

MONTANANS FOR TESTER  
 “MONTANA BEEF”  
 APRIL 26, 2012

AD SCRIPT	BACKUP
<p>Jon Tester doesn't pack much when he goes back to Washington, but he always brings his Montana roots.</p>	<p><b>“The Testers Do Not Like to Leave Their State Without Its Meat, Which They Have Been Schleppling Around the Country For Years.”</b> As reported by the <u>New York Times</u>, “Just as some lawmakers cannot part with their pillow from home, the Testers do not like to leave their state without its meat, which they have been schleppling around the country for years, including to a family reunion in Hawaii. They are also known to take purple barley, grown organically on their land along with lentils, winter wheat and peas, among other crops. On a recent trip, Mrs. Tester tucked a Ziploc bag of barley into her purse.” [<u>New York Times</u>, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p> <p><b>Sharla Tester: Montana Meat Is A Family Tradition.</b> In January 2012, the <u>New York Times</u> reported: “Montana meat loyalty, the Testers say, is a family and state tradition. ‘Montana has been known for its wheat and beef forever,’ Mrs. Tester said, ‘and everybody just eats their own.’” [<u>New York Times</u>, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p> <p><b>Tester: “Taking Meat With Us Is Just Something We Do.”</b> In January 2012, the <u>New York Times</u> reported: “Such a trip calls for light packing, yet the senator, a first-term Democrat, can often be found lugging an extra 40-pound roller bag, which he gingerly stuffs into the overhead bin. His precious cargo is neither briefing books nor an extra raincoat, but roasts, ribs, round steak and (his favorite) rib steak. ‘Taking meat with us is just something that we do,’ Senator Tester, 55, said over a meal of beef stroganoff cooked by his wife, Sharla, in their Capitol Hill town house. ‘We like our own meat.’” [<u>New York Times</u>, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p> <p><b>Tester’s “Loyalty” To Montana Beef Comes From “A Lifetime” Of Raising It Himself.</b> In January 2012, the <u>New York Times</u> reported: “The senator’s loyalty to his state’s beef, in particular, stems not from the hyper food-sourcing that has become a near parody of itself on American menus, but from his own taste preferences, honed from a lifetime of raising, slaughtering and butchering Black Angus cattle.” [<u>New York Times</u>, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p> <p><b>Testers “Still Slaughter Their Own Animals And Cut The Meat.”</b> In January 2012, the <u>New York Times</u> reported: “Their neighbors in Big Sandy raise and feed the only Black Angus cow the Testers currently own, plus two hogs. Though the Testers are not raising livestock themselves now, they still slaughter their own animals and cut the meat, sometimes in 20-below temperatures in the processing</p>

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	<p>facility on their property.” [New York Times, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p> <p><b>Sharla Tester “Spends Most Of Her Time Tending The Farm Back Home” Rather Than Working Capitol Hill Social Scene.</b> In January 2012, the <u>New York Times</u> reported: “While many Washington wives like to make the dinner party scene and attend spouse lunches on Capitol Hill, Mrs. Tester spends most of her time tending the farm back home. There is harvesting and plowing in the spring and beating back the snow in the winter. In the summer she cans tomatoes and puts up pickles (‘Jon eats them like candy’) and choke cherries, though last year those flooded out.” [New York Times, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p> <p><b>Tester: “I Think There Is Some Real Therapy” In Working On A Farm.</b> In January 2012, the <u>New York Times</u> reported: “The family farm, which was homesteaded 100 years ago by Mr. Tester’s grandparents, was converted to organic 25 years ago; the family decided to improve the health of the soil and add value to their crops. ‘I think there is some real therapy in getting your hands in the dirt and working with food,’ the senator said.” [New York Times, <a href="#">1/10/12</a>]</p>
<p>In Washington, Jon’s standing up for Montana values.</p>	<p><b>Tester: Focus on Finding Common Ground and Getting Things Done for Montana.</b> As reported by the <u>Great Falls Tribune</u>, “‘The key is to focus on working together, find common ground and actually get things done for Montana rather than just blow hot air, as too many in Congress would rather do,’ Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., said.” [Great Falls Tribune, 1/9/11]</p> <p><b>EDITORIAL: “Tester Has Made It His Mission to Represent All Montanans.”</b> In January 2009, the <u>Missoulian</u> editorial board wrote: “These are the sort of actions that show us Tester has made it his mission to represent all Montanans, not just Democrats. And that’s the sort of spirit we believe truly represents Montana.” [The Missoulian, Editorial, <a href="#">1/18/2009</a>]</p> <p><b>EDITORIAL: Tester “Often Seems More Than Willing to Cross Party Lines in Interests of Doing What’s Right for All Montanans.”</b> In January 2009, the <u>Missoulian</u> editorial board wrote: “Although Tester is a member of the Democratic Party, he often seems more than willing to cross party lines in the interests of doing what’s right for all Montanans. Thus he was the lone Democrat to vote against giving \$15 billion in emergency loans to the auto industry, on top of his earlier vote against the \$700 billion bailout for the financial industry.” [The Missoulian, Editorial, <a href="#">1/18/2009</a>]</p> <p><b>EDITORIAL: Tester One “Among The Few Democrats Who Still Care About Blue-Collar Voters.”</b> In December 2011, a <u>Wall Street Journal</u> editorial reported: “The Keystone codicil is now being negotiated in the Senate, where at least eight Democrats have said publicly they hope the project goes forward: Jon Tester and Max Baucus of Montana, Kent Conrad of North Dakota, Joe Manchin of</p>

