

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

*Congresswoman*

***Diane E. Watson***

*Dear Friend,*

*I am pleased to report to you on my activities on your behalf within the 33rd Congressional District and in Washington, D.C.*

*The federal government has the potential to positively impact our daily lives. As your representative, I am committed to utilizing federal resources and programs to improve our quality of life and ensuring that the residents of Los Angeles and Culver City have a significant voice in Congress.*

*Since the second session of the 109th Congress began in January, the House of Representatives has addressed some very tough issues – the war in Iraq, immigration, voting rights, election reform, health care and prescription drugs. The needs and concerns of you, your family and loved ones are uppermost to me.*

*As the House of Representatives moves toward the conclusion of the second session, I believe that we can and must do better for the American people. Issues of war and peace, homeland security, education, environment, and the crafting of a national budget should not be defined and debated as partisan issues. Instead they should be defined and debated in the interest of the American people.*

*Each month, I receive between 4,000 and 5,000 letters, faxes and e-mails from my constituents on a variety of topics. Your communication to me is important, and I appreciate those of you who have taken the time to correspond. I also appreciate the more than 10,000 visitors to my website each month.*

*So thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and feel free to share it with others who may have an interest.*

*Diane E. Watson  
Member of Congress*

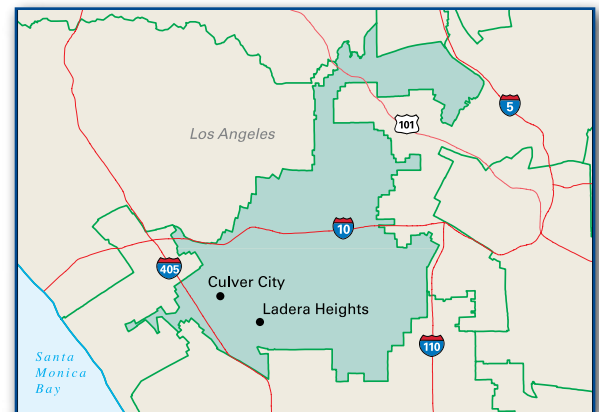


## WATSON ANNOUNCES \$14 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDS FOR 33<sup>RD</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The 33rd Congressional District has been awarded nearly \$14 million in federal appropriations. The funds will be used for new transportation projects, library renovation, housing, alternative energy research, and job training.

The funded projects include:

- Mayme Clayton Library – \$400,000 for the Western States Black Research and Educational Center renovation of a facility to house the Mayme Clayton Library in Culver City.
- La Cienega Intermodal Transfer Facility – \$400,000 for a bus and rail station at La Cienega and Exposition.
- Exposition Line – \$400,000 for the City of Los Angeles' Exposition Line Crenshaw Crossing Transit-Oriented Station District.
- University of Southern California – \$1.5 million for alternative energy research.
- West Los Angeles College – \$350,000 for “on location” entertainment industry craft and technician college job-training program.
- Childrens Hospital Los Angeles – \$200,000 for model pediatric RN residency program.
- Municipal Transit Operations Coalition (MTOC) Bus & Bus Facility Improvement Project – \$2.7 million for bus facility upgrade.
- Marlton Square -- \$8 million in HUD grants to complete project.



## IMMIGRATION REFORM

Immigration reform is one of the toughest and most pressing issues Congress is facing. Currently, our nation's immigration system is suffering under dramatic pressure. It is broken. The threat of terrorism has raised the stakes. The House and the Senate are now deadlocked over bills that are very different in their approach.

I support efforts to enhance our nation's border security, but do not support legislation that singularly focuses on enforcement. A balanced and reasonable approach is needed. Building a wall around our nation not only sends the wrong message, it will also not make America any safer.

Thoughtful immigration reform must address the security of our nation's borders as well as the fate of roughly 12 million illegal immigrants who currently reside in the U.S. Undocumented immigrants who are hard-working and law-abiding taxpayers should be given the opportunity to take steps towards legal status and ultimately citizenship. This is not amnesty. In fact, it is the only true long-term solution to fix our borders.

The strength and diversity of our nation derives from the fact that we are largely a nation of immigrants. We must gain control of our nation's borders, but not by becoming anti-immigrant and isolationist.

