



Report to New York from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney

DECEMBER 05

www.house.gov/maloney

Dear New Yorker,

It's the end of the year, and a time for reflection.

While I'm proud to report many achievements on behalf of New York in Congress in this newsletter, it's important for New Yorkers to recognize both how off-kilter our domestic priorities have become and how over the course of the last five years our international standing has suffered.

Since most of my time in the U.S. House has been spent as a member of the minority, I'm used to working to defeat efforts to cut funding for the social safety net and human needs. But this era is the worst.

Things may be changing. American public opinion appears to be starting to catch up with the reality of the disconnect in Washington. Recent events have thrown the majority party for a loop, and that has heartened those of us who share progressive ideals.

Future generations—at home and abroad—demand that we change our priorities. That's the task ahead in the new year. I hope you will contact any of my offices with your concerns and ideas on how to meet that challenge.

Together, we can force a change in the new year.

Sincerely

Carolyn B. Maloney

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

How best to reach me:

Regular postal mail to my Washington office is subject to screening delays. If you'd like to reach me quickly, the best methods now are via the Internet at www.house.gov/maloney or by fax at 202/225-4709.

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Astoria, NY 11102
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■ Reps. Maloney and Vito Fossella meet with sick and injured 9/11 responders in Washington. They were on Capitol Hill fighting to salvage \$125 million from the injured workers fund that the administration planned to take away.

■ Victory for 9/11 responders

As you know, President Bush had proposed taking back \$125 million in 9/11 aid meant for sick 9/11 responders. I'm happy to report success in our efforts to stop it.

Working as a united New York Delegation, we were able to receive a commitment from the Speaker of the House that Congress will reject President Bush's proposal and the \$125 million will be restored to care for the men and women who rushed to Ground Zero, but are now sick. This would not have been possible without the constant advocacy of 9/11 rescue workers who came to Washington to inform lawmakers of what this funding meant to them. Without them, this federal aid would be gone. While the heroes of 9/11 should never have had to fight for this funding in the first place, restoring this funding is the right and just thing to do.

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■ Fighting for New York's fair share

In October I released a report revealing how the FIRE grant program, the only homeland security funding program targeted specifically for fire departments, is sending nearly 60% of its funding to Republican-controlled congressional districts, while fire departments in large cities are losing out. For example, the Fifth Congressional District of Kentucky received nearly \$4.5 million in FIRE grants last year, but New York City, where 3,000 people died on 9/11, got less than \$715,000.

The 9/11 Commission and anti-terrorism experts agree that our nation's largest cities, including New York City and Washington, D.C., are under the greatest threat. However, in 2004, Washington, D.C. received zero FIRE act funding. Additionally, of the 20 Congressional districts nationwide that were denied FIRE Grant funding in 2004, eight were in New York City. On a per-capita basis, the State of Montana receives \$7.84 per person in FIRE act funds, while New York City receives only 12 cents per person.

The huge disparity in FIRE grants stems from the program's arbitrary funding cap, which prevents any fire department from receiving more than \$750,000, even though large fire departments, like those in New York and Washington, D.C. have far greater needs than rural districts. Though the funding limit was increased in 2006, the cap still badly shortchanges cities under the greatest threat. The Secretary of the Dept. of Homeland Security, however, has the authority to waive the caps in cases of extraordinary need. To read this report, visit: www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20051023FireGrants.htm

■ Plan for Iraq still 'missing in action'

Unfortunately (and tragically) the Iraq War was sold to Congress and the American people under false pretenses. Despite attempts by the administration to cover for the mistakes made in planning the war and winning the peace, it's increasingly evident that there's no real exit strategy to bring the troops home.

Rep. John Murtha—a genuine war hero and strong military advocate—has proposed a framework that takes us in the right direction, which is why I am a cosponsor of his resolution. His plan includes bringing our troops home as soon as feasible and keeping a quick-reaction force in close proximity, while using diplomatic methods to build democracy.

I pressed the administration on many issues related to Iraq, including calling for Defense Secretary Rumsfeld to resign after the Abu Ghraib torture scandal; demanding investigations into no-bid reconstruction contracts; repeatedly urging the administration to demand more protections for women's rights in the Iraqi constitution; and pushing to guarantee that all of our soldiers are properly equipped. We must continue to press for answers, demand accountability, and support ways to get our soldiers home as soon as possible.

■ U.S. jobs at risk to outsourcing

As the senior House Democrat on the Joint Economic Committee (JEC), I'm constantly keeping tabs on the latest economic indicators and the direction of our economy. Recently, the JEC Democrats convened some of our nation's most astute and most accomplished minds to discuss the challenges for our economy in the wake of this year's devastating hurricanes.

