

# 2015 Year in Review



Congressman  
Raúl M. Grijalva

*Representing Arizona's 3rd  
Congressional District*

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## Welcome

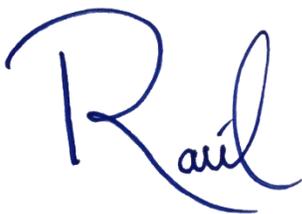
Dear Friends,

As 2015 draws to a close, it's my pleasure to share some of my highlights of the year with you. We accomplished so much in the last year, from helping more than 800 constituents close their cases with federal agencies to saving our community more than \$3.5 million in taxpayer money to passing legislation in honor of former Arizona Governor Raúl Castro.

But there is still so much to do in the next year. Our district, our state and our country face challenges that demand leadership, and in many cases, our community is on the front lines of issues impacting this nation as a whole: While people in every corner of our country debate our broken immigration system, Arizonans live with the consequences of that system each and every day; As Americans grapple with how to balance energy needs with vital environmental protections, the costs and benefits of this struggle are on full display in our home state; And while Congress just passed new education policy replacing No Child Left Behind, its success is now dependent on our state officials and I will be watching them closely.

We have a stake in all of these fights and so many more, and I am as committed to finding solutions today as I was when my career in public service began more than four decades ago. I thank you for the privilege to serve, and welcome you to explore some highlights from my work in 2015.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl". The letter "R" is large and stylized, with the "aúl" written in a smaller, cursive script below it.

## Proudly Serving Southern Arizona

### Letters & Meetings

Congressman Grijalva's first priority is always serving the needs of his constituents. He maintains an active schedule within Arizona's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, and is always accessible for meetings or a simple email.

In 2015, Rep. Grijalva and his staff took more than 850 meetings with constituents and advocates. He sent more than 13,500 letters to constituents responding to their concerns regarding everything from Net Neutrality to the Trans-Pacific Pipeline, Planned Parenthood to protections for wild wolves.

### Help With Federal Agencies

Congressman Grijalva works hard to ensure constituents get the services and benefits they earn from the federal government. Whether it's a passport, a late Social Security check, a missed Medicare payment, an immigration paperwork request, a mortgage modification, or any other business with a federal agency, Rep. Grijalva and his staff are ready to assist.

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance, call Congressman Grijalva's Tucson office at (520) 622-6788, Avondale office at (623) 536-3388 or Somerton office at (928) 343-7933 any time for more information.

#### Cases Opened With Federal Agencies

Rep. Grijalva received over 1,052 assistance requests from constituents, these requests involved U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs, National Banks and Mortgage Services, and many other agencies in 2015.

#### Cases Resolved With Federal Agencies

Rep. Grijalva closed approximately 806 cases with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs, National Banks and Mortgage Services, and many other agencies.

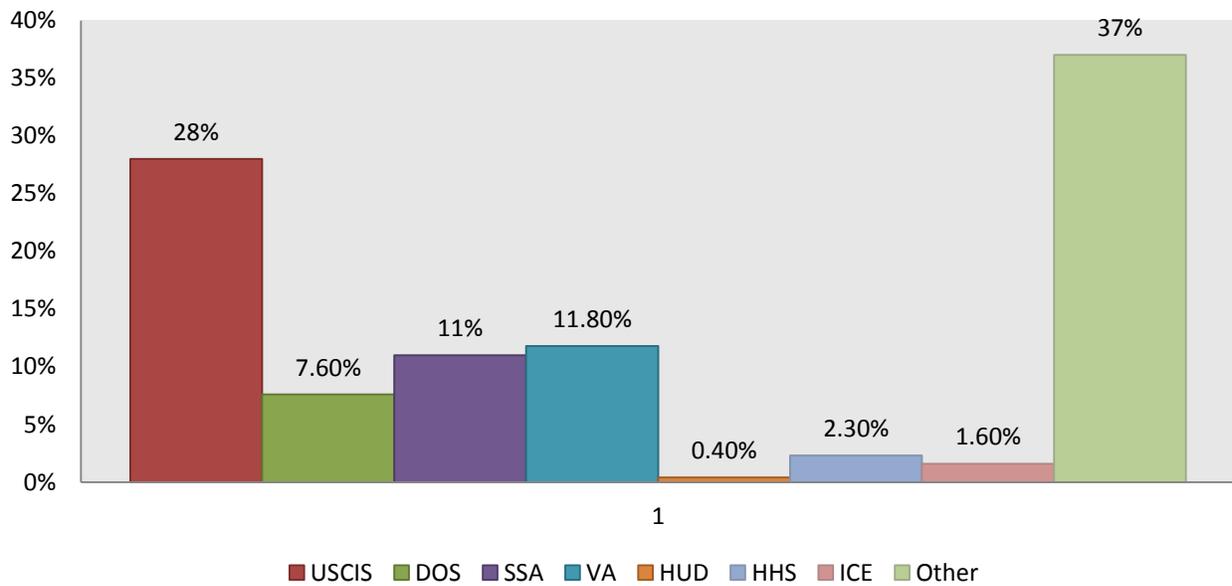
#### *Help With Federal Agencies At A Glance*

Number of Cases Opened	1,052
Number of Cases Resolved	806

### COMPLETED CASEWORK REQUESTS BY FEDERAL AGENCY

FEDERAL AGENCY (%)	
USCIS	28%
DOS	7.60%
SSA	11%
VA	11.80%
HUD	0.40%
HHS	2.30%
ICE	1.60%
Other	37%

### COMPLETED CASEWORK REQUESTS BY FEDERAL AGENCY



### **Saving You Money**

Congressman Grijalva's office saved Southern Arizonans more than **\$3.5 million** this year by recovering funds, getting checks released, preventing foreclosures and helping with agencies. This figure includes assistance with Social Security Administration disability claims, claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs, tax credit applications with the Internal Revenue Service, and mortgage loan modifications savings.

<i>Tracking Misdirected Benefits Payments</i>	
SSA	\$130,600.62
DOL	\$64,943.43
RRB	\$9,955.00
VA	\$54,891.00
Foreclosure	\$3,304,087.96
USAR	\$112,528.00
DOE	\$15,200.58
USCIS	\$9,210.00
HHS	\$2,709.79
IRS	\$12,891.59
ACA	\$898.56
<b>Money Recovered/Saved for Constituents</b>	<b>\$3,717,916.53</b>

## Making a Difference in our Community

### Education

#### The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Head Start

Head Start marked its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on May 18<sup>th</sup>, and Rep. Grijalva celebrated with students Fowler Head Start Program and Littleton Elementary School District. The Congressman released the following statement:

*"Fifty years ago today, President Johnson signed the Head Start Act into law with the belief that children born into poverty should not be held captive by it. Early education gives kids a foundation for success, and empowers them to live the lives they choose. And over the past five decades, Head Start has ensured low-income children are every bit as prepared to succeed in classes from kindergarten to college as any other peer. In Arizona alone, more than 22,000 kids are learning the skills they need to have a brighter future thanks to this vital program.*

*"Despite this, Republicans continue to cut away at Head Start funding. Nation-wide, only two in five students who are eligible for Head Start have access right now, and the GOP's budget cuts will mean another 35,000 will miss out. That's 35,000 kids whose futures will be stunted over politics and misguided priorities. So as we mark 50 years of Head Start, let's renew our commitment to the ideals that helped create the program in the first place, and ensure all our children have access to the tools for success today, and for another fifty years to come."*



### Education Forum

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, Congressman Grijalva hosted a conversation with school administrators, teachers, school support staff and education organizations on the state of public education in Arizona at the YWCA – Francis McClelland Community Center in Avondale. Rep. Grijalva provided a legislative update on the discussions at the time to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and outlined his priorities for an education policy that meets the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs of every child.



*Rep. Grijalva speaks with Constituents at his Education Forum in Avondale*

### Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization

With childhood nutrition programs set to expire on September 30<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva toured local schools as kids went back after the summer break to help get the word out to families. Across the country, over 30 million children receive low-cost or free lunch throughout schools and over seventeen million children live in food insecure households. School nutrition plays a central role in a child's health.



## Infrastructure for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### Chula Vista Bridge Dedication

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva joined Army Corps of Engineers Brigadier General Mark Toy and the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors for a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Chula Vista Bridge in Santa Cruz County, just north of Nogales city limits. The event was almost 10 years in the making, with assessments, studies and re-dos prolonging progress on the much needed bridge that allows easier access for emergency vehicles and thorough traffic.



### Raúl Castro Port of Entry

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva passed legislation to designate the United States Customs and Border Protection Port of Entry in Douglas, Arizona, as the “Raul Hector Castro Port of Entry”. The bill, which passed the House unanimously, is co-sponsored by all nine members of the Arizona Congressional Delegation. Grijalva’s bill went on to pass in the Senate on May 12<sup>th</sup> and was sent to President Obama to be signed into law. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Congressman Grijalva was joined by Rep. McSally, the Commissioner of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Mayor of Douglas, Arizona and other officials for the renaming ceremony.



## Forums

Congressman Grijalva cherishes the opportunity to speak directly to his constituents, and hear their concerns and opinions about the most pressing issues of the day. Forums offer Rep. Grijalva and the residents of Arizona's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District the opportunity for open and engaging dialogue.

### Immigration Forum



*Reps. Grijalva & Gutierrez Join Jose Diaz-Balart to Discuss Their Immigration Forum in Tucson*

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, Congressman Grijalva welcomed Rep. Luis Gutierrez to Tucson to hold a joint forum on immigration. The forum came as a court was set to hear a case challenging President Obama's executive actions on immigration. The forum attracted some 300 attendees who received legislative updates from Grijalva and Gutierrez and had access to attorneys and counselors to help prepare them for the implementation of DACA and DAPA.



*A View Inside Rep. Grijalva's Immigration Forum in Tucson*

### Visiting Rosa Robles Loreto

Before their immigration forum, Grijalva and Gutierrez visited the Southside Presbyterian Church to meet with Rosa Robles Loreto. Rosa had been in sanctuary at the church since August 2014 when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) entered a final order of deportation against her. After 461 days in Southside Presbyterian, Rosa was finally able to leave without threat of being taken away from her family.