*Immigration Case Load Fact:  
Congresswoman Watson's  
Los Angeles office handled over 400  
requests for immigration assistance  
in the first five months of 2006.*

## GAS PUMP WOES

American families are paying record prices at the pump. According to a recent congressional report, this year Californians will spend an additional \$18 billion on gasoline as a result of higher prices compared to 2001.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina dramatically demonstrated the growing vulnerability of our nation's aging energy infrastructure. It is well past the time for the U.S. to develop a sensible energy strategy that promotes the development of alternative energy sources and higher fuel efficiency standards and reduces dependence on foreign oil. A new national energy strategy must also take into account the serious impact of fuel consumption on our environment.

As the Ranking Member of the House Energy and Resources Subcommittee, I recently participated in a series of hearings that examined the federal government's failure to collect royalty payments from oil companies drilling on federal lands. The error could cost the federal government and American taxpayers \$10 billion over the next 25 years.

Congress must conduct a vigorous review of our national energy assets, particularly at a time when many Americans are struggling to put gas in their autos and heat their homes.



## THE WAR IN IRAQ

This June, the House of Representatives conducted twelve hours of debate on a resolution on the war in Iraq. House Resolution 861 called for staying the course in Iraq. I opposed the resolution.



To date, over 2,500 U.S. servicemen and women have lost their lives in Iraq, and more than 18,000 Americans have been wounded. The number of Iraqi dead may be as high as 50,000. We are witnessing rising levels of sectarian violence in Iraq and a resurgent Iran next door.

I believe we must disengage militarily from Iraq and re-engage diplomatically. We must get out of the business of nation building and get back into the business of rebuilding alliances with our friends and international institutions. Congress must fulfill its constitutional duty by conducting more meaningful and effective oversight of the President's policies in Iraq.

Congress must also consider the future viability of the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. The imprisonment of persons classified as enemy combatants, who are being held indefinitely, has seriously undermined the credibility and moral authority of the United States around the world. The detainees at Guantanamo should be charged, designated as prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention, or sent home.

We all share the dreams of the Iraqi people. We want them to live in peace, in a secure, prosperous society where they are free to choose their government. But the presence of our troops and our occupation of Iraq has become such an obstacle to that future that we can no longer ignore reality.

## HONORING OUR NATION'S FALLEN

From the fields of Gettysburg, to the shores of Western Europe and the Pacific Islands, to the frozen tundra of Korea, to the jungles of Vietnam, and now in the streets of Afghanistan and Iraq, America's finest have answered the call to serve. Listed below are the brave American heroes from Los Angeles and Culver City who paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving in Iraq:

### UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Private First Class Geoffrey Perez, 24, Los Angeles  
Lance Corporal George J. Payton, 20, Culver City  
Lance Corporal Felipe D. Sandoval-Flores, 20, Los Angeles  
Corporal Carlos Pineda, 23, Los Angeles  
Lance Corporal Veashna Muy, 20, Los Angeles  
Lance Corporal Dion M. Whitley, 21, Los Angeles  
Lance Corporal Luis A. Figueroa, 21, Los Angeles  
Lance Corporal Victor R. Lu, 22, Los Angeles  
Sergeant Edgar E. Lopez, 27, Los Angeles  
Corporal Roberto Abad, 22, Los Angeles  
Lance Corporal Benjamin R. Gonzalez, 23, Los Angeles  
Private First Class Francisco Abraham Martinez-Flores, 21, Los Angeles  
Corporal Jorge Alonso Gonzalez, 20, Los Angeles  
Corporal Carlos Arrelano Pandura, 22, Los Angeles

### UNITED STATES ARMY

Sergeant First Class John W. Marshall, Los Angeles  
Staff Sergeant Eddie E. Menyweather, 35, Los Angeles  
Chief Warrant Officer II Christopher G. Nason, 39, Los Angeles  
Sergeant Trinidad R. Martinezulis, 22, Los Angeles  
Sergeant Milton M. Monzon, Jr., 21, Los Angeles



## THE NEW PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

Medicare Part D, the new federally funded prescription drug plan available to all seniors age 65 and older, officially rolled out in January 2006.

Persons currently eligible for Medicare had until May 15, 2006, to enroll in the prescription drug Part D plan for 2006. Any individual who did not sign up during the initial enrollment period will only be able to register during the annual open enrollment period, which will run from November 15 to December 31 each year. Coverage will begin the following January 1.