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	<p>West Virginia, Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Mark Begich of Alaska, Ben Nelson of Nebraska and Claire McCaskill of Missouri. Perhaps they're among the few Democrats who still care about blue-collar voters, as opposed to public unions and Mill Valley hedge-fund greens.” [<a href="#">Wall Street Journal</a>, editorial, <a href="#">12/16/11</a>]</p> <p><b>EDITORIAL: Tester’s Overall Performance “Has Been Downright Impressive.”</b> In January 2009, the <a href="#">Missoulian</a> editorial board wrote: “If his past performance is any indication, Tester will be a fine addition to the Appropriations Committee. However, even as we congratulate Tester and wish him well in his new duties, we have to note that he hasn't exactly spent the past two years sitting on his hands. In fact, while we might quibble with a few of his decisions, his overall performance on the Veteran's Affairs, Indian Affairs and Banking committees has been downright impressive.” [<a href="#">The Missoulian</a>, Editorial, <a href="#">1/18/2009</a>]</p>
<p>Reducing the deficit.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TESTER VOTED FOR OVER \$2 TRILLION IN SPENDING CUTS PASSED INTO LAW</b></p> <p><b>Tester Voted for At Least \$2.1 Trillion in Spending Cuts.</b> In August 2011, Tester voted for the Budget Control Act of 2011 which would provide a process to reduce the deficit by at least \$2.1 trillion or up to \$2.4 trillion over 10 years. [S.365, Senate Roll Call Vote #123, 8/2/2011; Public Law No. 112-25; CQ Bill Analysis, 8/11/2011; CBO, <a href="#">8/1/2011</a>]</p> <p><b>Tester Voted for \$40 Billion in Spending Cuts.</b> In March 2011, Tester voted for the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution compromise that cut government spending by nearly \$40 billion from FY 2010 levels. According to the House Appropriations Committee, “The final CR will include a total of \$1.049 trillion in funding, a nearly \$40 billion reduction from last year’s (fiscal year 2010) levels. This includes the \$12 billion in reductions previously approved by Congress and signed into law under the previous three continuing resolutions, as well as nearly \$28 billion in additional new spending cuts.” [Senate Roll Call <a href="#">Vote #61</a>, 4/14/2011; House Appropriations Committee FY 2011 CR Summary, <a href="#">4/12/2011</a>]</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TESTER ONE OF ONLY 20 DEMOCRATS TO SUPPORT BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT</b></p> <p><b>Tester Supported Amendment to U.S. Constitution Requiring Federal Budget to Be Balanced Every Year.</b> As reported by the <a href="#">Great Falls Tribune</a>, “Montana lawmakers Jon Tester and Denny Rehberg both support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that requires the federal budget be balanced every year. But what exactly is "balanced?" And what, if anything, should be exempt? Turns</p>

out Tester, the Senate Democrat from Big Sandy, and Rehberg, the Republican congressman from Billings, have their own ideas on the matter. While they both back the concept of not spending more than the government collects, they part ways on what they're willing to do to achieve it. [[Great Falls Tribune, 8/21/2011](#)]

