civics and public service. Their teachers are clearly doing a phenomenal job. And when I consider the important issues facing the United States, I can't help but think about these students and other children across the nation, including my grandchildren, who stand to inherit an unimaginable debt if Congress and the White House do not act to put in place responsible deficit and debt reduction measures.

This week in Washington was filled with committee hearings and briefings, planning sessions for the upcoming 113th Congress in January, and meetings with constituents visiting Washington. While these are important parts of Congress' role in governing, I am deeply frustrated that there has not been more activity to address the so-called Fiscal Cliff, which is a combination of tax hikes and drastic spending cuts set to take effect in January. It is absolutely critical that these issues be addressed as soon as possible to provide certainty and stability to the American people, to our job creators, and to the global economy as a whole.

The most important part of our form of government is the role of the citizens in the decisions their leaders make, and I am hopeful that you'll continue to stay in touch with me and make your opinions known as the debate over the Fiscal Cliff unfolds. I also hope that you'll encourage family and friends [to sign up to receive this Weekly Update](#) . The more engaged folks on Main Street are in the legislative process, the more responsible Washington will become. As always, I can be reached I can be reached by telephone at (202) 225-4261, through my website (

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