

G. V. Sonny Montgomery Weekly Radio Show

1-1-1992

Audio begins at 0:18

Interviewer: This is Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington. You will be in Jackson January 6 to speak at the dedication of the VA Regional Medical Headquarters. What does this facility mean to the veterans in our state?

Montgomery: What we're doing, we're making the Jackson area of Mississippi kinda the center for veterans of medical programs. This regional office that will be dedicated there on January the sixth, will handle all the moneys and will supervise all the veteran's hospitals from over in Texas all the way over to North, South Carolina all the way through Florida. About thirteen states will come under this regional office. So, and also in the near future we're opening a regional benefits office. It will, it was opened a couple of months ago, and all benefits checks such as; Compensation Pension, Insurance, Education, Housing. All that will come out of the Jackson area, so Mississippi is becoming the southern regional office for all veteran benefits and for medical care. We're very proud of that, and we need to thank Secretary Derwinski, who is Secretary of Veterans Programs. For letting this happen, and it gives jobs and it helps us in Mississippi to have these big regional offices that handle all other states including Mississippi. Right there giving out and helping on veteran's programs.

Interviewer: Veterans hospitals in Virginia and Alabama will be used in a test study to see the effects of allowing non-veterans to be treated in these veterans' facilities. Some veterans' groups object to this idea. What do you think of the plan?

Montgomery: I don't particularly like the idea. I think what we should do, right now believe it or not, retired military personnel are not using the veteran's hospitals. They come under Medicare, or they or they come under the Champus Program. But by law, Medicare, Champus, and Medicaid Programs of people can't go into the veteran's hospitals. I think we need to change that law first, where these veterans I just mentioned retired military under Champus, and Medicare can use the VA hospitals. That'll bring some extra money in. But looks like they're moving ahead. The argument on the other side is, that these rural hospitals for veterans they've had to close some wards and some beds because there's not enough veterans using these hospital facilities. If you bring in non-veterans, then Medicare, Medicaid, Independent groups will pay into the veteran's hospitals system. That'll give more money to treat the veterans, and it's very clear in this regulation; it's being done by by the Secretary, not by Congress. Where it says that veterans will get the priority, you'll have to have a bed for the veterans before you take in a non-veteran.

Interviewer: There is some consideration being given to a cut in the capital gains tax rate as a part of a plan to stimulate the economy. Would you support such action?

Montgomery: I certainly would, it would really help in Mississippi. Where we have a lot of timber growing, timbers been growing there for twenty, twenty-five years. And this is not the big land owners will be helped by capital gains tax reduction. The small small individual, the family who's owned fifty, a hundred acres of timber. They haven't sold that timber, because payin' capital gains tax, they don't make much on it. But if you could reduce the capital gains tax, to give a good breaks for people who've had this timber growing for a long time. It will certainly help and stimulate the economy in Mississippi, and I think investment tax credit to look into that where you can deduct where you buy machinery to improve your operation. That'll give jobs to people, and we should look at some legislation that will stimulate a Real Estate. Real Estate has just been hurt by the 1986 laws, we don't encourage anybody to sell or buy property anymore. And we need to look into that situation. So, also this reduction in interest rates is putting more money back in the homeowners for refinancing their home. So, I think it looks pretty good, we oughta' come out of this recession.

Interviewer: Thank you Congressman, this has been Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington. Presented as a public service by this station.

Audio ends at 5:12