



the arena

**OWENS OFFERS ALTERNATIVE TO DOWNTOWN ARENA**

Brooklyn deserves a professional team, however it should not be at the cost of resident's homes. Other areas in Brooklyn, such as the Brooklyn Navy Yard, should be analyzed as possible sites for our new team. Many important issues such as, quality of life, sustainable job development and affordable housing, should be addressed by the arena proposal. What should go into the mix when planning an ambitious development project if the goal is to best serve Brooklyn residents? Teams of community residents, urban planners, architects and sports stadium consultants are grappling with these issues. It is important that we exhaust all other options before we move towards eminent domain.



your rights

**CHANGES IN VOTER REGISTRATION FOR FIRST TIME VOTERS**

Don't let changes in voter registration requirements prevent you from voting. Beginning this year, the NYS Board of Election is asking people who are registering for the first time for identification. It is simple. If you register through the mail you will be asked to include on the application your NYS Driver's License # or the last four digits of your social security number. If you don't have either of them and are registering by mail, you can send in a copy of a valid photo ID, a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or some other government ID that shows your name and address.

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Official Business

**EX-FELONS USE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE**

In the past ex-felons had to produce a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities issued by the Department of Corrections to be able to register and re-gain their right to vote. On October 29, 2003, the NYS Board of Elections issued an advisory to all Board of Elections that an ex-felon does not have to provide a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities in order to re-register.

**YOU CAN REGISTER, RE-REGISTER AND VOTE IF:**

1. YOU HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY BUT HAVE BEEN PARDONED.
2. YOUR MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT HAS EXPIRED.
3. YOU HAVE BEEN DISCHARGED FROM PAROLE.
4. YOU HAVE BEEN CONVICTED BUT HAVE NOT BEEN SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT OR IF THE SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT HAS BEEN SUSPENDED.
5. YOU FINISHED YOUR MAXIMUM SENTENCE AND ARE CURRENTLY SERVING PROBATION.

For more information call: (212) VOTENYC  
or on the web at <http://vote.nyc.ny.us>

M.C.  
Presorted Standard  
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Representing the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District - New York  
**Congressman Major Owens**

Crown Heights • Brownsville • Flatbush • East Flatbush • Park Slope • Cobble Hill • Kensington • Windsor Terrace • Carroll Gardens • Midwood • Ditmas Park • Prospect Heights • Brooklyn Heights



Volume I

Dear Neighbor,

To relieve the Haitian population suffering from a terrorist takeover of their Democratically elected government, the U.S. is proposing forty to fifty million dollars in aid. I have recommended that Members of Congress advocate for no less than one billion dollars. In the past ten years assistance for all Caribbean nations has decreased. To relieve suffering caused by distressed economies I will be supporting a new Hemisphere Marshall Plan Act. We will not call for a matching of the 20 billion dollars in reconstruction aid to Iraq; however, in addition to the millions being spent in Columbia to contain the drug trade, a minimum of five billion dollars is needed to maintain stable governments able to resist the corrupting powers of international drug lords. We must cut off all possible avenues for more terrorism to flourish in this hemisphere.

Sincerely,

Major R. Owens  
Member of Congress

289 Utica Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11213  
1414 Cortelyou Road  
Brooklyn, NY 11226  
30 Third Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11217  
718-773-3100  
2309 Rayburn Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-6231

[www.house.gov/owens](http://www.house.gov/owens)

contact information

**FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

As a former librarian I know the important role libraries play in educating children. Brooklyn Public libraries provide a safe space for our children to learn the wonders of the world and to encourage them to stay in school. In the past three years I have secured \$800,000 in Federal funds for the Brooklyn Public Library's Programs. One program will help teens in 20 branches who are interested in law enforcement, social work and/or library science by providing internship opportunities and mentoring in public service agencies. Congratulations to the entire library community for this innovative program.



**PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS**

Because it hurts senior citizens in many ways I voted "NO" on the Prescription Drug Benefit legislation. Among its outrageous components are the outlawing of the purchase of cheaper medicines from Canada and the ban on any Federal negotiations to get lower prices. Only the Medicare Discount Cards highlighted above offer some temporary help to the most needy.



IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT THE NEW  
**MEDICARE CARDS**

Medicare is contracting with private companies to offer Medicare-approved drug discount cards. In addition if you have a 2004 income no more than \$12,569 for a single person, or no more than \$16,862 for a married couple, you might also qualify for a \$600 credit on the Medicare approved discount card you choose. For further information call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227 and ask about drug savings. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048. Or you can go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) on the web and select "Prescription Drug and Other Assistance Programs."

## CONSTITUENT SERVICES CORNER

Since 2000, constituent services have been expanded at my district office. For example, in April 2004 alone, my district office staff handled 858 constituent requests: 239 appointments, 63 walk-in/emergencies, 512 constituent calls, and 44 written inquires to various federal agencies. Below are some of many acknowledgements people have taken the time to express their gratitude:

"I would like to use this opportunity to say thanks to your staff assistant who listened to me with full attention, with authentic wish to help and who did her best to fulfill her promise. I am not her relative or acquaintance. I am a simple refugee who came to this country to make life better for me. I received attention, support and assistance from you and your staff. It means that any one who comes to your office asking for help, would get it regardless of their title, position or wealth."

--Tatiana G.

"I shall thank you so very much for your interest and assistance on my behalf. Because of your help, I've gotten a sworn in date so now I am a citizen. Thanks again for serving us, the people of the community."

--Andrew C.

"Thank you very much for taking interest in my citizenship case. I am glad people like you are running American government."

--Khan M.

