

McClintock shares his beliefs with the people

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – Federal spending, government regulations, banking, the economy, carbon emissions, immigration and the Auburn Dam dominated the discussion Thursday night between Rep. Tom McClintock and his constituents.

At times it was a bit argumentative between the congressman and those in attendance, as well as between attendees – but nothing like what is heard on talk radio.

McClintock, R-Granite Bay, was at the Truckee Tahoe Airport on May 2 for a town hall meeting. He represents Truckee and the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin in Congress.

As chair of the House Water and Power Subcommittee, McClintock has some pull in getting the Auburn Dam project through; despite many thinking the issue was dead in the water. It's a project that has been discussed since the late 1960s, was started, but has been on hold for decades because of seismic and political reasons.



Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, talks May 2 to constituents in Truckee. Photo/Kathryn Reed

One woman got in a bit of back-and-forth debate with the congressman about the benefits of the dam. She believes the value of today's natural resources need to be weighed before a vast area is flooded to create what would be Lake Auburn.

McClintock believes the state needs another area to store water, that it would provide recreation and flood control.

The constituent said the money would be more wisely used to develop better irrigation for farmers who want to use Northern California's water.

When it comes to the greater disconnect in Washington, McClintock said, "The government is divided because the people are divided." He said the people need to resolve their differences and then lawmakers will follow their lead.

He is fine with sequestration, especially because it is getting people to the table to talk.

"At this moment in time it is the only tool we have to get the federal budget back to solvency," McClintock told the nearly 50 people in the room.

But he is not usually for across the board cuts that are equal in nature.

"That's the lazy man's way to budget cutting," he said. McClintock said that way of thinking doesn't allow for thoughtful analysis of whether something should be funded more or less. He doesn't want all things to be treated equally because their importance is not of equal value.

McClintock wants changes in Medicare and Social Security, saying the former will be bankrupt in nine years and the latter 10 years later.

One person responded, "I'm entitled to that. I paid into that."

The congressman said with people living longer, people taking out more than they paid in and the ratio of those contributing compared to those withdrawing diminishing, the two funds are not going to have money for everyone who is paying in today.

When it comes to banks, McClintock believes people should know what their banks are doing – saying that if you have your eggs in one basket, you better keep an eye on that basket. The audience was a bit taken aback, wondering how they were supposed to know what big banks were doing with their money after it was deposited.

“I think the bailout was one of the worse, (most) corrupt mistakes ever made,” McClintock said.

But he is for personal accountability.

While he sympathizes with people who came to this country illegally as children, he doesn't have an answer for what to do with them.

He believes in the path that exists to become a U.S. citizen, but does not want to allow those who are in the country illegally to have the right to become a citizen.

“If we are going to support illegal immigration, then there is no point to have legal immigration,” McClintock said.

He got in a bit of debate with a woman who said the system is not working for her. She has hired people from other countries with advanced degrees, but when their visa ran out the person had to leave. She believes the workforce is not educated enough to fill all the jobs on U.S. soil and that immigration laws need to change.

McClintock said if the recent gun control law that failed in the Senate had made it to the House, he would have voted against it.

“We are taking increasingly Draconian steps to disarm the law

abiding population. That is not going to end well," McClintock said.