You Can Make A Difference!

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March 12, 2012

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I spent last week in Washington, DC meeting with our congressional delegation and various agencies and lobbying groups. Lots of security everywhere, but I was impressed with how easy it was to meet with people from agencies, lobbying groups and congressional delegations. Your chances of meeting with specific individuals on short notice is very thin and in many cases you cannot even get into a building without a specific appointment but if you have made contacts well ahead of time (weeks) it is pretty easy. As you would expect, some individuals just wanted to tell you about the great things they were doing but many of them genuinely wanted to listen to what you had to say. Some seemed to be there just for a paycheck or as a stepping stone to a more important position while others seemed to love what they were doing and had issues that they were very passionate about.

The trip really emphasized to me how important it is to be involved whether at the local, state, or national level. I know from previous experience how a rule, ordinance, or bill which is meant to correct a problem can have unexpected consequences. Some things that seem to be great ideas can cause major problems in unexpected ways. We, as individuals and members of interested groups need to stay informed about issues and let our officials know how issues may affect us and our local communities.

Right now is a time of rapid change in our state and in our local communities. Change can be hard to accept but it is always easier if we have a voice in that change. Not all change will be to our liking but by making an effort to be informed and voicing our concerns in a well thought out and deliberate manor we can help guide changes in a direction we find acceptable.

Make an effort to learn about and study issues like planning and zoning, water and sewer development. We often hear about the extremes of any issue but to understand the real pros and cons we need to make an effort to research those issues beyond the coffee shop. By understanding both sides of an issue we can make informed decisions and our informed decisions may or may not be what our emotions initially tell us to do.