*Reps. Grijalva and Gutierrez meet with Rosa Robles Loreto at Southside Presbyterian Church*

### Forums to STOP the TPP

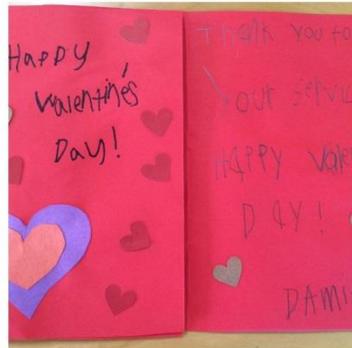
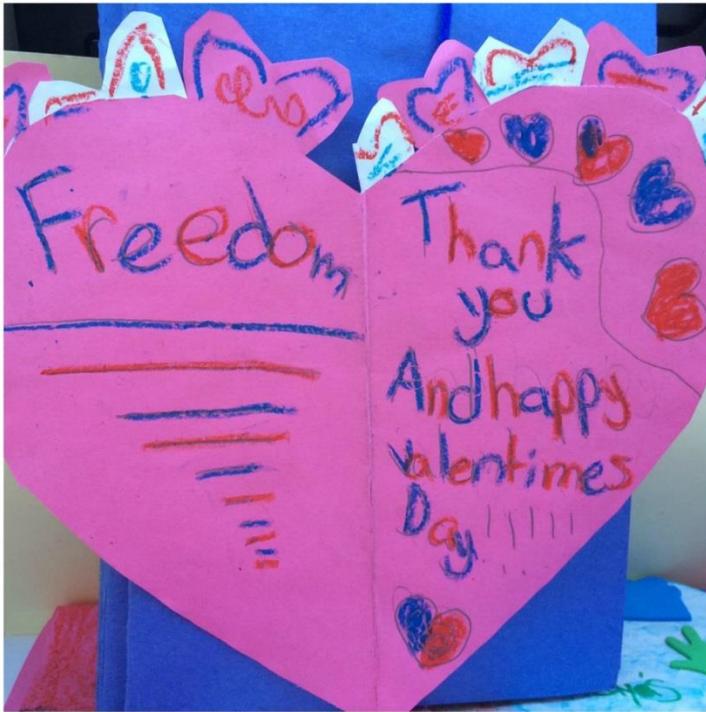
A blue poster with red and white text. At the top, 'STOP THE TPP' is written in large, bold, black letters, with a red circle and slash over the 'O'. Below this, it says 'JOIN REP. RAÚL GRIJALVA FOR A FORUM ON WHY TPP IS A BAD DEAL FOR AMERICA.' and 'The Labor, Environment, Corporate, Healthcare &amp; Food Safety sectors all have concerns about the Trans Pacific Partnership. Hear the details on June 5 &amp; 6.' There are two event listings: 'JUNE 5TH @ 5 PM PHOENIX' at 'UFCW LOCAL 99 HALL, 2401 N. CENTRAL AVE, FIRST FLOOR' and 'JUNE 6TH @ 1PM TUCSON' at 'IBEW LOCAL 570 HALL, 750 S. TUCSON BLVD'. A circular portrait of Rep. Raúl Grijalva is centered between the two event listings, with the American and Spanish flags behind him.

On June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva organized forums on the Trans-Pacific Partnership for constituents in Phoenix and Tucson. The forum hosted speakers across a spectrum of interest groups, including Sandy Bahr, Chapter Director of the Sierra Club, Rebekah Friend, Executive Director of the Arizona AFL-CIO, Dr. Sailesh Rao, Executive Director of Climate Healers, Doug Hart, President of Arizona Alliance for Retired Americans, and Rachel Linden, founder of GMO-Free AZ. Over 125 people attended in Phoenix, and more than 100 joined in Tucson.

## Supporting Our Veterans

### Valentines for Veterans

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva led a Valentines for Veterans drive. Students from 40 elementary schools throughout our community made Valentine's Day cards for local heroes, and Grijalva's office delivered them to the Tucson Veterans Administration hospital, University of Arizona and Pima College Veterans Centers, and American Legion Veterans Halls.



## Wounded Warrior Fellow

In May, Rep. Grijalva welcomed David Alvarez onto his staff as a Wounded Warrior Fellow. Originally from Morenci, Arizona, David followed his grandfather's footsteps after high school and enlisted in the United States Army. After 10 years of service, including two tours of duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and a deployment to South America, he came home to Arizona and got to work on a new mission: serving and assisting his fellow veterans.

David serves as Rep. Grijalva's liaison between constituents and local, state, and federal government agencies. As David puts it, "I feel that being a veteran and understanding the concerns of fellow veterans allows me to be an effective advocate for their needs."

Arizona Veterans Magazine ran an article about David and his work in the October issue.



## Recognizing the Regional Municipalities Veterans Treatment Court

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Rep. Grijalva presented Judge Michael Pollard with a Congressional Record in his honor to celebrate his contributions to the Tucson community. In 2009, Judge Pollard and a handful of other judges developed the Regional Municipalities Veterans Treatment Court. The organization provides veterans an opportunity to avoid jail time and clear any misdemeanor charges they may have on their record. In return, the veteran must complete court-mandated rehabilitation and support courses, many times working with the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System and other local organizations that provide those services. Since its inception, this program has allowed over 600 veterans to work towards a healthy, clean lifestyle without the difficulties of possessing a criminal record.



*Rep. Grijalva Presents Judge Pollard with a Congressional Record*

### Connecting a WWII Veteran with his Medals

On August 7<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva [joined](#) World War II veteran Tony Velasquez Figueroa on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday to present him with the he earned (but never received) in service to our country. Mr. Figueroa joined the U.S. Navy following the attack on Battleship Row in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. He trained at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii before deploying to the Midway Islands to serve as an Aviation Machinist Mate Third Class in the U.S. Navy.



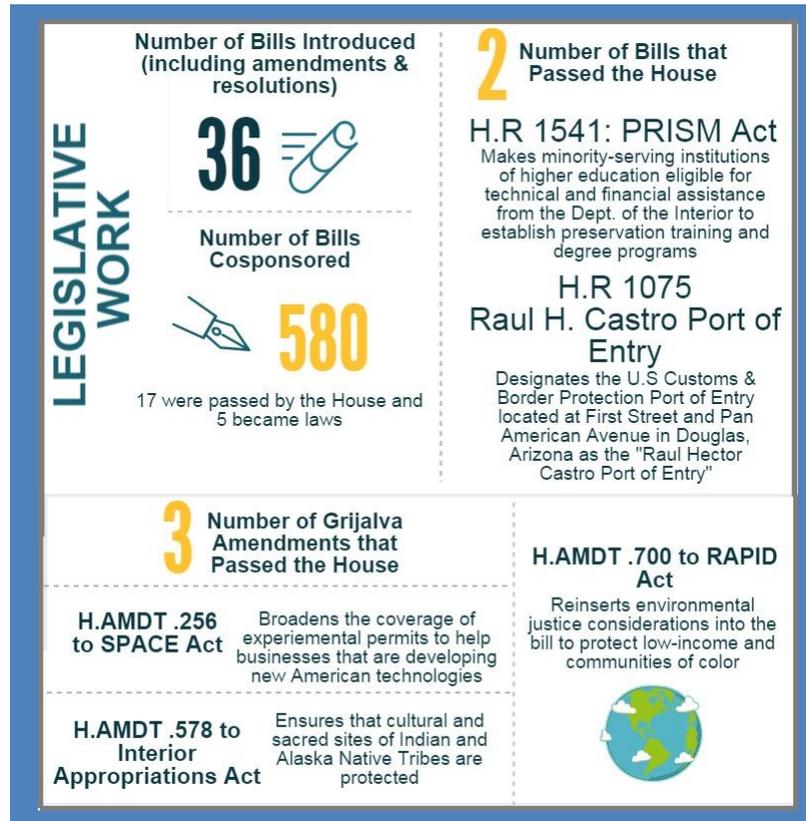
*Rep. Grijalva Presents Tony Velasquez Figueroa with Medals he Earned in Service During WWII at his 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party*

### Veterans Resource Fair



On November 10<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva hosted a Veterans Resource Fair at Avondale City Hall. Representatives from the VA Regional Benefit Office, the VA Medical Center, Veteran Service Organizations and community non-profit organizations were on hand to assist attendees in making the most of the benefits they've earned through their service to our country.

## Fighting for What's Right on Capitol Hill



## Working on Behalf of the Most Vulnerable Among Us

### Protecting Unaccompanied Minors from Sexual Assault

On February 13, 2015 Congressman Grijalva submitted comments to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell expressing concerns and shortfalls within the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Interim Final Rule (IFR) proposing standards and procedures to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment. HHS published the IFR on December 24, 2014, less than 2 weeks after Grijalva led 59 House Democrats in sending a letter to HHS on December 15, 2014 regarding the lack of adequate protection against discrimination and sexual assault for unaccompanied minors in the care of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). The lawmakers urged HHS to implement robust regulations alongside guidance to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth from discrimination.

### No Más

On April 21, 2015 Congressman Grijalva hosted a briefing in cooperation with Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network which unveiled the findings of "NO MÁΣ," an in-depth, ground-breaking

national study that uncovered some of the unique barriers, challenges and opportunities within the Hispanic community to address domestic violence and sexual assault.

### **Touring Family Detention Facilities**

Congressman Grijalva [participated](#) in an eight-Member Congressional Delegation to San Antonio, Texas to tour two for-profit detention centers currently contracted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detain women and children who are awaiting disposition of their final asylum claims.

#### **Karnes County Residential Center**

One woman was asked:

*“Knowing what you know now, and knowing what you’ve been through to get here – you’ve been here almost a year in this prison with your little girl – knowing all that, would you do it again?”*

She responded:

*“Absolutely.” When she was a young woman, she was sexually assaulted and raped in her country, but there was no rule of law or civil society to hold her attackers accountable. She was not going to allow that to happen to her four-year-old girl.*

Another woman told the Members about inadequate healthcare at the facility, and shared that her own daughter is suffering from a treatable medical condition but has not received help. Upon returning to Washington, Members learned that the same woman attempted suicide the day after they met with her.



*Reps. Grijalva and Gutierrez meet with women and children currently detained by ICE*

*“Seeing firsthand the conditions that women and children are forced to endure in family detention centers is nothing short of heartbreaking,” said Rep. Grijalva. “The unnecessary*

*human suffering at the hands of our government, and for the profit of the private prison industry, is wrong, and must stop without exception.”*

Following the Congressional site visits, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson announced changes this morning to family detention protocols. Grijalva and the other Members of the Congressional delegation met with Secretary Johnson today on Capitol Hill to discuss their dismay with the current system.

*“I understand that DHS is taking some initiative to soften this situation, but it doesn’t matter how gilded the cage might be, it’s still a cage – it’s still a prison for women and children,” Grijalva continued. “DHS must recognize that these are people seeking asylum and refugee status in our country as our laws accommodate. They deserve to have their cases managed properly; to have access to legal support, supportive services and protection in light of their credible stories regarding the need for asylum as refugees.*

*“Instead, a for-profit prison industry, contracted by DHS with minimal oversight and minimal accountability is turning a buck by imprisoning the most vulnerable among us. We must eliminate the monetary gain from this situation, and deal with it in a way that’s much more rational than what we’re doing now. Secretary Johnson has to understand that this is not something he can window dress – this fundamentally has to stop.”*

More pictures are available [here](#).

Grijalva has been a vocal opponent of family detention centers, and of the for-profit detention industry.

In December 2014, he led 59 House Democrats in [sending a letter](#) to Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell expressing concern over the lack of adequate protection against discrimination and sexual assault for unaccompanied minors in the care of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

For Mothers’ Day this year, he [wrote an article](#) recognizing the hundreds of mothers held in family detention centers just like the ones he visited this week.

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, he joined 135 of his Democratic colleagues, including Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, in [sending a letter](#) to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson expressing deep concerns with the Department’s “continued detention of mothers and children in secure, jail-like facilities.”

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, Grijalva [sent a letter](#) to Attorney General Loretta Lynch requesting a thorough and public investigation into allegations of mistreatment of detainees at Eloy Detention Center outside of Phoenix, Arizona, which allegedly led to the deaths of two detainees.