**Tester Supported Balanced Budget Amendment With Flexibility to Restructure Tax Code, Protect Social Security.** As reported by the [Great Falls Tribune](#), “Rehberg, a tea party supporter, wants to balance the budget almost exclusively through spending cuts. Tester, along with fellow Montana Democratic Sen. Max Baucus, wants the flexibility to restructure the tax code and end certain breaks while excluding Social Security from the equation.” [[Great Falls Tribune, 8/21/2011](#)]

**Tester Voted For A Balanced-Budget Amendment To The Constitution.** In December 2011, Senator Tester voted for passage of the joint resolution that would propose a constitutional amendment that would require a balanced budget starting in the fifth fiscal year after ratification by three-fourths of the states. Under the proposal, three-fifths of the entire House and Senate would be required to approve deficit spending, except in times of congressionally declared war or in the face of a serious military threat. The proposal would not count the Social Security trust fund in calculating overall receipts or outlays. [CQ; Vote 228, [12/14/11](#)]

**HEADLINE – Baucus & Tester Support Balanced Budget Amendment.** [KXLH, 12/14/2011]

**HEADLINE – Baucus, Tester Two of 20 Democrats to Support Balanced Budget Amendment.** [[Flathead Beacon, 12/15/2011](#)]

**Tester One of 20 Democrats to Vote for Balanced Budget Amendment.** As reported by the [Flathead Beacon](#), “Sens. Jon Tester and Max Baucus were two of only 20 Democratic senators to vote in favor of a balanced budget amendment earlier today. The Senate rejected two separate proposals to add a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution, following the footsteps of the House, which fell 23 votes short of the required two-thirds majority to pass its own balanced budget amendment last month.” [[Flathead Beacon, 12/15/2011](#)]

**Tester: Nation Needs Balanced Budget Requirement Because Congress Squandered Away Surplus.** As reported by the [Flathead Beacon](#), “Tester also issued a statement: “This nation needs a balanced budget requirement because Congress was given a \$236 billion surplus in 2001, then irresponsibly squandered it in a matter of months. Unlike previous balanced budget proposals, this responsible amendment requires a balanced budget while protecting seniors, Social Security, and

	middle-class families.” [Flathead Beacon, <a href="#">12/15/2011</a> ]
Making sure kids can afford to go to college.	<p><b>Tester Helped Pass <i>College Cost Reduction Act</i> Into Law, Cut Student Loan Interest Rates From 6.8 Percent to 3.4 Percent in 2011-2012 Academic Year.</b> In 2007, Tester voted for adoption of the conference report on the bill that would cut government subsidies to student loan firms by about \$20 billion and redirect most of the money to aid for students and college graduates. It also would include \$750 million in federal budget deficit reduction. The maximum Pell grant award would be increased by \$490 in 2008 and by \$1,090 over five years. It would provide debt forgiveness to certain public sector workers after 10 years of service. The bill also would cap student loan repayments at 15 percent of discretionary income. The bill also cut interest rates on need-based student loans (subsidized Stafford Loans) over a four-year period. The rates were cut from 6.8 percent in the 2006-2007 academic year to 3.4 percent in the 2011-2012 academic year. [CQ; Senate Roll Call Vote #326, 9/7/2007]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Tester Touted Higher Education Bill That Increased Pell Grants, Cut Student Loan Interest Rates, Created Student Debt Forgiveness Program for Public Service Employees.</b> As reported by the <a href="#">Great Falls Tribune</a>, “Tester also is proud of having supported a higher-education bill that increased the maximum Pell Grant award for the neediest college students, cut the interest rate on subsidized student loans, capped the amount low-income borrowers must pay back each month, and created a debt-forgiveness program for many public service employees. ‘The higher-education bill that I campaigned on, I couldn’t have written it any better,’ Tester said. ‘That was a great piece of legislation.’” [Great Falls Tribune, 1/17/2008]</p> </li> </ul> <p><b>Tester Helped Pass Into Law <i>Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act</i>.</b> Tester voted to pass the <i>Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act</i>. This legislation will increase the amount of federally-subsidized loans available to students by \$2,000 and provide parents with improved access to low-cost federal loans. The legislation will also help students access low-cost federal loans by helping to stabilize the private student loan program and shoring up the existing "lender of last resort" program. In addition, by expanding eligibility for need-based financial aid, the legislation will decrease students' reliance on loans to pay for college. The bill was signed into law on May 5, 2008 [Passed/agreed to in Senate by Unanimous Consent 4/30/2008; P.L. 110-227].</p> <p><b>Tester Voted For Higher Education Act Reauthorization Act Conference Report.</b> In July 2008, Senator Tester voted for adoption of the conference report on the bill that would reauthorize the Higher Education Act through fiscal 2012. The bill would increase the maximum Pell grant to \$8,000 per year by the 2014-15 academic year. It would bar lenders from giving schools financial perks in order to get</p>

