



Mack hears constituents' concerns, shares his own



Written by

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1:10 A.M. — Repealing President Barack Obama's health care plan and eliminating government rules and regulations dominated U.S. Rep. Connie Mack IV's town hall meeting Monday night.

"We need to reduce the size and scope of government," the Fort Myers congressman told a gathering of about 200 people at Harborside Events Center. "We must look at pro-growth policies.

"With all of those who are unemployed, the answer is not more laws and regulations. What can we do to get government off our back?"

Those words were music to the ears to small business owner Tony Martinez of Cape Coral.

"We've got to do something. There is so much government interference," said Martinez, who owns Second Chance Bail

Bonds. He said that as a business owner there are so "many hoops you have to jump through" that it's difficult to do business.

He cited the excessive paperwork he needs to complete to run his business.

"Something has to be done," he said.

Mack said he was optimistic that small businesses will soon get some breaks.

"We are seeing that we are starting to get some traction about repealing some things," Mack said. "My promise is this: I am going to try to cut things."

Mack has been a vocal opponent against Obama's health care plan since the president began lobbying for it.

"It's an unconstitutional piece of legislation," he said. "Obamacare flies in the face of freedom."

Joining Mack at the forum were Brad Hobbs, professor of free enterprise at

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FGCU, and Bob Levy, chairman of the Cato Institute, a public policy think tank.

Levy predicted that the health care reform law's constitutionality will be debated in the Supreme Court.

George Richey of Bonita Springs said he liked what he heard.

"I'm against Obamacare and wanted to hear about how it could be constitutional," he said.

In all, Mack took 15 questions from the audience ranging from term limits — he's not in favor of them; to funding for National Public Radio — he said the government should not be paying for public radio and television; to foreign aid — help our friends, punish our enemies; to gasoline tax — we should get to keep our tax money instead of being a donor state.

But not one question raised the possibility of Mack running for the Senate.

"It did kind of surprise me that it didn't come up," Mack said.

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