

Like many Americans, a number of Nebraskans I visited with over the past few weeks have serious concerns regarding the state of affairs in our nation. At town hall meetings held across eastern Nebraska, we took time to have detailed, constructive discussions about the weighty challenges confronting our economic and national security.

Three specific concerns, as well as ideas to address them, emerged throughout the discussions: our federal government's unsustainable spending, the challenges illegal immigration presents to local communities, and the appropriateness of the latest bailout to states from the federal government. Local media accounts of these public meetings can be found at <http://fortenberry.house.gov/2010/08/august-town-hall-meetings-and-economic-forum.shtml>.

But even in the midst of unprecedented debt levels, military conflicts abroad, and domestic challenges, it is important to remember that America is a great nation that has overcome similarly significant challenges in the past. As I noted recently at the conclusion of a budget-oriented speech to a group of Nebraska business leaders and entrepreneurs, "There is nothing wrong with America that can't be fixed by what is right with America."

I wish to thank all of you who attended the meetings and shared your thoughts and concerns with me. An important step in renewing America's strength will be the American people's demand for accountability and prudent, decisive leadership from their elected representatives. As long as good people remain engaged in the civic process, the U.S. – despite present challenges - will remain a strong nation and a model of opportunity and justice in the world.