	<p>on a "preferred lender list." It also would penalize states that cut funding for institutions of higher education by withholding some federal funds if the state's funding for such institutions falls below the average amount allocated by the state over the last five academic years. It would establish a new loan forgiveness program, providing up to \$2,000 a year for five years, for individuals such as nurses, early childhood educators and librarians serving in high-need areas. [CQ; Senate Roll Call Vote 194, <a href="#">7/31/2008</a>]</p> <p><b>Tester Helped Pass Into Law \$2,500 Tax Credit for College Tuition Costs.</b> In 2009, Tester helped pass into law the American Opportunity Tax Credit, which provides a maximum tax credit of \$2,500 a year for college tuition. Nearly 4 million additional families were made eligible for the tuition tax credit. [CQ; Senate Roll Call <a href="#">Vote #61</a>, 2/10/2009; Senate Roll Call <a href="#">Vote #64</a>, 2/13/2009]</p>
<p>Protecting Social Security and Medicare.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TESTER: DEFENDING MEDICARE</b></p> <p><b>Tester Voted AGAINST Extreme Ryan Budget Plan That Ends Medicare As We Know It.</b> In May 2011, Tester voted against the Reid, D-Nev., motion to proceed to the concurrent resolution that would allow \$2.859 trillion in new budget authority for fiscal 2012. The motion was rejected by a vote of 40-57. (H.Con.Res.34, Senate Roll Call <a href="#">Vote #77</a>, 5/25/2011)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tester: “The Plan That I Saw Come Out of Congressman Ryan Really Destroys Medicare.”</b> During an April 2011 interview on MSNBC, Tester blasted the Ryan budget as a plan that “really destroys Medicare.” TESTER: Well, I think that -- I think the plan that I saw come out of Congressman Ryan really destroys Medicare, and Medicare is a program that has worked very, very well for many, many decades. And, you know, changing it into a voucher system is not going to help our seniors and is going to put additional -- additional health care costs on them. (MSNBC, 4/11/2011)</li> <li>• <b>Tester: “No, I Don’t Like Paul Ryan’s Plan as It Applies to Medicare.”</b> During an April 2011 interview on MSNBC, Tester said he did not like the Ryan budget as it applied to Medicare. TESTER: And I will tell you that, no, I don't like Paul Ryan's plan as it applies to Medicare, but I do think we need to have a plan that does address the entitlements, does address military spending, does address discretionary spending and tax reform. And we can -- you know, those are --those are four big items that if we delve into, we can come up with some solutions if we want to do it. (MSNBC, 4/11/2011)</li> </ul>

**Tester Signed Letter Criticizing House Republican Budget That Would “End Medicare as We Know It and Throw Seniors into Private Market.”** On May 5, 2011, Tester cosigned a letter to President Obama that criticized the Paul Ryan Republican budget for “ending Medicare as we know it” and urged President Obama “to protect Americas seniors and oppose any attempts to dismantle Medicare.” (Letter to President Barack Obama Opposing Medicare Vouchers, 5/5/2011)