## Protecting LGBT Immigrants in Detention Centers

On June 23, Congressman Grijalva and Rep. Michael Honda led 33 Members of Congress in [sending a letter](#) to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson expressing concern over the circumstances lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) immigrants face while held in detention centers under Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody. The letter called for DHS to use existing discretion to release LGBT individuals from detention to ensure this vulnerable population's safety by releasing them to alternatives to detention.

*"LGBT individuals face unique threats in detention facilities, and we must do everything in our power to protect them," Rep. Grijalva said. "The good news is ICE has policies in place to help address these needs – the bad news is they are not utilizing those policies, and in some cases, ignoring them outright. This disregard facilitates sexual assault against the LGBT community, which is completely unacceptable. Most of these people fled their native countries for fear of persecution – we cannot allow them to be victimized again once in U.S. custody."*

Following the letter, Congressman Grijalva hosted a briefing on August 5, 2015 that discussed the newly released ICE transgender detainee care guidance.

## Rallying to Save Oak Flat

A last-minute Republican addition to the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) forced a federal land trade that ripped Oak Flat and the surrounding area away from the Apache people – *for whom this land is sacred* – and gave it to a mining company called Resolution Copper, which was formed by multinational mining conglomerates BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto specifically to take over and develop the site.

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Rep. Grijalva joined the Rally to Save Oak Flat on the West Front of the Capitol building where he accepted more than half a million signatures petitioning to return Oak Flat to the Apache people.



## Equality Act

On July 23, 2015 Congressman Grijalva joined Congressman David Cicilline and 164 other colleagues as an original cosponsor of the Equality Act. The historic bill would provide comprehensive nondiscrimination protection to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans covering employment, housing, public accommodation, credit, jury service, education and federal benefits.

## Transgender Equality Caucus

On November 17, 2015 Congressman Grijalva joined 7 colleagues in forming the groundbreaking Transgender Equality Task Force within the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus. This was the first task force ever created by the LGBT Equality Caucus. The task force will analyze barriers to full legal and societal equality faced by the transgender community and will design legislative and other initiatives to make the American Dream more accessible to all transgender people.

*“Every member of our society is entitled to full respect and equal protection under our laws,”*  
**Rep. Grijalva said.** *“The Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus’s groundbreaking Transgender Equality Taskforce will help ensure our friends and loved ones who are gender non-conforming do not endure discrimination, unequal treatment, or even violence simply because of their gender identity. This taskforce will fight for the transgender community’s constitutionally protected pursuit of happiness, and enable them to safely be open about who they are. I hope this taskforce brings solace to transgender youths in our nation, and ignites for them the deep care that their representatives have for their livelihood. One more transgender youth taking their life due to lack of acceptance and bullying is too many. It’s past time we act.”*

## Prohibiting Discrimination Against LGBT Community at the Olympics

In December 2014, the International Olympic Committee amended its charter to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Prior to that, Rep. Grijalva signed a letter in November 2013 expressing concerns regarding LGBT discrimination in Russia, which was hosting the Winter Olympic Games. Grijalva also signed a letter in April 2014 requesting the International Olympic Committee amend Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

## Small Business/Science and Technology

### SPACE Act Amendment

On May 21<sup>st</sup>, Rep. Grijalva passed an amendment on the SPACE Act (H.R. 2262) expanding the coverage of experimental permits to suborbital launch vehicles to allow for non-revenue testing. Specifically, this facilitates the permitting process for the testing of ‘reusable launch vehicles’. The FAA does not have the ability to grant experimental permits for Launch Vehicles which include spacecraft. Under current law they can only grant permits for rockets. So industry and the Federal Government go to extraordinary lengths to find ways to conduct tests in the aviation parts of the FAA, or working with other agencies like NASA or the DoD. This regulatory impediment is very expensive and time consuming to deal with and results in stifling progress in developing new American technologies, including for a business in our district.

## Health

### Native American Suicide Rates

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Congressman Grijalva [re-introduced](#) the Native American Suicide Prevention Act to more actively curtail the alarming rate of suicide amongst Native American populations. This cost-free legislation directs state or state-sponsored organization to make a reasonable effort to consult with Native American Indian Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian organizations in the crafting and implementation of suicide intervention and prevention strategies.

*“Suicide is a tragic and desperate form of escape, and its prevalence among Native populations, and particularly their youth, says a lot about the terrible conditions and lack of opportunity they face in this country,” Rep. Grijalva said. “These are the original Americans, and we owe them more than to turn a blind eye to their suffering. Without greater access to mental health care, and resources for those struggling with suicide, we will continue to see the same tragic results, and that is unacceptable.”*

### EAT for Health Act

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Rep. Grijalva [re-introduced](#) the Education and Training (EAT) for Health Act to encourage a stronger focus on nutrition and disease prevention in continuing medical education. The bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to issue guidelines that ensure federally employed physicians and nurses learn more about the role of nutrition in preventing cancer, diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease in their continuing education programs.

*“Equally important to having the most effective medicines and advanced medical facilities in the world is having access to the best medical advice available when consulting a practitioner,” Rep. Grijalva said.*

### Medicaid

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, Congressman Grijalva [sent a letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) urging them to reject Arizona’s new Medicaid waiver request on grounds that the state did not adequately fulfill its obligation to allow for meaningful public input as required by federal law. The application includes changes that could harm some of the most economically disadvantaged individuals in the state. CMS has until October 15, 2016 to decide whether or not to proceed with the State of Arizona’s request.

*“The State of Arizona is seeking dramatic changes to its Medicaid program and is effectively limiting the public’s ability to speak out against it,” Rep. Grijalva said. “Proceeding without affording Arizonans the opportunity to voice concerns will cast a shadow of doubt on the entire process. The alterations to Medicaid will impact people all over our state – they deserve transparency in this process and the opportunity to air their concerns over the pending outcome.”*

Grijalva followed that on December 3<sup>rd</sup> by leading fellow Arizona Democrats Reps. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ) and Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ) in urging Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Matthews

Burwell to reject proposed changes to the state's Medicaid program included in its 1115 Medicaid renewal waiver.

The lawmakers [wrote](#) jointly:

*We ask that you carefully review and reject any provisions that limit access, reduce coverage, penalize low-income Arizonans, act as a barrier to care, or cause individuals to lose their coverage.*

## Taxes

### Protecting Taxpayers From \$3.5 Billion Tax Windfall for BP Over Oil Spill

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva led 52 of his Congressional colleagues in [sending a letter](#) to Attorney General Loretta Lynch requesting she prohibit British Petroleum (BP) from claiming \$15.3 billion of their \$20 billion settlement for the Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill as a business expense, which would allow the negligent oil company to secure a tax windfall of up to \$5.35 billion at the expense of the American people. BP was found “grossly negligent” in causing the Deepwater Horizon disaster that killed 11 people and created the largest marine oil spill in U.S. history.

The letter reads, in part:

*“The tragedy of the Deepwater Horizon must be answered with justice for the people, economy and wildlife of the Gulf Coast—not further tax benefits for BP.” ... “[W]e are concerned that without strict language to the contrary, BP will seek to claim the remaining \$15.3 billion as a business expense, displacing the burden of that uncollected revenue onto every other taxpayer while securing a tax windfall worth \$5.35 billion for itself.”*

## Foreign Policy

### Iran Nuclear Deal

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, Congressional Republicans tried and failed to vote down the P5+1 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran. Rep. Grijalva released the [following statement](#) about the deal:

*“This deal provides for the most aggressive inspection regime in history, which will finally allow the United States and our allies the ability to verifiably restrain Iran’s nuclear ambitions.*

*“I applaud President Obama, Secretary Kerry, Secretary Moniz, and our partners in the P5+1 negotiations for this tremendous victory. It’s time to begin a new chapter in the Middle East that builds towards peace, human rights and a sustainable future – not war. The deal solidified today is our first step towards that future.”*

## Postal

### Saving Cherrybell

Rep. Grijalva has staunchly opposed the U.S. Postal Service's continued consolidation plans, including the closing of the Tucson Postal Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC)/Cherrybell, which is slated for closure in 2016, moving all Arizona postal sorting to a single center in Phoenix.

On March 17, Grijalva joined five members of the Arizona Congressional Delegation in sending a bipartisan letter [urging](#) USPS enact a moratorium on continued consolidations to allow USPS to fulfill its regulatory and statutory obligation to engage in complete, fair, and transparent review of service standard changes and the factors that have led to the consolidation decisions.

On August 6<sup>th</sup>, he led members of the Arizona Congressional delegation in [sending a bipartisan letter](#) to Postmaster General Megan J. Brennan, requesting a response to concerns raised in an extensive community survey demonstrating significant negative impacts on the community caused by the consolidation Cherrybell.

*"This survey makes clear in no uncertain terms that this consolidation is harmful to our residents, our businesses, and even poses health risks as medication deliveries are delayed. It's time that the residents of Tucson and the surrounding communities – the very people impacted by this closure – have their voices heard. It's time to stop this shutdown, once and for all," Rep. Grijalva said.*

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva [re-introduced legislation](#) to prevent the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) from closing any post office or postal facility that serves a high-growth ZIP code – including the facility at Tucson/Cherry Bell.

*"Our goal should be to catalyze economic development, not stunt it in the fastest growing population centers in the country. The employees of Cherrybell, residents and businesses of Tucson, and the people of Arizona deserve better than haphazard facility closures that undermine the basic services of our society," Rep. Grijalva said.*

## Animal Rights

### Fighting to Save Nosey

On July 31<sup>st</sup>, Congressman Grijalva led 31 Members of Congress in [sending a letter](#) to Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack urging the USDA to reevaluate Nosey, an African circus elephant that has reportedly undergone long-term abuse.

*"The detainment and reported abuse of Nosey the Elephant is as much a moral issue as it is a legal one," Rep. Grijalva said. "Nosey's owner has received nearly 200 animal welfare violation citations, yet he still holds a license. Some independent examiners have even labeled this elephant's suffering as the worst they've ever reviewed. The USDA must enforce the Animal Welfare Act to its fullest degree, not only out of legal obligation, but out of decency and kindness to this living, breathing creature that deserves better than a lifetime of abuse and neglect."*

## Seniors

### Supplemental Security Restoration Act

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, Congressman Grijalva joined forces with Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Bernie Sanders (I-VT) to [introduce](#) *The Supplemental Security Restoration Act of 2015*. The legislation would restore the original intent of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, which was to supplement incomes of vulnerable seniors and people with severe disabilities enough to protect them from the harms of poverty. The current SSI program is painfully outdated, with many funding and benefits formulas still in place from when President Nixon signed the law in 1972. As a result, many individuals that need assistance are unable to get it, and many that do receive assistance still live below the poverty level, unable to afford adequate food or housing. Rep. Grijalva is a prominent voice in the effort to update SSI, and previously introduced similar legislation in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### 100 Percent Rating from Alliance for Retired Americans

The Alliance for Retired Americans, which represents more than 4.3 million retirees across the United States, [awarded](#) Rep. Grijalva a 100 percent when they released their rankings on May 29<sup>th</sup>. The ranking reflects votes Rep. Grijalva made during the second session of 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, and preserves his 100 percent lifetime ranking with the ARA.

