

The end of violent Al-Qaeda ideology

Written by U.S. Congressman Keith Ellison
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The death of Osama Bin Laden this week marks the most significant accomplishment yet in the war against Al-Qaeda. I commend the leadership of President Obama, the U.S. Armed Forces and the intelligence community for finding the world's most wanted terrorist. As we reflect, our thoughts should be with the families of those Bin Laden murdered in the September 11th terrorist attacks. Even before 9/11, Bin Laden killed Americans and others at the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and on the USS Cole. I hope his death marks the beginning of the end of the violent Al-Qaeda ideology.

This week I joined with my colleagues to write a letter to President Obama, calling for a significant reduction in U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Bin Laden's death signals the need to end our involvement in the longest war in American history. We must ensure that the scheduled reduction in troops in July meets the expectations of the American people and that we transition to a civilian-led reconstruction and development effort.

Another Week And Still No Jobs Legislation

Republicans continued their anything-but-jobs agenda this week. It is now five months since Republicans took the majority in the House, and they still haven't introduced a single bill that would create even one job. Instead, this week they voted to undo health care reform, undermine women's health, and promote environmentally devastating oil drilling policies.

This week Republicans voted to take \$1.7 billion away from Minnesota to create a health care exchange under the Affordable Care Act. I voted against this measure since it would delay coverage for uninsured Minnesotans and put a greater burden on our state government. Republicans want to derail reforms that will enable individuals and small businesses to purchase quality, affordable health care coverage.

On Wednesday, Republicans voted to significantly restrict women's access to legal health care services. Their legislation would raise taxes on individuals and small businesses with health insurance plans that -- among many other services -- also offer coverage for abortion. Their proposal would raise taxes on 87 percent of health care plans. Contrary to Republican claims, this bill has nothing to do with public funding of abortions, which has been prohibited by law for over 40 years. As a proud supporter of a woman's right to choose, I voted no on this legislation that would undermine women's health.

Finally, almost exactly one year after the BP oil spill, Republicans voted for legislation that would make it easier for companies to drill for oil offshore and continue business-as-usual. I voted against this reckless legislation that ignores the many safety and environmental lessons we learned last summer and does nothing to lower gas prices in Minnesota.

To read letter go to: http://cpc.grijalva.house.gov/files/PresidentObama_BinLadenAfghanistan_050411.pdf