**Tester Urged Obama to “Protect America’s Seniors and Oppose Any Attempts to Dismantle Medicare.”** On May 5, 2011, Tester cosigned a letter to President Obama urging the Administration “to protect America’s seniors and oppose any attempts to dismantle Medicare” in the Republican FY 2012 budget. Tester and cosigners wrote: “We cannot afford to reverse these gains through the ultimate form of rationing health care for seniors: the replacement of Medicare as we know it with insufficient vouchers for private health coverage. We urge you to protect Americas seniors and oppose any attempts to dismantle Medicare.” (Letter to President Barack Obama Opposing Medicare Vouchers, 5/5/2011)

**HEADLINE – Senators Tell Biden to Reject GOP Medicare.** (AP, [6/6/2011](#))

**HEADLINE – Democratic Senators Tell Biden GOP Medicare Plan Shouldn’t Be Part of Deficit Negotiations.** (AP, [6/6/2011](#))

**Tester Called on Biden to Reaffirm Commitment to Leaving Medicare Unchanged During Budget Negotiations.** As reported by the AP, “Five Democratic senators are calling on Vice President Joe Biden to reaffirm his commitment to leaving Medicare unchanged during budget and deficit negotiations. Sens. Claire McCaskill, of Missouri, Jon Tester, of Montana, Sherrod Brown, of Ohio, Ben Cardin of Maryland and Bill Nelson of Florida express their concerns in a letter sent Monday to Biden. The letter was obtained by The Associated Press.” (AP, [6/6/2011](#))

#### **TESTER: PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY**

**Tester Voted To Protect Social Security From Deficit-Cutting Measures.** In January 2010, Senator Tester voted for a Baucus, D-Mont., amendment no. 3300 to the Baucus substitute amendment no. 3299. The Baucus amendment would exclude fiscal task force proposals that affect programs established under Title II of the Social Security Act or related Social Security taxes from being considered under expedited procedures in the House or the Senate. In the Senate, a three-fifths majority would be required to waive the exemptions or to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the chair on a point of order related to the exclusions. The substitute would increase the statutory debt limit to \$14.29 trillion. [CQ; Vote 4, [1/26/10](#)]

	<p><b>Tester Voted to Advance One-Time \$250 Social Security Payment To Those Who Had Not Received Cost-Of-Living Payments.</b> In December 2010, Senator Tester voted for a motion to invoke cloture (thus limiting debate) on the Reid, D-Nev., motion to proceed to the bill that would provide one-time payments of \$250 to Social Security recipients and others who have not received cost-of-living payments because inflation has not been high enough to trigger such adjustments.[<a href="#">CQ</a>; Vote 267, <a href="#">12/8/10</a>]</p> <p><b>Tester Said He Would Oppose Any Reduction In Social Security Benefits.</b> In October 2011, the AP reported: “Earlier in the day, U.S. Sen. Jon Tester held a teleconference with AARP members many of whom expressed a great deal of concern that Social Security could be scaled back in some way. Tester, also a Democrat, said he would oppose any reduction in benefits and believes a ‘critical mass’ in Congress would as well. ‘We do have to get the budget deficit dead under control,’ Tester said. ‘But we don’t have to reduce your benefits to make that happen.’” [AP, 10/19/11]</p> <p><b>Tester Was “Lukewarm” On Payroll-Tax Reduction “Because It Could Undermine Social Security, Which Is Supported By The Tax.”</b> In October 2011, the <a href="#">Helena Independent Record</a> reported that Tester was “lukewarm” on Obama’s jobs bill, saying “he doesn’t like the bill’s payroll-tax reduction because it could undermine Social Security, which is supported by the tax.” [Helena Independent Record, 10/7/11]</p>
Protecting the Second Amendment.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>“Gun owners in Montana and across the country appreciate Sen. Tester's leadership on Second Amendment issues.”</b> – NRA Executive Director Chris Cox</p> <p><b>Tester Named “Legislator of the Year” by National Shooting Sports Foundation.</b> The National Shooting Sports Association – a trade association for the firearms, ammunition, hunting and shooting sports industry – named Jon Tester “Legislator of the Year” in 2012. [National Shooting Sports Foundation, Press Release, <a href="#">4/18/2012</a>]</p> <p><b>“Tester’s Leadership in the United States Senate Has Helped Ensure and Protect Our Shooting Sports, Hunting and Firearms Freedoms.”</b> According to a press release issued by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, ““Sen. Tester's leadership in the United States Senate has helped to ensure and protect our shooting sports, hunting and firearms freedoms,’ said Keane. ‘NSSF is pleased to present to Sen. Tester NSSF's 2011 Legislator of the Year Award and looks forward to continuing a</p>