## Housing

### Housing Trust Fund

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) [announced](#) that it would remove the funding suspension to the Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund, allowing dedicated funds to return to the programs. The move came after Rep. Grijalva was joined by 77 of his Democratic colleagues in Congress in sending a [letter](#) to FHFA Director Mel Watt on July 21, 2014, urging him to reverse a determination made in November 2008 to suspend contributions to the Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund. Members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, which Rep. Grijalva co-chairs, also urged Director Watt to re-fund the programs in a meeting earlier that year.

*“By funding the Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund, the FHFA is helping to place roofs over the heads of our society’s most vulnerable members,”* **said Rep. Grijalva.**

*“Construction and preservation of affordable housing will help stabilize communities across Arizona and the country that are still struggling to recover from a devastating mortgage crisis. Low income and minority communities have been disproportionately impacted by the mortgage crisis, this will be a huge step in helping many in my district rebuild their lives.”*

## Serving Our Service Members

### Ensuring Access to the VA Home Loan

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, Federal Housing Finance Agency Director Melvin L. Watt announced he would direct Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to [develop a new universal loan application dataset](#) (ULAD) that

will capture information about a borrower's current and prior military service. FHFA will use the ULAD as the basis for an updated uniform residential loan application (URLA). This came merely one month after Grijalva led 45 of his colleagues in [calling for a veteran status identifier](#) to be included on the URLA to ensure more veterans are aware of VA home loan options, and to collect vital data on how many veterans obtain VA home loans. Grijalva's letter was sent to FHFA on September 22, 2015.

*"I commend FHFA for their swift action to ensure veterans are informed of every option available to them, and for collecting the data needed to analyze the effectiveness of our veteran outreach," Rep. Grijalva said. "Veterans earn benefits like the VA home loan through their service to our nation, yet without this data, we cannot ensure that veterans are even aware that benefits like zero down payments were available to them. This small step will change that, and make a huge difference for veterans looking to buy a home."*

### **Protecting Veterans from Predatory Lending**

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, Congressman Grijalva submitted a congressional record calling for an end to predatory lending towards veterans in honor of Veteran's Day.

*"To protect veterans, their families, and all consumers, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau must adopt the strongest possible rule to rein in the worst abuses in the payday loan market. Specifically, we ask that the CFPB meaningfully reform the marketplace by implementing rules governing both storefront and online payday lending that would: One, require the lender to determine the borrower's ability to repay the loan, including consideration of both income and expenses; Two not sanction any series of repeat loans or provide any safe harbor; Three recognize that borrowers need small dollar loans with good terms, not short-term loans that are difficult for them to repay. These short-term loans are renewed a multitude of times and trap the average borrower in debt for more than half the year at rates that average 391 percent. The CFPB should establish an outer limit on length of indebtedness that is at least as short as the FDIC's 2005 guidelines – 90 days in a twelve-month period; and lastly prohibit lenders from using post-dated checks of electronic access to a borrower's checking account as evidence of ability to repay the loan."*

## Progressive Caucus

Now serving his fourth term as a co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Rep. Grijalva has transformed the CPC from a loose group of lawmakers into a legislative powerhouse, influencing politics both on and off of Capitol Hill. Through the CPC, Grijalva set benchmarks for responsible progressive policies, from an alternative budget that would create 8.4 million jobs to a climate change resolution with targets that would overcome the threats of our warming globe.

## Progressive Agenda

On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison joined New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and national progressive leaders to launch *The Progressive Agenda to Combat Income Inequality*.

*“The Progressive Agenda is an important first step in growing the paychecks of working Americans. The coalition assembled today is proof we can do great things for people when we organize together. All of the partners involved in creating The Progressive Agenda are dedicated to the idea that no one working full-time in America should live in poverty.”*

## Labor

### Progressive Caucus Supports Low Wage Workers Striking for Higher Wages

On April 14<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Progressive Caucus released a [statement](#) in solidarity with low-wage workers across the country set to strike the following day for higher wages and the right to collectively bargain.

*“The Fight for \$15 isn’t about a number – it’s about the dignity of a livable wage and the rights of workers to stand together against unfair employment practices,” said Rep. Grijalva. “As workers from across the country continue to rise against unfair – and immoral – treatment, we must recognize that every American forced to accept less than their worth for labor is an American who cannot contribute fully to our economy. We must restore this nation’s role as a land of unbridled opportunity, and that starts by ensuring everyone willing to work full time earns enough to get by.”*

### Progressive Caucus Hosted Forum: A Good Jobs Strategy for the Low Wage Economy

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the CPC hosted a forum how the federal government can create good jobs as millions of Americans were going on strike around the country. The forum highlighted model employers in order to show that real-world alternatives to a business model reliant on poverty-jobs are possible.

### Progressive Caucus Applauds President’s New Overtime Rule

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, President Obama announced a [proposal to raise the overtime](#) threshold to \$50,440. The previous threshold was \$23,660. The move came after the Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs signed a letter led by CPC member Rep. Mark Takano to President Obama on January 19<sup>th</sup> asking for an increase in the overtime threshold. The CPC also called for an increase in the overtime threshold in its Fiscal Year 2016 Alternative Budget.

*“We applaud President Obama for standing with American families who deserve fair pay for their hard work. People all over the country are working longer hours, but their paychecks continue to come up short.”*

### **Senator Sanders, Congressional Progressive Caucus Introduce Bill to Raise Federal Minimum Wage**

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ) and Keith Ellison (D-MN) and 28 of their colleagues [introduced](#) the *Pay Workers a Living Wage Act*, which raises the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2020.

Details on the bill is available [here](#).

A letter signed by over two-hundred economists support of raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 is available [here](#).

*“In the richest nation on Earth, full-time work should be compensated with more than a never-ending struggle to make ends meet,” Rep. Grijalva said. “We believe in the dignity of hard work – we should demand the dignity of fair compensation, too. Every American forced to accept less than their worth for labor is an American who cannot contribute fully to our economy, which is why Congress should pass the Pay Workers a Living Wage Act immediately.”*

### **Equitable CEO-to-Worker Pay Ratio**

On July 27<sup>th</sup>, Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) and Keith Ellison (D-MN) joined Financial Services Committee Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA) in calling on the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to finalize the rule requiring publicly-traded corporations to disclose the ratio of the compensation for their CEO to the compensation of their median worker.

The [letter](#) states:

*“Congress enacted the CEO-to-worker pay ratio disclosure rule in response to public concerns over escalating executive pay and the need for investors and the public to have this information available in an easily understandable format. Finalizing this rule has also never been more needed as income inequality continues to grow.”*

### **Progressive Caucus Supports NLRB Decision on Joint Employers**

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ) and Keith Ellison (D-MN) released the following statement after the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that Browning-Ferris Industries is a joint employer responsible for working conditions set by their subcontractors and franchisees.

*“This decision is a significant victory in the ongoing effort to hold corporations accountable for poor working conditions that harm American workers. Today’s decision will help close this unfair loophole in labor law. Low wage workers face stagnant wages and poor working conditions. Organizing to demand better treatment is their protected right.”*

## Justice

### Domestic Right Wing Extremism

On October 14<sup>th</sup>, the Justice Department created a [new position](#) to put more emphasis on countering domestic terrorism. The domestic terrorism counsel will assist federal prosecutors nationwide who are working on domestic terrorism cases, according to John Carlin, in charge of DOJ's national security division. He says the counsel will "help shape our strategy and analyze legal gaps or enhancements required to ensure we can combat these threats."

The position was created after the Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison, along with 18 House Democrats, sent a letter to President Barack Obama and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Jeh Johnson urging the DHS to issue an updated report on domestic right-wing extremism and reopen the Extremism and Radicalization Branch of the Homeland Environment Threat Analysis Division.

The text of the letter is below and a signed letter is available [here](#).

## Voting Rights

### Audit National Voter Registration Act

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, CPC Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison, along with Rep. Mike Honda [sent a letter](#) to Attorney General Loretta Lynch requesting an audit detailing the enforcement of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).

The letter states:

*"Our representative democracy is threatened by chronically low levels of voter turnout. The federal government should be doing more to ensure that our political system works for all Americans. A healthy democracy requires the highest possible rate of voter participation. One of the most successful ways to increase voter participation is to simplify the voter registration process."*

The full text of the letter is available [here](#).

## Environment

### National Ambient Air Quality Standard

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison, along with 62 House Democrats, sent a letter to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy urging the EPA to issue a strong National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone of 60 parts per billion.

The letter states:

*"We are writing to express our strong support for a science-based standard of 60 parts per billion (ppb). Despite the tremendous success of the Clean Air Act, millions of Americans are still*

*breathing unhealthy air. A strong smog standard of 60 ppb would drive investments in clean energy and public transit infrastructure, save taxpayers billions of dollars annually in health care costs, and save lives.”*

The full text of the letter is available [here](#).

### **Climate Change Resolution**

On November 30<sup>th</sup>, the CPC marked the first day of the U.N. Climate Conference in Paris by [introducing a House Resolution](#) that set aggressive national priorities for combatting climate change. The resolution called for significant goals of near zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, 50 percent of electricity to be derived from renewable sources by 2030 and a transition to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050.

## **Foreign Affairs**

### **Forum on ISIL**

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, CPC Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison, along with CPC Peace and Security Taskforce Chair Rep. Barbara Lee held a forum today on ISIL and President Obama’s proposed Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF). The Congressional Progressive Caucus heard from policy experts who discussed the need for a comprehensive solution to the conflict in Syria and Iraq. Panelists included:

- Ron Dellums, former chair of the House Armed Services Committee
- Phyllis Bennis, Director of New Internationalism Project Institute for Policy Studies
- Jen Daskal, Professor at American University Washington College of Law
- Mel Duncan, Executive Director, Nonviolent Peaceforce

### **Call to Bring Our Troops Home From Afghanistan**

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the CPC issued the following [statement](#) after Afghan President Ashraf Ghani addressed a joint session of Congress.

*“Afghanistan needs the strong leadership of President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah—not a prolonged U.S. military presence. A political solution is the only way forward in Afghanistan. We fully support U.S. efforts to facilitate inclusive and democratic institutions in Afghanistan that are free from corruption and meet the needs and goals of its people. But after nearly fourteen years, the deaths of 2,201 service members, and a total price tag of five trillion dollars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we do not support extending the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan. “President Obama should reconsider his commitment to allow U.S. troops to stay in Afghanistan through 2016.”*

### **Amendment to Audit Drone Killings Rejected by Rules Committee**

On June 16<sup>th</sup>, the Progressive Caucus [offered an amendment](#) that would have required that the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community to audit the effectiveness of existing U.S. efforts to report, track and investigate civilian deaths caused by our drone program. The Progressive Caucus

also attempted to offer this amendment on last year's intelligence authorization bill and has held ad-hoc hearings on accountability for the drone program.

*"Congress must exercise its oversight authority and demand more transparency in the U.S. drone program. Targeted drone strikes claim the lives of innocent civilians too often, creating deep resentment towards the U.S. around the world."*

### **Demanding Accountability for Doctors Without Borders Attack**

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, Rep. Grijalva joined Reps. Keith Ellison (D-MN), Jim McGovern (D-MA), Barbara Lee (D-CA) and 14 additional House colleagues in [sending a letter](#) to President Obama requesting a full and independent investigation into the bombing of a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan that killed 12 humanitarian workers and 10 patients.