Speakers included former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, former Deputy Treasury Secretary

Roger Altman, and former Council of Economic Advisers Chair Alan Blinder, among others. These people were part of the economic policy process in the 1990s, a period of the greatest economic expansion and poverty reduction since WWII.

Mr. Blinder, now a Princeton University professor, discussed a looming economic problem that must be addressed—outsourcing of American jobs. To American workers already concerned about outsourcing Mr. Blinder warned, "we have only seen the tip of a very big iceberg." He argued that historically, American workers have not faced competition from their overseas counterparts on a large scale, but that in the coming years, Americans may be facing job insecurity in record numbers due to "offshoring." The changing nature of jobs in the Information Age puts us increasingly at risk to overseas competitors.

In November, along with Rep. Jim Ramstad of Minnesota and a bipartisan coalition of almost 100 Members of Congress, I led an effort to head off one company's large-scale outsourcing plan. Northwest Airlines has proposed outsourcing flight attendant jobs. Replacing U.S. flight attendants with foreign nationals on a majority of international flights would mean the loss of 2,600 U.S.-based jobs with union-negotiated protections and benefits and could set a dangerous precedent if other airlines were to follow suit. We need to continue fight to keep jobs here at home.

■ No to Social Security privatization

The majority has apparently decided against pushing forward with their plan to "reform" Social Security. It was only a matter of time and common sense: the more the American people learned about the partial privatization proposal, the less they liked it.

Even the President has now admitted that his proposal for private accounts did absolutely nothing to improve the long term solvency of the Social Security Fund. More risk, less security.

Democrats are ready to engage in a meaningful Social Security debate to find ways to strengthen the program's funding. Sadly, bipartisan solutions have become an endangered species in the current Washington atmosphere.

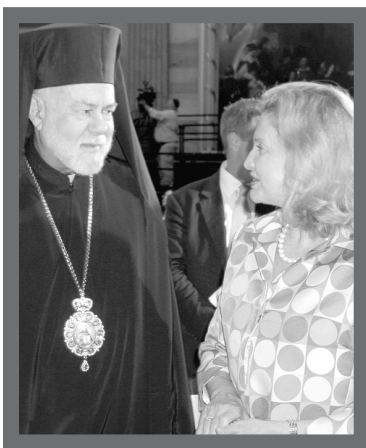
■ Preparing for a flu pandemic

We've all heard the alarming reports about a deadly form of avian flu spread by birds migrating throughout Asia and Europe. Public health officials worry that it could spread to humans, potentially infecting millions. Viruses from birds contributed to three flu pandemics in the last century (in 1918, 1957 and 1968).

In November, President Bush outlined a \$7.1 billion plan to assemble stockpiles of vaccines and other drugs to combat an outbreak of avian flu. Critics charge that the plan falls short, and warn that millions could die before a vaccine could be developed. Yearly, flu kills about 36,000 Americans; the current vaccine system only protects roughly 1/3 of those most at risk. We need to work to enhance our stockpiles of medication and train those responsible for fighting the pandemic.

■ Terror insurance for NY's economy

We're making progress in getting an extension of the federal Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA). Passed in the wake of 9/11, this law requires insurers to offer terrorism insurance and provides federal reinsurance for covered terrorist events. Its expiration would be a big hit to the economy and economic development not only in New York but across the nation.



■ Rep. Maloney meets with Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of America on July 26th at a ceremony held in the Capitol Rotunda commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Constantino Brumidi. As a NYC resident from 1868-1879, Brumidi painted 43 murals at St. Stephen's Church on E. 28th Street. Brumidi is most famous, however, for his artistic achievements in the U.S. Capitol. "The Apotheosis of George Washington," on the dome in the Rotunda, is one of the highlights of the Capitol building.

TRIA is an essential weapon in the war against terror and that is why I have been working so hard with my colleagues in New York and elsewhere to get it continued, over the resistance of the administration and some in Congress who are fighting the extension. Even more than causing tragic loss of life and property, terrorists want to destroy our freedom, security and stability. Insurance against terrorism can provide stability and security for our economy.

The extension of TRIA is critical to New York's and the nation's economy to ensure that development and construction projects, particularly in urban areas, are not interrupted. Without terrorism insurance, billions of dollars of commercial mortgages, which require such insurance, will be thrown into default.

■ Meeting the needs of veterans

By tightening eligibility, increasing fees and co-payments, and closing facilities, the administration is turning its back on our veterans. Earlier this year, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) underestimated the cost of health care for veterans so significantly that less than three months after saying there was enough money, the VA had to request an emergency appropriation of \$1.5 billion to cover operating expenses.