Persons who failed to enroll during the initial enrollment period will also be subject to a penalty—in effect, a higher monthly premium— if they decide to participate in the program at a later date. However, they will not incur a penalty if they have maintained drug coverage through another “creditable” source. One source of possible creditable coverage is retiree health coverage offered by a former employer or union. I have cosponsored legislation that would extend the enrollment deadline without penalty.

I voted against the new Medicare legislation in 2003. It prohibits the federal government from negotiating lower drug prices. In contrast, private insurers typically negotiate drug pricing with pharmaceutical companies in order to manage rising prescription drug costs. Many beneficiaries will also be denied Medicare benefits for their prescription drug costs that exceed \$2,250 annually, but will still have to pay monthly premiums. Medicare will again pay when costs exceed \$5,100. This payment gap is known as the “donut hole.”

Another issue of concern is the sizeable number and complexity of insurance plans from which Medicare recipients can choose. Also, under current law insurance companies can change their drug pricing without warning. It is confusing for seniors who want to make an informed decision about their prescription drug coverage.

Medicare Part D is not for everyone. Seniors who already have prescription drug insurance through a private insurer may do better with their current coverage. However, Part D may be helpful for seniors with no prescription drug coverage.

Become informed before you make a decision. Please contact the district office if you need assistance.



Congresswoman Watson and representatives from health care organizations observe district senior (seated left) receiving prescription drug computer counseling at Medicare district town hall meeting.

## Flawed Telecommunications Bill

The House of Representatives recently approved the first major re-write of the Telecommunications Bill (H.R. 5252) in over a decade. I opposed the bill because it does not include adequate safeguards to guarantee that minorities as well as other traditionally under-served groups are not discriminated against in the provision of telecom services. The bill contains weak anti-discrimination provisions and may lead to the redlining of entire neighborhoods.

I supported an amendment that would have required continued equal access to the Internet for all users, but the House rejected it. The bill allows Internet providers, for the first time, to differentiate services they provide to customers. This will repress innovation.

If the equivalent of tollbooths is erected on our information highway, we will seriously curtail the number of voices that Americans hear, hurt consumers, and restrict the growth of our nation's most dynamic medium.



## Working to Promote the Entertainment Industry

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District is home to Sony Studios, Capitol Records, Raleigh Film and Television Studios, and the American Film Institute. Approximately 30,000 people are employed in creative industries located in the 33<sup>rd</sup>.

The importance of the entertainment industry to the welfare of my congressional district is the reason why I started the Congressional Entertainment Industries Caucus. The bipartisan caucus serves as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of vital information about the entertainment industry. Periodic briefings – open to Members of Congress, their staff, and the public – are held on cutting edge issues, including intellectual property rights (IPR), piracy prevention and trade; runaway production; minority representation; the impact of new and emerging technologies; and arts promotion and education.

Currently, forty-eight members of Congress participate in the Congressional Entertainment Industries Caucus. The Caucus is non-partisan and does not endorse legislation.

Entertainment is America's number one export. In June, I testified before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission on China's failure to control counterfeiting and piracy of films, DVDs, and CDs. I also introduced legislation to prevent Russia from becoming a member of the World Trade Organization until it strengthens its enforcement of IPR and offered bill language to increase the State Department's funding for its intellectual property enforcement and education programs.

## HURRICANE KATRINA — LOCAL RESPONSE

It has been almost a year since one of the greatest natural disasters in American history hit the Gulf Coast. Los Angeles may be removed in distance from the Gulf Coast, but there are strong ties between the two regions.

Over the past year, more than 4,000 people displaced by Hurricane Katrina have sought refuge in and around the Los Angeles region. Many evacuees found housing and assistance in the 33rd Congressional District. Groups such as LALA (Louisiana to Los Angeles) and the Brotherhood Crusade aided the Katrina survivors.

At my urging, the University of Southern California, located in the 33rd, enrolled 109 students from Gulf Coast colleges and universities affected by Hurricane Katrina. All 97 undergraduates and 12 graduate students received credit at their home institutions, which include Tulane University, the University of New Orleans, and Xavier University. Members of the USC community also organized relief efforts for students and their families who survived the storm.

The images of Hurricane Katrina may have receded from our television screens and front pages of the newspapers, but the ongoing needs of the region remain enormous. Visit [www.house.gov/watson](http://www.house.gov/watson) for more information regarding the recovery efforts.