The letter states:

*"We are deeply disturbed by the news that U.S. airstrikes in Afghanistan destroyed the MSF trauma hospital in Kunduz...Under international law, hospitals in conflict zones are protected spaces. An independent investigation will help ensure future military engagements keep humanitarian heroes, like the MSF staff, safe."*

## **Transportation**

### **The Mobility, Opportunity, and Vocational Enabling (MOVE) Act**

On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ) and Keith Ellison (D-MN) [introduced H.R. 3788](#), *The Mobility, Opportunity and Vocation Enabling (MOVE) Act*. The *MOVE Act* directs the Department of Transportation to create performance measures for transportation planning that would assess:

- Cumulative increase in residents' connection to jobs;
- Accessibility for disadvantaged populations; and
- The variety of modes of transportation available to users, such as public transportation, roads and highways, and bike and pedestrian pathways.

By providing greater access to jobs and more affordable, accessible transportation options, we can help communities thrive.

## **Trade**

### **Progressive Caucus Trade Principles**

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Progressive Caucus [released broad principles](#) to establish standards for U.S. trade policy that put workers first, balance trade deficits, and improve labor and environmental protections around the world. The CPC argued it is possible to negotiate a trade agreement that doesn't replicate the mistakes of the past, and instead creates a new model for trade, promoting balanced growth for the global economy. Trade agreements should create a net

increase of good American jobs, spur more balanced trade between partners, and improve governance, public health, and environmental protections around the world.

The Congressional Progressive Caucus called for the following principles to ensure fairer trade agreements by prioritizing middle class families and removing special protections and privileges for corporations:

- Protect Congress' Authority to Set Trade Policy
- Restore Balanced trade
- Put Workers First
- Stop Currency Manipulation
- Expand Buy America Procurement Practices
- Protect the Environment for Future Generations
- Prioritize Consumers above Profits
- Protect Nationhood Rights
- Secure Affordable Access to Essential Medicines and Services
- Respect Human Rights
- Provide a Safety Net for Vulnerable Workers

The text of the executive summary is below and the full version is available [here](#).

### **Opposing Medicare Cuts to Pay for Trade Adjustment Assistance**

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison, along with 59 House Democrats, [sent a letter](#) to Speaker John Boehner and Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi urging them to not use Medicare as an offset for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

The letter states:

*“We write to urge you to fund a more robust Trade Adjustment Assistance program that is not offset by cuts to critical social programs like Medicare. American workers rely on Trade Adjustment Assistance when trade deals send jobs overseas. While it is clear we need Trade Adjustment Assistance, it is not clear why the offset should be extended budget limitations on Medicare, as proposed. More than 50 million seniors rely on Medicare; we should be investing in the trust fund, not using savings to fund other programs.”*

The full text of the letter is below and a signed copy is available [here](#).

### **Denouncing the Trans-Pacific Partnership**

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, CPC Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison [announced](#) that the Trans-Pacific Partnership does not meet their Progressive Principles for Trade.

“The deal announced today is the result of negotiations between corporate interests and trade representatives, which ignored the voices of working families in all twelve countries. While details are still emerging, we are concerned the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will destroy jobs and depress wages, threaten health and safety standards, harm our air, land and water, and make it harder for patients to access life-saving drugs.”

## Budget

### Amendment to Repeal Sequester

On January 12<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs [submitted an amendment](#) to the Rules Committee which would substitute the text of H.R. 37 with language that repeals limits on discretionary spending created in the Budget Control Act of 2011.

*“House Republicans are opening the 114th Congress by putting the profits of mega-banks over investments in hard-working Americans. While they are championing failed policies of trickle-down economics, we know our economy works best when we put Americans back to work. If Republicans are serious about creating jobs, they should focus on ending harmful budget cuts. That’s why the Progressive Caucus is proposing to replace H.R. 37 – a bill that would delay a requirement for the largest banks to sell possibly risky investments in their portfolios – with investments that will create jobs across the country. “Our priority should be American families, not bank CEOs. We can rebuild our roads and bridges, upgrade our transit systems and electrical grids, and continue important science research while putting Americans back into decent paying jobs if we get rid of the budget sequester once and for all.”*

### People’s Budget

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Progressive Caucus [unveiled the CPC’s FY 2016 budget alternative](#) called *The People’s Budget: A Raise for America*.

The executive summary for The People’s Budget is below and the full budget is available [here](#).

*“The most important thing Congress can do as we recover from the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression is pass a budget that invests in the American people,” Rep. Grijalva said. “The People’s Budget create good paying jobs by addressing our nation’s biggest challenges head-on, from rebuilding crumbling roads to updating antiquated energy infrastructure. It’s a down payment on the continual effort to improve the quality of life for all Americans by raising wages, restoring and enhancing vital programs like SNAP and emergency unemployment compensation, and making bold new investments like debt-free college for all, which will increase our global competitiveness and ensure every student has a fair shot at achieving their dreams.”*

The People's Budget fixes an economy that, for too long, has failed to provide the opportunities American families need to get ahead. Despite their skills and work ethic, most American workers and families are so financially strapped from increasing income inequality that their paychecks

barely cover basic necessities. They earn less and less as corporations and the wealthy continue amassing record profits. It has become clear to American workers that the system is rigged.

The People's Budget levels the playing field and creates economic opportunity by increasing the pay of middle- and low-income Americans. More customers and higher consumer spending advance American businesses, not tax cuts and relaxed regulations. The People's Budget drives a full economic recovery by creating high-quality jobs and reducing family expenses, restoring the buying power of working Americans.

The People's Budget closes tax loopholes that companies use to ship jobs overseas. It creates fair tax rates for millionaires and provides needed relief to low- and middle-income families. It invests in debt-free college, workforce training and small businesses within our communities, helping return our economy to full employment and giving a raise to Americans who need it most. Investments in The People's Budget boost employment and wages by addressing some of the biggest challenges of our time: repairing America's rapidly aging roads and bridges, upgrading our energy systems to address climate change, keeping our communities safe, and preparing our young people to thrive as citizens and workers.

A fair wage is more than the size of a paycheck. It's having enough hours, paid overtime, sick and parental leave, and affordable health and childcare. It's being able to afford a good education for your kids and never living in fear that your job will be sent overseas. It's knowing you can make ends meet at the end of the month. The People's Budget helps achieve that with a raise for American workers, a raise for struggling families and a boost to America's long-term global competitiveness.

### **Calling for an End to Sequestration**

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva and Keith Ellison released the following [statement](#) today after Congress passed a Continuing Resolution to fund the government current spending levels through December 11, 2015.

*“With today’s vote, House Republicans just bought themselves 10 weeks to get their house in order. When that clock runs out, Congress must create a budget for the rest of the fiscal year that invests in America, not one that continues the cuts that will harm our education system, veterans, and working families. A budget that continues sequestration funding levels only prolongs harmful cuts – it cannot be considered a clean budget compromise. Allowing those cuts to continue is irresponsible and a nonstarter – period. By reversing the devastating effects of the sequester, we can gain hundreds of thousands of jobs and grow our economy.*”

*“The dysfunctional Republican leadership has governed by crisis for five years now. It is time to show real leadership and draft a budget that invests in our country. Anything short of that is a failure for the American people.”*

## Health

### Prescription Drug Price Hikes

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, CPC Co-Chairs Reps. Grijalva and Ellison, along with Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), the CPC Health Care Taskforce Chair, [sent a letter](#) to Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell about rising prescription drug costs.

*“We are writing to you to express our concerns about the rising costs of prescription drugs which are creating financial strains on Medicare and Medicaid and the household budgets of our constituents.”*

## Finance

### Payday Lending Practices

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, the Congressional Progressive Caucus [led a letter](#) along with the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau recommending it take bold action to improve the small dollar loan market. Fraudulent payday loans threaten the economic well-being of many Americans, especially those from low-income communities of color, by trapping them in a cycle of debt. On March 26<sup>th</sup>, CFPB announced that it is acting swiftly on a rule to protect working Americans from unfair payday lending practices.

*“We applaud the CFPB and President Obama for acting on our concerns and moving forward to protect Americans. We urge them to issue a rule that leaves no room for unscrupulous lenders to continue their harmful conduct.”*

## The Natural Resources Committee

The United States enjoys abundant natural resources that support our vibrant economy and beautiful open spaces that inspire Americans across the country. As Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee, Rep. Grijalva is committed to environmental policies that conserve and restore our environment, natural resources, public lands and oceans. The depletion of fish populations and our ongoing water management struggles are just a few of the many clear reminders we see every day that our natural resources standards need to be more sustainable. Rep. Grijalva advocates for that sustainability every day.

## Conserving America's Public Lands

America's public lands belong to the people. All Americans – whether they live in Chicago, Illinois or Cheyenne, Wyoming – deserve an equal say in the management of our public resources.

### Sportsmen's Roundtable

On May 13, 2015, Rep. Grijalva [held a roundtable](#) with Democratic House Natural Resources Committee lawmakers, members of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and national hunting, fishing, wildlife and conservation organizations to discuss potential collaboration on public lands issues, habitat protection, wildlife conservation and access to public lands and waterways.

### The National Park Service Centennial Act

On September 18, 2015, Rep. Grijalva [introduced](#) the National Park Service Centennial Act (H.R. 3556), which provides funding and management authority for the National Park Service (NPS) to help the country celebrate the Service's 100th anniversary next year. The bill establishes a National Park Centennial Challenge Fund at the NPS, matched by private donations, to support signature NPS projects through 2018, among other measures.

### The Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument Act

On November 3, 2015, Rep. Grijalva [introduced a bill](#) establishing a new national monument to protect and restore the Grand Canyon's heritage of sacred Native American lands and ecosystems. The Greater Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument Act – developed with extensive input from the Grand Canyon-Associated Tribes and enthusiastically endorsed by the Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe, the Havasupai Tribe, and the Hualapai Indian Tribe – would protect approximately 1.7 million acres of federal land surrounding Grand Canyon National Park.

## Reauthorizing and Fully Funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Just like the minerals within our federal lands, offshore federal resources – like oil and gas – should benefit all Americans. Fifty years ago Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which sets aside a small portion of the royalties from the sale of oil to pay for conservation of federal lands and the creation of state and local parks. Unfortunately, for the first time in history, Committee Republicans allowed the LWCF to expire on September 30, 2015.

### LWCF Bill (H.R. 1814)

On April 15, 2015, Rep. Grijalva [introduced a bipartisan bill](#) to permanently reauthorize the LWCF. Each day Congress does not act on LWCF, conservation projects throughout the country lose about

\$2.5 million in future investments. H.R. 1814 enjoys the support of 200 bipartisan cosponsors. If brought to a vote, the bill would pass easily.

### **Saguaro National Park**

On August 25, 2015, the 99<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service, Rep. Grijalva joined Saguaro National Park staff and students from Cholla High School, Desert View High School and Pueblo High School for [a day of appreciation](#) at Saguaro National Park West. The Tucson-area high school students learned about a wide range of conservation efforts in Southern Arizona and the importance of LWCF reauthorization.