This generation of veterans is coming home with amputations and head traumas so serious they might not have survived in previous wars. Although these



■ Rep. Maloney and Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan urge fair homeland security aid for firefighters and push to re-open a partially closed fire station in Western Queens, with Gerald Walsh, President of the Dutch Kills Civic Association, firefighters, and other local residents.

veterans have many years ahead of them, they are likely to require serious medical assistance to help them lead productive lives. Despite the growing number of veterans who need services, the VA continues to proceed with a study that could lead to the closure of the Manhattan VA Hospital at 23rd Street, one of the nation's premier veterans hospitals and the only source in the Northeast for prosthetic limbs.

On September 19th, I testified before the Local Advisory Panel in support of options that would keep both facilities open and against any plan to close either hospital. In October 2005, along with ten colleagues, we sent a letter urging VA Secretary Nicholson to consider only the options that would ensure that the Manhattan and Brooklyn hospitals remain open. In the coming months, I will continue to stand with New York veterans to fight the dismantling of local veterans hospitals.

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■ Fact-based science and the 'morning after' pill

Remember the old adage, "Refusing to decide is to decide"? Well, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has repeatedly postponed approval of Plan B emergency contraceptive for over-the-counter status. In response, I introduced HR 4229, the "Plan B for Plan B Act." This bill requires FDA to simply make a decision—to do its job—on this drug. Failure to do so within 30 days of passage would result in automatic approval. The bill ensures that the agency's inaction will no longer prevent women from getting access to a drug that they have found to be safe and effective for over-the-counter use. Emergency contraception is currently available in 101 countries, 33 of which do not require a prescription. The U.S. should not be lagging behind. It's time to remove the politics from the science policy.

■ Supporting property rights in Cyprus

In June I introduced H. Res 322, a resolution in support of the European Court of Human Rights for its decisions in the Loizidou v. Turkey and Xenides-Arestis v. Turkey cases. Titina Loizidou was denied access to property in Northern Cyprus she had inherited from her family when Turkey illegally invaded Cyprus in 1974. In 1989, she filed an application against Turkey with the European Commission of Human Rights, and in 1996, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Turkey must pay Loizidou damages totaling the equivalent of \$900,000. In April the Court decided a similar case brought by Myra Xenides-Arestis against Turkey was admissible.

■ Protecting the privacy of library users

I've heard from many constituents who have serious and legitimate concerns about the PATRIOT Act and investigations of innocent Americans. As a member of the PATRIOT Act Reform Caucus, I've cosponsored legislation and supported efforts to protect the civil liberties of all Americans like H.R. 1157, the "Freedom to Read Protection Act," which will exempt libraries and bookstores from the laws that allow the FBI to conduct searches on personal records. This would reinstate legal standards for investigations which were in place before the passage of the PATRIOT Act.

■ Fighting to end sex trafficking

The exploitation of the world's young women, men, and children in sex trafficking is a tragic human rights offense. To help combat it, I've joined my colleague Rep. Deborah Pryce (OH) in introducing H.R. 2012, the "End Demand for Sex Trafficking Act." It would establish a new federal grant program to encourage the development and implementation of demand-side strategies for enforcement of laws against sex trafficking and require the Attorney General to undertake a statistical review and analysis of the incidence of unlawful commercial sex nationwide every 2 years. Although we continue to make important advances in the rights of women throughout the world, as long as there are women whose freedoms, livelihoods, bodies, and souls are held captive because of trafficking, our work will never be done.

■ Helping mothers worldwide

More than a million children worldwide lose their mothers every year due to complications during childbirth. It doesn't have to be this way. By providing pre-natal health care and safe, modern contraception, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) combats maternal mortality and stems the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Yet the administration has withheld the U.S. contribution to UNFPA funding since 2002. I've worked to restore U.S. funding both through my bill, H.R. 2811, the "Repairing Women's Lives Around the World Act," and various amendments to other measures over the past year. Funding UNFPA is compassionate toward women and children in developing countries around the world. With their needs in mind, we must keep up the fight.

■ Removing mercury from vaccines

It's well known that mercury is a neurotoxin that is harmful to the developing central nervous systems of fetuses and infants. It seems clear that we should not allow toxins in our children's vaccines if there's a toxin-free alternative—and there is. Vaccines without toxins can be made, and it's about time that we do. So that's why I've joined Rep. Dave Weldon in introducing H.R. 881, the "Mercury-Free Vaccines Act of 2005." Our bill will eliminate mercury from vaccines protecting infants and children from exposure to one of the most dangerous substances on earth.

