Since I was first elected to Congress in 2008 it's been a tremendous honor to serve the people of northwest Louisiana in the Fourth Congressional District. Now, that district has grown with the addition of Union and Evangeline Parishes, and new areas in Allen and St. Landry Parishes. Many of you went to the polls Tuesday and I'm grateful for the privilege I've been given of serving another term in Congress.

The work in Washington will resume quickly. The problems are stacking up against our great nation, and there are crucial issues that must be addressed soon. A potentially devastating shock to our economy is just around the corner if Congress and the president fail to stop the largest tax hike in our nation's history. Our federal debt has grown by more than $5 trillion over the past four years, and spending must be cut. Taking more taxes from hard-working Americans is not the answer, and I intend to continue to fight to stop a massive federal tax increase on January 1.

From my position on the House Armed Services Committee I will also keep working to stop the drastic cuts to our defense spending that will begin automatically in January. Sequestration, as it's been called, was a bad idea when it was proposed in 2011. I opposed it then and I still believe our Armed Forces deserve better. Indiscriminate, across-the-board cuts will reduce our military readiness, will force some of our men and women in uniform out of the service at a time when it's still hard to find good-paying jobs, and will diminish the equipment and training for those who remain in the military. Spending must be cut and the budget must be balanced, but not on the backs of our Armed Forces.

Those issues await me in Washington, but my primary focus will remain where it has for the past four years: serving my fellow Louisianians. It is your voice and values that I represent, and my staff and I will continue to strive to represent you and to help you in your dealings with the federal government. If you have questions or concerns that you think my office may be able to help with, please contact my staff in either Shreveport, Leesville, or Bossier City, or through my website at www.fleming.house.gov.

Dr. John Fleming (R-LA) is a physician and small business owner and represents the 4th Congressional District of Louisiana. In Congress, he is a member of the House Armed Services Committee, and Chairman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs.