



In Iowa's Interest: Rebuild America Act will Strengthen Iowa's Middle Class

by Senator Tom Harkin

Last summer, my staff and I traveled Iowa, talking to folks of all walks of life about the middle class – everyone from recent college graduates, to those looking for work, to Iowans seeking to secure their retirement. Unfortunately, the theme we heard resoundingly is that the American Dream – the promise of a good wage, a decent standard of living, and a dignified retirement – is slipping away from far too many in our state.

As the wealthiest major nation on earth, our country can and should do better.

To preserve and strengthen the middle class, I recently introduced The Rebuild America Act. This legislation tackles the problem of the shrinking middle class in four ways: by taking immediate steps to create jobs and kick-start the economy, by investing in our roads, bridges, schools, and other critical infrastructure needs to secure future economic growth, by implementing policies that will offer families economic opportunity and peace of mind, and by paying for these new investments through a balanced tax code that fosters economic growth.

In short, the Rebuild America Act will make our government work again for people who work for a living.

Amanda Greubel of Dewitt called the legislation “an important step toward showing average Americans that our government is finally paying attention to issues that real families face every day: access to healthcare, the high cost of childcare, the availability of good jobs, and quality public education for our kids.”

This summer, I am proud that my staff will return to all 99 counties to discuss how ideas obtained from Iowans last year on how to rebuild the middle class have influenced this legislation.

For three decades now, our economy has been held back by failed trickle-down economics for the rich. It is time for percolate-up economics for the middle class. As we say in the Midwest, you do not fertilize a tree from the top down, you fertilize the roots.

There can be no sustainable economic recovery and no sustained return to fiscal balance without the recovery of the middle class. The middle class is the backbone of this country, and it's time for Washington to have the backbone to not only defend it, but rebuild it.

For more information about the Rebuild America Act, please visit my website <http://harkin.senate.gov/help/middleclass.cfm> or contact any of my offices across Iowa and in Washington, D.C.