*Rep. Grijalva with National Park Staff and Local High School Students at Saguaro National Park*

### **LWCF Press Conference**

On October 7, 2015, Rep. Grijalva and Democratic members of the House Natural Resources Committee [held a press conference](#) calling on House Republican leadership to bring our bipartisan LWCF reauthorization bill (H.R. 1814) to a vote.

### **Developing a Broad Constituency of Conservation Leaders**

Protecting our nation's land, water and wildlife is a value shared by all Americans regardless of their backgrounds. Unfortunately, our nation's conservation organizations, especially at the leadership level, do not always reflect the rich cultural backgrounds of the American public. We need to embrace America's diverse communities and make sure that our policies consider a broad range of perspectives.

### **Latino Leaders Roundtable**

On February 26, 2015, Rep. Grijalva [held a historic roundtable](#) with national Latino leaders to discuss efforts to build a broader environmental coalition with an inclusive agenda for the 114th Congress and beyond. The meeting focused on how Members of Congress and Latino groups can work together on issues important to constituents and group members alike, including climate change, clean energy, water resources, support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, preserving cultural antiquities, and including more public input in making major federal environmental decisions through the National Environmental Policy Act.

### **Women Leaders Roundtable**

During Women's History Month, [Rep. Grijalva held a roundtable](#) with a diverse group of women professionals to discuss women's unique contributions in promoting clean air and water, preserving public lands, combating climate change, and promoting a clean energy economy. Women leaders shared policy recommendations on preserving and enhancing the environment for current and future generations.

### **Environmental Justice Forum**

On April 8, 2015, [Rep. Grijalva held a Forum on Environmental Justice](#) in Los Angeles with several of his Democratic colleagues. The forum explored the disproportionate burdens of climate change and pollution on low-income and minority communities and examined innovative policy solutions.

### **Congressional Delegation to Cuba**

On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Congressman Grijalva joined a Congressional Delegation trip to Cuba. Grijalva was joined on the trip by fellow Congressman John Larson (D-CT), as well as Senators Tom Udall (NM) and Al Franken (MN). The delegation returned to the United States one day before Cuba was removed from the United States' list of state sponsors of terrorism.

*"Visiting Cuba in person was an opportunity to see first-hand the many ways our nations can mutually benefit from open relations," Rep. Grijalva said. "We are the only nation in our hemisphere that doesn't deal with Cuba, and that has to change if we want to develop a mutually prosperous relationship with this neighbor just 90 miles off our coastline. President Obama has taken significant actions to normalize relations with Cuba. Now Congress must act to fully end the decades-old trade and travel embargo."*

The Congressional delegation met with officials from Cuba's ministry of agriculture, and learned of key opportunities for American businesses, including many specific to Arizona.

*"As Cuba opens its markets, it's vital that Arizona's agricultural, technological and business leaders engage in the new opportunities that develop," Grijalva continued. "Cuba needs farming equipment and agricultural goods – with Yuma providing 90 percent of our nation's lettuce and leafy vegetables harvest in winter, our community is uniquely positioned to benefit from trade with Cuba."*

Lawmakers also met with Etecsa, a telecommunications company in Cuba, to learn about technological challenges and goals for the island nation.

*“Only 20 percent of Cubans have access to the internet right now,” Grijalva said. “They want to extend the promise of open internet to 60 percent of their population by 2020, but that will require access to computers and electronics that they don’t currently have. Once again, Arizonans have an opportunity here, with computers and electronics being our largest merchandise export category, accounting for \$5 billion of our state’s merchandise exports in 2014.”*

Grijalva’s trip also coincided with the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Havana Biennial, an art exhibition devoted to showcasing the works of artists from Latin America. This year’s marks the first iteration since the announced normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba.

*“The Havana Biennial is a perfect example of the cultural exchange of ideas that Americans are mostly excluded from right now,” Rep. Grijalva said. “Art can play a vital role in breaking down barriers between the United States and Cuba, and I’m encouraged that collaborations between artists in both nations will only grow stronger as relations normalize.”*



*Rep. Grijalva meets with Ambassador Jeffrey DeLaurentis, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, and the Chief of Mission at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, Cuba.*

*Since President Obama’s new direction in U.S. policy toward Cuba, both countries have met regularly to discuss the conditions under which the U.S. would establish diplomatic relations and re-open embassies after more than five decades*



*Rep. Grijalva joins the service staff at Paladar San Cristobal after a dinner with artists participating in The Havana Biennial Art Exhibition.*



*Rep. Grijalva meeting with Bruno Rodriguez, Cuba's Minister of Foreign Affairs.*



*Rep. Grijalva visiting Finca Vigía, the home of Ernest Hemingway, in San Francisco de Paula, Cuba. In the picture, Grijalva meets Lic. Ada Rosa Alfonso Rosales, Director of the Hemingway Museum.*



*Lawmakers tour the Guayabera Cooperative where they met with textile workers.*



*Rep. Grijalva at the home of Cuban Cardinal and Archbishop of Havana, Jaime Ortega y Alamino.*

*The Catholic Church has long advocated that the U.S. embargo against Cuba, imposed in 1959, be lifted to facilitate both trade and travel between the two countries. Cardinal Ortega, a close friend of Pope Francis, played a key behind-the-scenes role in finding a new beginning for Cuban-American relations.*



*Lawmakers attend a press conference for Cuban and American journalists at the U.S. Interests Section, Havana.*

## **Building a Balanced National Energy Policy**

The drilling frenzy of the past decade has warped our energy policy. Big Oil has overpowered reasonable attempts to protect our environment and our wallets. That's why Rep. Grijalva is focused on returning some balance to our policies by protecting our National Parks, Forests, coastlines and oceans from the destructive impacts of unchecked fossil fuel development. Big Oil already holds tens of millions of acres of undeveloped leases across the country and pockets billions in taxpayer-funded subsidies each year. Unfortunately, all they and their Republican allies in Congress want is more. Rep. Grijalva is dedicated to developing a balanced energy policy that ends century-old fossil fuel subsidies, ensures a fair return for taxpayers, invests in clean energy, protects our air and water and forces disclosure of the chemicals used in fracking.

### **President Obama's Keystone Rejection**

Rep. Grijalva was proud to be a leading House critic of the Keystone XL pipeline proposal. On November 6, 2015, [he hailed President Obama's decision](#) to formally reject Keystone. In May 2013, he and 29 of his colleagues [sent a letter](#) to President Obama pointing to the pipeline's climate impacts and urging rejection.

### **Clean Power Plan**

On August 3, 2015, [Rep. Grijalva hailed the release](#) of the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan rule to reduce climate-warming emissions nationwide over the next several decades.

## **Renovating our Nation's Mining Reform Laws**

Reforming the antiquated General Mining Law of 1872 and other outdated statutes that govern mining on public lands is the only way to guarantee a fair return to the public. Currently, private individuals and foreign corporations can extract hardrock minerals like gold and copper from publicly owned land without paying any royalty or giving a return to the American people.

### **Hardrock Mining Reform and Reclamation Act of 2015**

On February 13, 2015, [Rep. Grijalva introduced the Hardrock Mining Reform and Reclamation Act](#) (H.R. 963), which establishes a dedicated source of funding to clean up hardrock Abandoned Mine Lands and provides Good Samaritan protections under the Clean Water Act for hardrock mine cleanups. This issue was brought to the forefront after the Gold King Mine toxic spill turned the Animas River in Colorado orange.

## **Honoring Commitments to Indian Country & Relationships with Insular Areas**

Indian Country and our offshore Insular Areas do not fully share in our country's economic successes and often suffer the most during economic downturns. Tribal Nations must be recognized as sovereign entities and treated with the dignity that status deserves. It is the fiduciary responsibility of the United States to protect tribal treaty rights, lands, assets, and resources, and to carry out federal mandates with respect to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages. Rep. Grijalva is dedicated to supporting the efforts of the people of Puerto Rico to freely determine their future political relationship with the United States.

### **Building a Stronger Indian Country Roundtable**

On June 29, 2015, Rep. Grijalva [held a town hall discussion](#) titled *Building a Stronger Indian Country* in St. Paul, Minn. The town hall, held during the National Congress of American Indians, focused on federal responsibilities in areas such as education, transportation, telecommunications, and housing. Tribal leaders had an opportunity to engage in a too-rare dialogue with federal lawmakers on the future of their communities.

### **Puerto Rico Economic Crisis Report**

The Democratic staff of the House Natural Resources Committee [released a report](#) on September 4, 2015, examining how certain hedge funds are damaging the Puerto Rican economy in the midst of the territory's ongoing financial crisis. The report makes it clear that some hedge funds have spent the past several years buying Puerto Rico bonds because their well-known potential for default meant higher potential profits. Those same funds now are disingenuously calling for deep social service cuts for Puerto Rican families as a means of increasing the payments they receive.

### **Save Oak Flat Rally in Washington, D.C.**

Rep. Grijalva joined members of the San Carlos Apache Tribe [at their "Save Oak Flat" rally](#) in Washington, D.C., on September 22, 2015, to [protest Congress' sale](#) of their sacred Oak Flat land to foreign mining conglomerates. Apache protesters trekked cross-country from the San Carlos reservation in Arizona to bring public awareness to this issue.

### **Oak Flat Forum**

On November 5, 2015, [Rep. Grijalva held a forum](#) on protecting Native American sacred sites. The forum, titled "Save Oak Flat: The Fight to Protect Sacred Apache Land," examined the dangerous national precedent and implications of the land transfer of sacred Apache land, examined the spiritual and cultural importance of Oak Flat, and importance of building national momentum in the fight to save Oak Flat.

### **Vote "NO" on H.R. 308**

Rep. Grijalva was proud [to successfully block](#) the House from passing H.R. 308, a bill unfairly preventing the Tohono O'odham tribe from building a court-approved casino in Glendale, Ariz., under suspension of the rules on November 16, 2015. If enacted, H.R. 308 would establish a dangerous precedent for hundreds of tribal-state compacts and land settlements nationwide.

### **National Day of Action for Puerto Rico**

On December 2, 2015, [Rep. Grijalva joined Puerto Rican government officials](#) and leaders from the labor and faith communities in Washington, D.C., for a National Day of Action to urge Congress to pass legislation addressing the growing fiscal crisis. Grijalva spoke about the importance of addressing Puerto Rico's debt crisis – an issue Natural Resources Committee Democrats explored in a report released earlier this year, which revealed that hedge funds are standing in the way of resolving the debt crisis.

## **Protecting our Nation's Bedrock Conservation Laws**

Americans have long supported federal efforts to conserve cultural and natural resources, ensure transparency and efficiency in government spending, and establish a more inclusive decision-making

process. The bedrock laws that embody these values are critical to our goal of leaving the world a better place for future generations.

### **NEPA Roundtable**

On June 17, 2015, Rep. Grijalva convened a roundtable discussion with environmental activists to discuss congressional attempts to weaken or dismantle the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Top representatives from environmental organizations met with Members of Congress to discuss legislative strategies to protect and strengthen NEPA in the 114th Congress.