	<p>constructive dialogue with him on public-policy matters affecting the industry.” [National Shooting Sports Foundation, Press Release, <a href="#">4/18/2012</a>]</p> <p><b>NRA Called Tester A “Pro-Second Amendment” Senator.</b> In March 2009, the NRA issued a press release that said: “Yesterday afternoon, DoD additionally confirmed the lifting of the suspension to pro-Second Amendment United States Senators Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Jon Tester (D-Mont.), who sent the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) a joint letter vigorously opposing the suspension, on the grounds that it had ‘an impact on small businesses who sell reloaded ammunition utilizing these fired casings, and upon individual gun owners who purchase spent military brass at considerable cost savings for their personal use.’” [NRA, 3/18/09]</p> <p><b>NRA Thanked Tester For His Leadership On Gun Issues.</b> In March 2009, the NRA issued a press release that said: “Everyone who would have been impacted by the suspension, had it become permanent, owes thanks to Senator Baucus for his leadership on this issue, as well as to Sen. Tester and U.S. Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-Mont.), who also weighed in strongly on behalf of gun owners and the suppliers from whom they obtain ammunition reloaded with surplus military brass.” [NRA, 3/18/09]</p> <p><b>NRA PRESS RELEASE – U.S. Senator Defends American Gun Owners – Again.</b> [National Rifle Association, <a href="#">3/27/2009</a>]</p> <p><b>NRA: Tester “Stepped Up to the Plate for Gun Owners.”</b> According to a press release issued by the National Rifle Association, ‘As previously reported, the attempt to blame America’s lawful gun owners and its gun laws for the horrific violent acts of Mexican drug cartels continues, spurred on by Secretary of State Clinton and her foray south of the border. Fortunately, gun owners do have some advocates in congress. This week, during the above-mentioned Senate Homeland Security Committee hearing, Senator Jon Tester [D-Mont.] stepped up to the plate for gun owners, telling Deputy U.S. Attorney General David Ogden, ‘I want to be clear. Some have used this latest outbreak in Mexico to argue for tighter gun control restrictions in the United States. I don’t agree that that’s the right answer. I think the right answer is really cooperation at all levels of government, and smarter intelligence—more eyes and ears on the border, getting tougher on criminals that are smuggling weapons and drugs.’” [National Rifle Association, <a href="#">3/27/2009</a>]</p>
Taking care of veterans.	<p><b>Tester: “My Overall Goal Is To Make Sure We Do Right By Our Veterans.”</b> In January 2008, the <a href="#">Great Falls Tribune</a> reported: “Tester said he has not been blind to this need, noting he has worked for veterans' services since taking office a year ago. ‘I didn't think we were keeping up with the demand</p>

that's there. These folks sacrificed a lot to serve,' he said. In the next year, Tester, who serves on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, said he would like to do more to get services for soldiers returning from war with post-traumatic stress disorder. 'My overall goal is to make sure we do right by our veterans,' he said." [Great Falls Tribune, 1/17/08]

**Billings Gazette: Tester Has Amassed a Successful Resume in Securing Benefits for Veterans.** As reported by the Billings Gazette, "Moreover, Tester has amassed a successful resume in securing benefits for veterans, which bodes well for Bare and others." [Billings Gazette, [9/27/2011](#)]

**Billings Gazette: Montana Received Six New VA Clinics, Two New VA Vet Centers and Expansion of Billings VA Clinic During Tester's Senate Tenure.** As reported by the Billings Gazette, "During Tester's tenure in the Senate, Montana has received six new VA clinics in Lewistown, Havre, Hamilton, Libby, Cut Bank and Plentywood. Two VA Vet Centers in Great Falls and Kalispell also opened this year. In February, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs approved doubling the size of the Billings VA Clinic." [Billings Gazette, [9/27/2011](#)]

