

Recently the world lost a pioneering inventor and entrepreneur. Steve Jobs of Apple was an innovator, a risk-taker, and an inspiring leader. His success in life shows just how much folks can achieve when they work hard and harness their creative talents. If you use any type of personal technology, your daily life has been affected in some way by the creativity of Steve Jobs. He pushed the envelope for an industry innovating to better connect us with one another.

Looking back on Steve Jobs' amazing life, I can't help but wonder what inventions our world has yet to see. From a consumer's standpoint, I am excited to see the technologies of the future. However, when I consider the future from a legislator's standpoint, I must wonder if Congress is doing what is necessary to enable our country's creative minds to invent the next best smartphone, or even to design the miniscule parts that make up these devices.

Lately, our national discussion has focused on jobs and the country's high unemployment rate, and the simple truth is that Congress must address its own role in helping cultivate an environment of job creation. For example, if an inventor in rural Virginia is unable to secure a patent for his creation due to outdated or confusing patent laws, then his invention will never create a single job or provide a useful service for a consumer. When Congress considered the America Invents Act (H.R. 1249) in June, I supported the revamp of our patent process so that entrepreneurs and innovators all across our great country would have a better shot at getting their inventions into the marketplace. I have also recently supported legislation that limits the government's ability to tell a company where it can open a new factory (H.R. 2587), as well as bills that repeal pesky government requirements that would have forced businesses to focus more resources on tax filing rather than job creation or product expansion (H.R. 4).

Each of these bills is a jobs bill, and it is bills like these that will foster job creation across our great country. Just because a bill doesn't have a \$400 billion price tag doesn't mean it will not help our small businesses hire workers or spur our creative minds to continue innovating and creating. Each of our small businesses plays an important part in our economy, and the freedom for a business to grow is vital for a healthy economy. The company that Steve Jobs started in his garage is now a publicly traded company employing thousands of people, who support their families with their salary. Apple employees and consumers alike can appreciate that now-ancient computer invention Steve Jobs introduced in the late 1970s. We can all be inspired by Steve's entrepreneurial spirit.

As this session of Congress continues, Washington must ensure that its actions are not holding back innovative thinkers who could potentially design the next great product. Innovations lead to jobs, and jobs lead to prosperity. I will continue to support legislation in Congress that helps our small businesses and innovators thrive so that America can get back to work. The life of Steve Jobs can inspire us all to do something great, and we must all work together to ensure that his entrepreneurial spirit can continue to flourish in this country.

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