### **ESA and the CECIL Act**

Scientists tell us we're in the midst of an extinction crisis with profound negative environmental and economic impacts, and yet some lawmakers continue trying to weaken the Endangered Species Act. For the last 40 years, the law has prevented numerous extinctions and claimed significant species recovery successes, despite continued property development and habitat fragmentation. On September 16, 2015, [Rep. Grijalva introduced](#) the Conserving Ecosystems by Ceasing the Importation of Large (CECIL) Animal Trophies Act, a bill that restricts the importation of African lions and other sport-hunted species that have been proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

### **Anti-ESA Riders**

Rep. Grijalva and 91 other House Democrats [sent a letter to President Obama](#) on September 28, 2015, urging him to veto any appropriations or defense bill that includes policy riders designed to undermine the Endangered Species Act. Grijalva fought numerous anti-ESA riders on the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, which House Republican leaders eventually withdrew from consideration over the Confederate flag controversy.

### **Antiquities Act**

From the Grand Canyon to Fort Monroe, Va., presidents of both parties have used the Antiquities Act to establish national monuments that conserve important lands, safeguard wildlife corridors, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and honor our commitment to preserving our diverse past and protecting our future. I have been proud to [lead the fight](#) to protect the president's right to designate land for protection under the Act, which was signed by Teddy Roosevelt in 1906 as one of our country's bedrock conservation laws.

## Op-Eds

### **The Guardian – The Climate Change Fight Cannot be Won with White Liberal America Alone**

By Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva | May 26, 2015

The biggest issue in conservation – bigger than any mining project, power plant or climate plan – is diversity. The environmental movement needs to start looking like modern America. To continue our proud American legacy of protecting our environment, we need to adapt.

A recent report released by Green 2.0 highlights the environmental movement's disconcerting lack of diversity. Unconscious bias, inadequate recruitment and poor retention all stand in the way of a more diverse environmental movement. People of color make up 36% of the US population and comprise 29% of the science and engineering workforce, but the report found that only about 12% of staff at the mainstream environmental advocacy groups and foundations that fund them are people of color. A separate report by the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy found that while environmental funders spent \$10bn between 2000 and 2009, just 15% of those dollars benefited poor and under-served communities.

The problem is just as serious at the top levels of environmental organizations. While 22.5% of interns at environmental organizations are people of color, only 12% of leadership positions and 4.6% of board positions are held by people of color. With some notable exceptions – such as Aaron Mair's recent appointment as The Sierra Club's first African-American national president – you see less diversity the further up the organizational chart you go. This failure comes despite the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on communities of color and the fact that people of color support executive action on climate change more strongly than white Americans.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

### **Las Vegas Review-Journal – Rubio Puts Politics Before Science on Yucca Mountain**

By Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva | May 28, 2015

Running for president means you have to start taking positions on issues you haven't worked on much before. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., is learning the hard way how dangerous that can be.

Despite having no good reason to stick his thumb in the eye of an early caucus state, Sen. Rubio recently came out in favor of dumping our nation's nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain. Most Nevadans don't want it, and both of the state's senators, including his Republican colleague Dean Heller, strongly oppose it. Politically, the project is as good as dead.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **Tucson Daily Star – Grijalva: Trade Deal Bad for Seniors, Workers Alike**

By Rep. Raúl Grijalva | June 8, 2015

As early as this week, the House of Representatives will vote on whether to sideline itself from negotiations on the biggest trade deal of the 21st century.

That deal — the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP — binds our economy and the fates of our workers with those of 11 other nations, many of whom do not hold the same high labor standards that we do, and some of whom are notorious for human-rights violations and currency manipulation.

Forcing American workers to compete with workers in Vietnam earning less than 60 cents an hour will have a predictable outcome: Jobs will be outsourced and livelihoods will be lost.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **The Guardian – America’s No ‘Land of the Free’ if we Send Kids Fleeing Violence to For-Profit Prisons**

By Rep. Raúl Grijalva | July 3, 2015

On a desolate dirt road about an hour south of San Antonio, some 2,500 women and children will experience the Fourth of July in America for the first time this weekend. For them, there will be no celebration: no barbecue in the backyard or fireworks in the night sky. We proclaim to the world that those facing credible harm in their homelands can find refuge in America, and they followed our promise of sanctuary for hundreds of miles to reach our southern border. They risked life and limb to escape poverty, violence and sexual predators in their native lands to find safety in America.

And then we threw them in jail.

The South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas – known simply as Dilley – is one of two detention facilities outside of San Antonio that I toured on a Congressional delegation last week. I went to see for myself the conditions that the women and children incarcerated there face firsthand – and what I saw was nothing short of heartbreaking.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **High Country News – We Need New Energy Policy, Now**

By Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva | July 21, 2015

The energy world we live in now was unthinkable just a decade ago. Policy back then was shaped by talk of peak oil and fears of increased reliance on Russian or Middle East imports. President Bush used his State of the Union address that year to push Congress for legislation to reduce environmental oversight and expand domestic drilling. As I remember it, the mood in Washington could best be described as frantic.

So much has changed since then. Domestic development is now booming so fast that Big Oil has set its sight beyond our shores and wants to end the export ban. The underground fracking revolution has ended any talk of "peak" production. But you wouldn't know it in Washington. Instead of recognizing that renewable energy has become affordable, or acknowledging the environmental risks of continued greenhouse gas emissions, industry lobbyists and many of my colleagues repeat the same talking points they've been using for years. I give them full credit for consistency, but they sound like a broken record that's been skipping since the days of the first Westward oil rush.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **Indian Country – Congress Must Rebuild Trust with Native American Tribes**

By Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva | July 22, 2015

Ask any Native American tribe for a story about working with Congress and you'll probably hear a story of frustration. There are too many examples to count of Washington not taking tribal sovereignty seriously, ignoring trust and treaty responsibilities, and failing to protect Native American historical treasures. Even the local football team is insensitive to Native People.

Unfortunately, much of this is based not on legitimate political differences but on a prevailing attitude that Native American history is important only when it is convenient, Native American economic interests are secondary and Native American land is held by tribes only through the grace and favor of the federal government.

This attitude has spilled out into the open several times on Capitol Hill in recent days. Rather than slowly getting better, Congress' treatment of Indian Country seems to be getting worse.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **Green Valley News – Voting Rights Act Must Live On**

By Rep. Raúl Grijalva | August 11, 2015

When Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act in 1965, it marked a turning point in our nation's long and painful march toward equality for all. What was enshrined in our Constitution from the start – that all men are created equal – was in reality, never realized in the eyes of our laws. Instead, centuries of slavery, segregation, and Jim Crow voter intimidation left African Americans and other minorities politically voiceless and relegated to an underclass in our society. The stroke of Johnson's pen was never going to exorcise this stain from our nation – no law can fully force the end of hate. But for 48 years, the VRA held back the tides of intolerance, allowing for a tremendous swell in black voter registration, turnout and elected officials.

One reason for the VRA's unmitigated success was the fact that both political parties embraced and strengthened it throughout the years. Congress reauthorized the Act four times, building on its protections and expanding its reach. But in 2013, just seven years after it was reauthorized by a vote of 390 to 33 in the House and 98 to 0 in the Senate, the Supreme Court invalidated a key component of the law in their *Shelby County v. Holder* decision. The Court asserted that the law had achieved its ends, and

its continuation was punishing states for past mistakes. However, those states wasted no time proving that the past sins were ever present in modern society.

New voting restrictions were enacted in North Carolina, Texas and other states that had previously been forbidden by the Voting Rights Act. Voter ID requirements and rollbacks of early voting and same-day registration became the modern equivalents to the poll taxes and literacy tests of the past. While the tactics in the 21st Century have changed, the injustice remains the same. Communities who struggled, generation after generation, to achieve the protections in the VRA were forced to watch our society regress as false claims of voter fraud led to the disenfranchisement of hundreds of thousands of Americans. The fact is, the rates of voter fraud in this country are lower than the rates of people being hit by lightning.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **Tucson Daily Star – Our Choices with Iran: Peace or War**

By Rep. Raúl Grijalva | August 22, 2015

The late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin once famously said, “You don’t make peace with friends. You make it with very unsavory enemies.”

History proves Rabin right time and again, and even provides fair warning for those who don’t follow his advice. Because inherent in Rabin’s words is the choice faced by any society confronting an adversary: It’s either peace, or it’s war.

No adversary makes that clearer than Iran. The Iranian regime has fomented turmoil around the world for more than three decades. It openly threatened to wipe Israel off the map, and remains the leading state-sponsor of terrorism more than 30 years after first being placed on the State Department’s watch list.

The regime commits brutal human rights violations, including judicially sanctioned amputations and floggings, severe restrictions on speech and press, and discrimination and attacks against women, ethnic and religious minorities, and LGBT individuals.

Worst of all, Iran’s illicit nuclear work and past obstruction of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has created an untenable status quo: a tyrannical regime a few technological advancements away from its most horrific ambitions, and an international community unable to monitor its progress.

Given all of this, skepticism over any nuclear deal with Iran is understandable. But this isn’t about negotiating with a wolf in sheep’s clothing — it’s about defanging that wolf. If the deal holds, we will have the most intrusive, effective and verifiable checks against Iran’s nuclear ambitions ever implemented. This deal doesn’t just make it hard for Iran to make a nuclear weapon; it cuts off all possible pathways.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **The Hill – The Pope, the U.S. and the Golden Calf**

By Rep. Rau Grijalva | September 24, 2015

Pope Francis is in the United States this week as the most dynamic — even transformational — pope in modern history. But the pontiff, whose words and actions have reinvigorated the church's teachings on poverty and ending human suffering, is touching down in a nation whose Congress and laws are in many ways at odds with his teachings and beliefs. On issues like fighting poverty, creating economic opportunity, world peace and even addressing global warming, Francis has not minced words about the consequences of our actions. The fact is, the U.S. serves as a case in point of many of the papal arguments. Inequality and social unrest in American society today are not inevitabilities — they are the consequences of the choices we make as a society.

Over the past 35 years, those societal choices have allowed the haves to far outpace the have-nots. We embraced policies like trickle-down economics, welcomed — even encouraged — the advent of financial institutions that are too big to fail, and turned a blind eye to corporate interests that bilked our system and outsourced our jobs. As a result of these policies, we lag behind other nations in the developed world in terms of income and economic mobility. The jobs that provide access to the middle class are increasingly out of reach for hardworking Americans, and the programs the poor rely on to make ends meet in our society are increasingly under attack. As the pope said earlier this summer on a trip through Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay, the poor are being sacrificed at the “altar of money,” while the rich worship a “golden calf.”

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **Huffington Post – The Clean Power Plan Helps Improve Climate Quality Standards for Communities of Color**

By Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva | October 28, 2015

Ever since President Obama presented the final version of the Clean Power Plan in August, we've seen coal- and gas-heavy states try to stop this badly needed effort in its tracks. As recently as Oct. 13, North Dakota's attorney general told a conference panel that he's preparing a lawsuit to block the program even as the state environment agency gets ready to implement it.

This highly political reaction ignores just how badly climate change is impacting Americans' health, especially in communities of color. Congress and the public need to start treating these health risks with the urgency they demand. Environmental justice advocates can help.

Americans of color face disproportionate climate-related health problems all over our country. For many of them, stronger standards are truly a matter of life and death. Climate change is hitting Latino communities especially hard in the West and Southwest, where hotter days, more intense and frequent heat waves and droughts, and worsening seasonal air quality are affecting areas that already have some of the worst air pollution in the country.