Congresswoman Watson meets with young residents from the 33rd Congressional District to discuss the importance of good health and physical fitness at an early age. The residents are participants in the federally-funded National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) that introduces youth, ages 10-16, to competitive sports programs designed to build athletic as well as life skills. NYSP participants are also exposed to a math/science curriculum and guest speakers who cover topics such as nutrition, career development, and disease prevention.

At the beginning of the program, each NYSP participant receives a comprehensive physical examination. The program, in its 38th year, is hosted on the campus of the University of Southern California and administered by USC's Dr. Justine Gilman.



## HEALTHY LIVING AT AN EARLY AGE

Most health experts are in agreement that type 2 adult-onset diabetes has grown at an alarming pace among the young. Minority children have registered the largest increases in obesity and are particularly vulnerable because of poor diets and limited access to nutrition education and health care.

We must take a comprehensive approach to fighting obesity. It will require more education about nutrition, including reducing the amount of advertising of unhealthy foods for children. Educators must also do their part. It is particularly heartening to see some schools limiting, or even banning, the sale of sodas and junk foods in vending machines.

Fighting childhood obesity will require adults and parents to act as role models for the youngsters in their life. This means taking time for regular physical exercise, eating healthy foods, and practicing portion control. Many doctors recommend limiting the screen time of children to no more than two hours a day.

This fall, I will be hosting a community forum with health experts to educate residents of the 33rd on the importance of healthy eating habits, especially during the holidays, and adopting healthy lifestyles year round. Please check the website for details.



Congresswoman Watson delivers remarks about her efforts as a member of the House International Relations Committee to enhance U.S.-Korea trade relations at the grand opening of the Korean International Trade Association's (KITA) Washington, D.C. office.

From left to right: Mr. Jae-Chul Kim, former Chairman and CEO of KITA; Honorable Colin Powell, former Secretary of State; Mr. Andy Moon, President, KITA Washington, D.C. Center; and Dr. C. Fred Bergsten, Director, Institute for International Economics.

Korea is California's fifth largest trading partner. More people of Korean descent live in Los Angeles than any other place in the world outside Korea. The 33rd Congressional District is home to Koreatown.

## ADDRESSING THE DISTURBING GROWTH IN YOUTH VIOLENCE

Los Angeles County is suffering from a disturbing growth in youth violence. The State Attorney General's office reports that homicide rates among California youth, which had steadily declined since the peak year of 1993, are once again on the rise. The rates are particularly high among African-Americans and Hispanics.

The upswing in youth violence comes at a time when funding levels for programs that have proven effective at the local level—Community Oriented Policing Programs, for example—are being cut. Youth anti-violence programs that promote partnerships among state, local and federal agencies, as well as community-based groups and businesses, are critical to alleviating this disturbing trend.

That's why I am working with community organizations such as CAVE UP (Community Anti-Violence Education United People) to address violence in our county jails and introducing legislation that will require those attending "transition" schools for problem students to perform a minimum of 100 hours of community service before graduation. Participating organizations and businesses will receive a tax credit. Additional tax relief will apply if a student is hired after high school graduation.

Many transition schools do not have extra-curricular activities, which are proven deterrents to youth crime. My legislation will provide students with an alternative and constructive outlet, as well as valuable job experience. It is an example of a collaborative partnership among schools, the local community and business groups that is essential to reducing rising levels of youth violence.



Congresswoman Watson meets with local high school student leaders to discuss youth violence.

*Save The Date!*

**Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**6:30 – 8:30 PM**

A Community Town Hall on

**"A New Direction for America"**

**Friendship Auditorium**

**3201 Riverside Dr., LA 90027**

check our website [www.house.gov/watson](http://www.house.gov/watson)

or call 323-965-1422 for info

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and keep current with events in Washington, D.C.  
and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District.



## CONGRESSIONAL ARTS COMPETITION WINNER

Congresswoman Watson congratulates Davion Jackson whose painting, entitled "Sir Edmund," is the winning entry in this year's 33<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District Arts Competition. Mr. Jackson attends Manual Arts High School.

The Congressional Arts Competition is sponsored by the U.S. House of Representatives. Art work from each participating congressional district is displayed in the Capitol for one year. This year sixty-five students from the 33<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District submitted entries to the contest.

