

BENICIA HERALD

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Sunday
March 24
2019

*A special good
morning to
subscriber
Jim Robertson*



Sunrise 7:06 a.m.

Sunset 7:24 p.m.

High/Low Tides

4:33 a.m. 5:47; 5:44 p.m. 4:46'

11:26 a.m. 6:10'; 11:05 p.m. 1:10'



The wet weather continues!

High 65, Low 49

SE wind at 9 mph

Cloudy

**A Different
Drummer**



Congressman Thompson attends Benicia Town Hall at a packed Senior Center



Congressman Mike Thompson (D-5) listens to questions from the audience at a Town Hall meeting held at the Benicia Senior Center on March 18. The event was sponsored by Carquinez Patriotic Resistance, Progressive Democrats of Benicia and Indivisible Vallejo-Benicia.

**Galen Kusic
Editor**

Congressman Mike Thompson appeared at a Benicia Town Hall meeting held at the Benicia Senior Center on Monday, March 18. The event was privately

sponsored by the Carquinez Patriotic Resistance, Progressive Democrats of Benicia and Indivisible Vallejo-Benicia.

Thompson, the Chairman of the House Violence Prevention Task Force, fielded questions ranging from gun violence

prevention and health care to economic inequality, climate change and immigration.

The center was packed, as numerous citizens asked important questions about many serious issues affecting Benicians locally and nationally.
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Thompson doubled down on his legislation to expand background checks for those purchasing a firearm, including prohibitors for violent criminals and those with a history of mental health problems. He cited that in other states an individual might not pass a background check at a gun shop, but right down the street at a gun show that same individual can legally purchase a firearm.

"The truth of the matter is someone is killed by someone using a gun 30 times a day," said Thompson. "30 people are killed everyday by someone using a gun...that is a real issue."

If you include accidental shootings and suicides, that number jumps to around 100 per day in the US. Thompson emphasized that proper laws must be in place to enforce background checks to make sure individuals are not a danger to themselves or others.

He relayed that he will continue to fight for sensible gun control laws, and that Democrats are not attempting to take away the 2nd Amendment as some Republicans have often accused. He again noted the importance of getting treatment for individuals with mental health issues and drug addiction. He also recognized those in Benicia that organized the March for Our Lives protest following last year's Parkland, Fla. school shooting at Stoneman-Douglas High School.

Thompson discussed the Green New Deal, a bill that he is an original co-sponsor of.



Congressman Mike Thompson (D-5) asks how many people in the room are on Medicare. It was a major point of discussion as to how the nation's health care system can better benefit an aging senior population.

While Republicans continue to denounce the proposal and often refer to it as "unrealistic," Thompson had an answer for those critics.

"This is an aspirational piece of legislation," said Thompson. "When you disregard aspiration for the sake of apathy, you're in trouble."

Scientists estimate that humans have around 12 years to significantly change the current crash course our planet is on to avoid disaster and prevent the premature loss of millions of lives. Councilmember Steve Young noted that predictions state in this century there will be an estimated 1 billion climate refugees. Thompson is adamant that something must be done immediately.

"Climate deniers repealed regulations that puts us in harms way," he said.

Thompson discussed health care and the need for comprehensive reform that will provide quality health care access to the public. He noted that the Trump administration has dismantled several pieces of the Affordable Care Act, and that the administration wants to

make it harder for people with pre-existing conditions to receive coverage.

Thompson also focused on the current tax mess following the passage of the first tax reform legislation in over 30 years. He explained the cuts only benefit the most wealthy and corporations.

"There has never been a tax cut that paid for itself," he said. "This was a big gift to the corporate side."

Thompson also discussed immigration and the need for a path to citizenship for immigrants. He addressed the comment that Democrats don't have a clear policy on immigration.

"We understand the immigration process is broken," he said. "We need to re-write immigration laws, but it won't happen in this Congress."

He cited that he was a co-author the DREAM Act to protect children born in America to undocumented parents, and that these individuals must be protected and given a clear path to citizenship in the US.