It's bad enough for anyone with a desk job. For the millions of Latinos who work in agriculture, landscaping and construction, this is unsustainable.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **The New York Times – The G.O.P.'s Myopia on Coal**

By Rep. Raúl Grijalva | November 18, 2015

IT'S no secret that American coal companies are facing tough times.

Shares of Peabody Energy, the world's largest private-sector coal company, have lost more than 90 percent of their value over the last year, and Arch Coal has seen its shares plummet to less than \$2 from about \$28 a year ago (and nearly \$360 in 2011). Another major producer, Alpha Natural Resources, filed for bankruptcy protection in August.

While it may not qualify for life support just yet, the American coal industry is decidedly unhealthy.

Republicans in Congress like to blame what they call President Obama's "war on coal." In particular, they single out for scorn the president's Clean Power Plan, which will set first-time emissions standards for carbon dioxide on coal-fired power plants by 2022. Many old, dirty plants will close as a result.

The industry's self-described defenders seem to assume that without these rules, American coal would be financially sound into the foreseeable future because Americans — and people everywhere — still need cheap energy. If a hypothetical Republican president forgoes carbon regulations, they believe, the industry's problems will be solved and we can get back to business as usual.

It's not that simple, and my colleagues help no one by pretending otherwise. Coal companies are struggling largely because domestic coal is not economically competitive with the country's cheap and abundant natural gas. That would be true no matter who was president or what climate quality standards we had in place.

The "blame Obama" argument essentially boils down to ignoring economics and pretending that the implementation schedule for the Clean Power Plan, which requires mandatory emissions reductions beginning in 2022, is a bureaucratic overreach rather than the compromise it represents. (The original implementation date was 2020.)

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **The Guardian – Climate Change Will Continue to Hurt America if we do Nothing**

By Rep. Raúl Grijalva | December 4, 2015

For too many people around the world, climate change is, without any exaggeration, at their front door. It won't be long before more Americans — in Florida and across the south-east, for instance — will have to live with and confront these risks every day. That's why the Paris climate talks are so important.

There are 31 Alaskan villages already facing “imminent threats” from warming ocean waters, erosion and flooding, according to a 2009 Government Accountability Office assessment. At least a dozen have relocated or are exploring relocation options. The same is happening elsewhere, both in the US and around the world.

That’s why Barack Obama recently made a historic trip to Alaska to raise awareness of climate change’s devastating impacts on the state’s seas, land and people. As he very rightly said at the time: “climate change is no longer some far-off problem ... [I]t is happening here. It is happening now”. His visit put the spotlight right where it needs to be: on the people already seeing the impacts that lie ahead if we don’t take action.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **The Nation – Congress Has a Plan to Achieve 100 Percent Clean and Renewable Energy by 2050**

By Reps. Raúl Grijalva & Keith Ellison with Actor and Activist Mark Ruffalo | December 9, 2015

World leaders from over 190 countries are meeting right now in Paris to develop global plans to reduce carbon emissions and overcome the threat of climate change. With 2015 shaping up to be the hottest year ever recorded, these talks are more urgent than ever. Extreme conditions are no longer a forecast—they are happening now. The scientific consensus is overwhelming. A more diverse international coalition is calling for action.

The impacts of our warming globe are already plain to see, from raging floods to extended droughts, from heat waves to rising sea levels. Food scarcity, extreme weather, and increased conflict are projected to displace millions, making the refugee crisis we see now just a glimpse of what is in store. While no nation or people are safe from the reach of global warming, the poor are particularly susceptible to harm. Developing countries that lack the means for an adequate response and underserved communities in the United States share this terrible reality in common: They are climate change’s first victims.

The enormity of this threat is not lost on the global community. Few issues, if any, bridge disparate voices the way climate change does. Voices in small communities and large, artists and the scientific community are calling for a comprehensive solution.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## **Arizona Republic – Education is Back in Your Hands, Arizona**

By Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva | December 15, 2015

When Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act from the lawn of his boyhood schoolhouse, he said, “No law I have signed — or will ever sign — means more to the future of America.”

ESEA was a major part of President Johnson's civil rights agenda. He knew the best way to combat poverty is to give all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, country of origin, income, disability or immigration status, access to a good education.

Fifty years later, that fact remains true, particularly true in diverse states like Arizona with the majority of students being of color.

That's why Congress has reauthorized ESEA numerous times over the last five decades, including in 2002 when the law became known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This week, Congress voted – *and I supported* – another reauthorization for an additional four years. While the program is secure in the short term, I worry it won't survive the Republican Party's increasing efforts to undermine our public education system in the long run.

The full op-ed is available [here](#).

## Notable Events, Awards and Recognitions

- January 27: GreenLatinos held a reception congratulating Rep. Grijalva for becoming Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee and celebrating his lifelong commitment to responsible environmental stewardship.
- February 10: Rep. Grijalva was honored with the FDR Service & Conservation Corps Leadership Award at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Friend of National Service Awards Ceremony.
- February 11: Congressman Grijalva delivered remarks at the Statue Dedication of the Honorable Barry Goldwater in the United States Capitol.
- March 24: Rep. Grijalva served as a panelist for Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) 2015 Latino State of the Union panel discussion.
- July 17: Rep. Grijalva delivered a keynote address at Netroots Nation and introduced Senator Elizabeth Warren.
- July 20: Congressman Grijalva attended the re-opening of the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba to the United States.
- July 22: Rep. Grijalva hosted the Apache Stronghold resistance rally to protect Oak Flat.
- August 18: Rep. Grijalva addressed the 114<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention for the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association.
- September 16: Congressman Grijalva spoke at the Woods Institute BLM Leadership Academy Congressional Briefing Conference.
- September 17: Rep. Grijalva received an award for his public service at the 2015 Wildlife Conservation Awards Dinner.
- September 22: Congressman Grijalva spoke at a rally with NETWORK Nuns on the Bus, Good Jobs Nation, the Amalgamated Transit Union, We Belong Together and NextGen Climate.
- September 29: Rep. Grijalva was a panelist for the Green for All National Forum: "Clean Power for All: National Forum on Climate, Clean Energy and People of Color."
- October 5: Rep. Grijalva was honored by GreenLatinos with a reception celebrating his work as Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee.
- October 6: Congressman Grijalva served as a panelist at the CHCI Public Policy Conference, Latino Leaders Summit Series Panel: Diversity in the Environment & Conservation Movement – Where is the Latino Engagement?
- October 15-17: Rep. Grijalva was honored at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Americas Latino Eco Festival: "Climate of Hope: Water & the New Shades of Green Honoree: Nuestro Padre Award for environmental stewardship.
- October 16: Rep. Grijalva received an award for distinguished service at the Humane Society 2015 Conference Dinner for Living Large: Wolves, Bears, Cougars and Humans in North America.

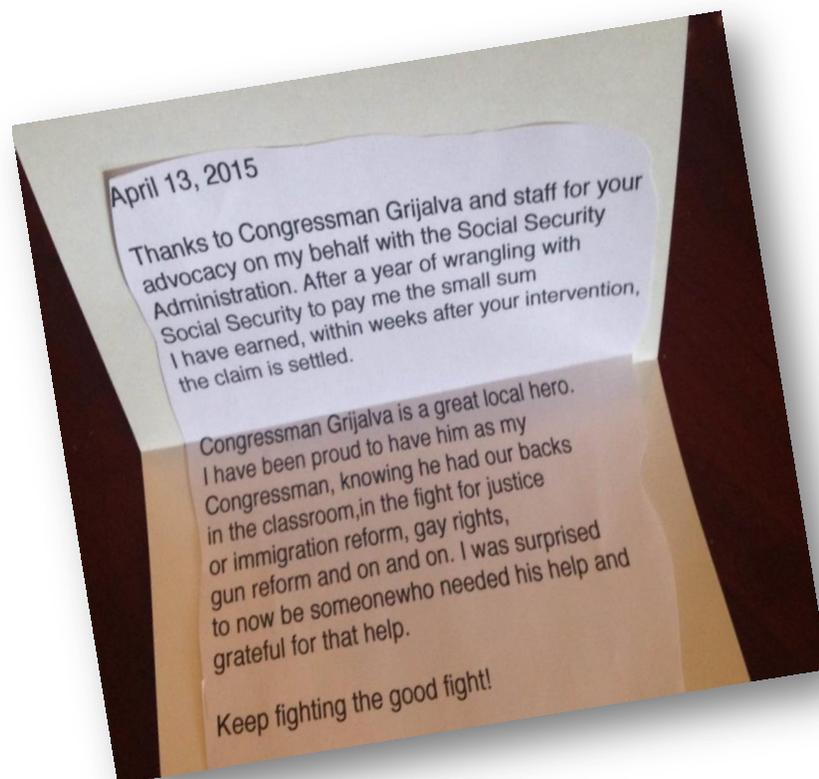


I just wanted to send a shout out to all of you who have been so very awesome in helping us with these Congressional Escalations!!! It has made such a HUGE impact on our clients, our company and our community that you have helped postpone these foreclosures!

We can't thank you enough and wanted to say Thank you!!!!

## Social Security Administration

Constituent made an error when applying for retirement with the Social Security Administration. She promptly tried to correct the mistake but after two months of not hearing back from the agency, she contacted our office. My office assisted in getting the error corrected, she received \$1,802.00 in owed monies as a result.



## U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services & Department of State

A petition for an immediate relative takes approximately 6 months for approval by US Citizenship and Immigration Services. A U.S. Citizen contacted our office after petitioning her spouse and waiting over 10 months for processing of his petition. My office contacted the agency and learned the petition had not yet been reviewed by an office, it was approved shortly after.



Thank you for your assistance with our GREEN CARD immigration delay. Your office's enquiries made it happen.

Thanks,

JUST WANTED TO EXPRESS  
my gratefulness, and appreciation,  
for the help you gave me,  
Without "you" I could NOT  
GOTTEN my I.D. immigration  
Card. "Thank you Very Much".

## Department of Veterans Affairs

Veteran reached out to my office requesting assistance after unsuccessfully attempting to have his wife added to his Disability Compensation award. Frustrated with the wait time at the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) he sought help from my office. Within 12 days of contacting the VBA on behalf of the Veteran, the Veteran's wife was added to his award, and the Veteran received a retroactive payment from the VA for \$2,600.

Veteran reached out to Veteran's family sought assistance in obtaining military records. My office successfully obtained the records from the agency.



Thank you for all of your time and effort when trying to locate my father's military records. You cannot know how much you helped us during a very rough time. Your follow up call on the day after the service was the icing on the cake -

## Affordable Care Act

Constituent contacted my office requesting help with getting corrected information from ACA. Constituent had been struggling for over half a year attempting to get accurate information. Our office was able to assist in getting her the information she needed.

"I wanted to email you to let you know what an amazing job your office has done in working my case. I spent 6 months fighting to get answers. I felt frustrated and downtrodden. Your office stepped in and helped me to breathe easy knowing I have you fighting for me. My issue was resolved quickly and smoothly, ensuring my interests were a priority. I am so grateful for your office and staff and the work that is done for me and other constituents! Thank you!"- Ms. Logan

*Please visit my website  
[grijalva.house.gov](http://grijalva.house.gov)  
for more information on  
constituent services and  
how my office can assist  
you.*