**Montana Veteran: "Jon Listened to Us" and "Went to Work to Finally Get Something Done."** As reported by the Helena Independent Record, "Tester included \$125 million in a 2008 appropriations bill to pay for the mileage increase...Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., said he'll continue working with Tester on veterans issues, while Jerry LaFountain, a longtime commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart in Montana, said disabled vets have been waiting for years for the increase. 'Jon listened to us,' LaFountain said. 'He realized right away it was a priority, and he went to work to finally get something done.'" [Helena Independent Record, 2/1/2008]

**Tester: Results for Montana Veterans "Happened Because I Listened to Veterans in Montana and We Worked Together To Get It Done."** As reported by the Billings Gazette, "During Tester's tenure in the Senate, Montana has received six new VA clinics in Lewistown, Havre, Hamilton, Libby, Cut Bank and Plentywood. Two VA Vet Centers in Great Falls and Kalispell also opened this year. In February, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs approved doubling the size of the Billings VA Clinic. Montana has also received additional resources, including transportation vans and housing vouchers, for veterans. At Tester's invitation, Shinseki made his first visit to Montana in July. 'That didn't happen on its own and it sure wasn't happening before I came to Congress,' Tester said. 'That happened because I listened to veterans in Montana and we worked together to get it done.'" [Billings Gazette, [9/27/011](#)]

And making the U.S. Senate look a little more

**EDITORIAL – Jon Tester, The Well Grounded Senator.** [New York Times, Editorial, [8/10/2010](#)]

like Montana.

I'm Jon Tester and I approve this message.

And I approve Sharla's cooking too.

**Tester “Went Home to His Farm and Harvested Wheat” During Congressional Break.** In August 2010, the New York Times editorial board wrote: So it was refreshing to hear how Senator Jon Tester, a Democrat of Montana, is spending his summer vacation. While other senators drove the campaign trail, dialed for dollars or lounged on a beach somewhere, Mr. Tester went home to his farm and harvested wheat. The senator is the third generation of his family to operate an 1,800-acre farm near Big Sandy, Mont., where the Testers grow organic spring and winter wheat. He is spending the first week of his vacation in his combine, trying to gather the wheat before the sawflies get to it. [New York Times, Editorial, [8/10/2010](#)]

**EDITORIAL: It's Good to Know At Least One Senator is Still Firmly Earthbound.** In August 2010, the New York Times editorial board wrote: “Some nostalgics maintain the Senate was more functional in the days when many of its farmer-members used the spring and summer recesses to plant and harvest. That may be a myth, but it is good to know at least one senator is still firmly earthbound.” [New York Times, Editorial, [8/10/2010](#)]

**Tester's “Down-to-Earth, Matter-of-Fact Style Hasn't Changed a Bit Since He Left Big Sandy for Washington.”** In September 2010, the Montana Standard editorial board wrote: “One thing The Standard's editorial board has always appreciated about U.S. Sen. Jon Tester is his down-to-earth, matter-of-fact style, and that hasn't changed a bit since he left Big Sandy for Washington. He never comes in with a preset agenda to lecture at length about. Rather, he stops by for a visit, opens himself up to whatever questions we'd care to ask, and keeps his answers short and sweet to make sure there's time to cover all the topics. We like the access and the openness.” [Montana Standard, Editorial, [9/2/2010](#)]

**EDITORIAL: Tester an “Honest, Forthright and Jovial Elected Official Who's About as Open as the Expansive Montana Prairie.”** In September 2010, the Helena Independent Record editorial board wrote: “Sometimes, though, it's what a person isn't that makes him what he is. And in an hourlong editorial board visit with Senator Tester Tuesday, it's refreshing to see an honest, forthright and jovial elected official who's as open as the expansive Montana prairie. It's not the first time a delegation member has visited our editorial board, of course, and not the first time Tester has weighed in here on topics from appropriations, to the northern border, to the economy, to war, to life back on the farm.” [Helena Independent Record, Editorial, [9/1/2010](#)]