1 Report to
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Bringing funds home to New York

ONE of the most important ways to expand jobs and invest in our communities is by improving our infrastructure. Major projects received significant funding in recent appropriations bills. I am proud of working in concert with the New York Congressional delegation to provide funding for a number of important projects, including:

Second Ave. Subway: \$25 million

For the first time since the 1970s, it looks as if construction on the Second Avenue Subway will finally start. The first new line since the 1930s, the Second Ave. Subway will provide relief to riders of the Lexington Avenue line—the most overcrowded subway in the nation—and carry 202,000 passengers a day.

In November, voters approved the Transportation Bond Act and Congress appropriated \$25 million—the 6th year in a row that the project has received a federal earmark. Those funds, combined with state construction money, give the project sufficient resources to move forward.

The first phase of the project will go from 105th to 63rd Street where it will join existing N/R tracks, giving East Siders a one-seat ride to Times Square, Wall Street and Brooklyn, at a cost of \$3.8 billion.

The Second Avenue Subway was one of only two projects—both of which are located in this district—that received a rating of “Highly Recommended” from the Federal Transit Administration. This rating makes it more likely that both projects could begin receiving significant federal funding.

Queens East River Seawall: \$80,000

A 200-foot portion of a seawall on the Queens side of the East River has completely failed, and experts are warning of further deterioration along the waterfront. While the City Parks Department rightly fenced off the area, the danger remains for people accessing the waterfront along the seawall, and the insult to the community of being barred from the waterfront continues to be a serious problem in need of immediate action. In addition, the seawall’s deterioration could lead to the flooding of mechanical devices that are critical to the safe operation of New York subway lines.

Quick progress on repairs is needed. At my urging, Congress appropriated \$80,000—in addition to \$375,000 previously secured—to complete a feasibility study and initiate a “Preconstruction, Engineering and Design Phase” for repairs. When the Army Corps of Engineers balked at making this project a priority, I convened a community meeting, secured recognition from the Corps that the concerns are urgent. The Army Corps will lead this phase of the project, with assistance from the MTA and the NYC Dept. of Parks.

East Side Access: \$340 Million

East Side Access is the other project highly recommended by the FTA. It would bring Long Island Railroad service into Grand Central Station, carrying an estimated 162,000 new passengers a day, giving the New York City and Queens economies a big shot in the arm.

On November 19th, Congress passed \$340 million in funding for the East Side Access project in the FY 2006 Transportation Appropriations bill. With more than \$2.4 billion in state and federal funds already committed to the project, and with funding from the Transportation Bond Act, East Side Access is moving forward with some real momentum.

With a new LIRR station to be built near Queens Blvd and Skillman Ave, 5000 Sunnyside commuters are expected to take advantage of a quick route into Manhattan.

Revitalization of Queens Plaza: \$800,000

Queens Plaza has long been known as a dangerous, forbidding roadway that is difficult for drivers and hazardous for pedestrians. The Department of City Planning proposes to transform the area by improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, while keeping auto traffic moving.

This year I secured \$800,000 for the project, which will be added to \$10.6 million in federal funds, a \$750,000 earmark in 2004 and a \$500,000 earmark in 2003. The second phase of the project, currently underway, will offer environmentally-friendly pedestrian and bike amenities, improved lighting and landscaping, street furniture, crosswalks and public art—all to help transform the Plaza into a welcoming gateway to Long Island City and the Borough of Queens, while reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality.

By investing in Queens Plaza, we can make it the foundation for economic growth in Western Queens and a place where the quality of life for Long Island City resident is improved enormously. New business initiatives are a great help to Long Island City, but they must be matched with neighborhood improvements for residents, including a cleaner environment and user-friendly transit systems.

Join me for Town Hall Meetings on transportation

In Queens:

Saturday
January 28, 2006
2:00 to 3:30 PM
HANAC Senior Residence
Ground Fl. Dining Room
32-06 21st Street,
(corner of Broadway)

In Manhattan:

Saturday
January 28, 2006
11 AM to 12:30 PM
Ruppert Community Room
222 East 93rd Street
(bet. 2nd & 3rd Aves.)

Sign up for Email updates

To facilitate communication, I send periodic email updates to constituents who are interested in receiving them. If you'd like to subscribe to the email updates, please complete this form and return it to my Washington office, or log on to www.house.gov/maloney to sign up. By signing up you are authorizing me to send regular email updates to the email account you provide.

Carolyn

Name: _____

Postal Address _____

ZIP _____

Email Address: _____

What issues are most important to you?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9/11 Recovery | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Deficit | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Rights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Due to space considerations, not all interest areas can be listed. Return to:
Rep. Carolyn Maloney 2331 Rayburn HOB Washington, D.C. 20515