## HATS OFF TO BROOKLYN MUSEUMS



The Brooklyn Museum recently completed a much needed facelift and I want to congratulate the Director and staff for a job well-done. The Brooklyn Museum is the second largest museum in New York City and houses in its permanent collection over one and a half million objects from Egyptian master pieces to contemporary art and represents almost every world culture.



As the first Jewish children's museum in the United States, I am pleased that the Jewish Children's Museum is in my district. I was able to secure \$135,000 to assist this magnificent institution. The Jewish Children's Museum presents Jewish history, values and traditions in a manner that inspires visitors with an increased interest and involvement in their heritage and Jewish identity. Non-Jewish children will gain a positive perspective and awareness of Jewish heritage for fostering tolerance and understanding.

## IMMIGRATION BILLS IN THE 108TH CONGRESS

H.R. 603

Sponsor: Rep Owens, Major R.

To provide for adjustment of immigration status for certain aliens granted temporary protected status in the United States because of conditions in Montserrat.

H.R. 604

Sponsor: Rep Owens, Major R.

**Worker Amnesty and Opportunity Act of 2001** - Amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for legal permanent resident status for certain undocumented or non immigrant aliens who are: (1) alien workers; (2) eligible for admission at a U.S. institution of higher education; or (3) at least 65 years old.

H.R. 605

Sponsor: Rep Owens, Major R.

**Alien Child Protection and Deferred Enforced Departure Family Unity Act of 2001** - Provides for the permanent resident status adjustment (and stay of removal if applicable) of an alien orphan who is physically present in the United States and under 12 years old. Provides for deferred enforced departure (and stay of removal if applicable) of an alien who is the natural and legal parent of a U.S.-born child under 18 years old.

H.R. 3361

Sponsor: Rep Lofgren, Zoe

To provide for the protection of unaccompanied alien children, and for other purposes.

*Cosponsored by Major R. Owens*

## My Upcoming Events

Monday June 7

P.S. 217

5:30pm-7:00pm

Coney Island and Newkirk Avenue Economic Development and Education Town Meeting

Monday June 21

St. Jerome's Catholic Church

465 East 29th Street @ Newkirk Avenue

6:00pm-8:00pm

Community Report on What's Going On in Washington, DC. regarding Immigration, Health, Senior Citizens, Housing and Education.

Saturday June 26

Gowanus Houses Community Room

10:00am-12:00pm

211 Hoyt Street, bet. Baltic and Bond St.

Community Report on Health, Housing and Senior Citizens.

## Congressman Major R. Owens Top Bills of the 108th Congress

### 1. School Construction & Modernization Act

(Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 599)- Provides vital funding for school construction and renovation for schools located in under-served communities. Charter Schools are also eligible for funding under this act.

### 2. Emergency Moratorium Testing Act of 2003

(Sponsor Rep. Owens) - Places a three year moratorium on federally driven high stakes tests.

### 3. Domestic Budget Protection Act of 2003

(Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 1804)- To raise revenue and reduce large and increasing Federal budget deficits due to the cost of the war in Iraq.

### 4. Emergency Targeted Revenue Sharing Act of 2003

(Sponsor Rep. Owens/H.R. 2335)- Provides general revenue sharing and assistance for States and their local governments.

## OWENS PROJECTS LISTED AS PRIORITIES IN TRANSPORTATION BILL

As Brooklyn grows, transportation becomes an issue. To help alleviate some of the problems, I have been able to secure \$11.7 million for the following neighborhood reconstruction projects to fix roads and improve safety. Through these projects we will see an influx of job opportunities for the district and Brooklyn as a whole.

### EAST FLATBUSH

\$4,000,000 for Empire Blvd.

\$1,000,000 for Kings County Hospital

\$1,000,000 for Downstate Medical Center

### CROWN HEIGHTS

\$1,400,000 for Brooklyn Children's Museum

### COBBLE HILL/CARROLL GARDENS

\$800,000 for Court & Smith Street Shopping District.

### GOWANUS

\$500,000 for the Gowanus Expressway.

### PROSPECT HEIGHTS

\$3,000,000 for Eastern Parkway

## SIX INITIATIVES FOR MILITARY FAMILIES AND VETERANS

Over the past year and a half there have been several initiatives put forth by the House of Representatives. For further clarification on these bills please go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/> on the web.

H.R. 1345 (co-sponsor) "Equity for Reservists Pay Act of 2003"-To provide compensation to members of the reserve components who suffer discrepancies between their military and nonmilitary compensation.

H.R. 2318 (co-sponsor) "Assured Funding for Veterans Health Care Act of 2003"- The bill would require the Secretary of the Treasury annually to provide funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system.

H.R. 2569 (co-sponsor as of 4/26) "Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003"- The bill would end a confiscatory tax on military retirees which requires them to pay for their service connected disability benefits.

H.R. 100, This bill would modernize the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act and would provide additional

protections from civil liability when service members are called to active duty.

H.R. 2297, as amended, Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 contains measures including: permanent authorization of the VA home loan program for members of the Guard and Reserve, home loan and education benefits; and increases the amount of educational assistance payable to the spouses or surviving spouses with dependent children of veterans who are either permanently and totally disabled or deceased.

H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2003, which would repeal the disabled veterans tax by allowing for concurrent receipt of disabled pay and retirement pay (co-sponsor as of 4/26).



The Crown Heights Jewish Community Council (CHJCC) is active in a variety of social programs. Above, Congressman Owens emerges from the office with leaders, from left, Congressional Staff Assistant Eli Slavin, Rabbi Nochum Gross, Executive Vice Chairman, CHJCC, Congressman Owens, Rabbi Chanina Sperlin, Chairman, CHJCC, Rabbi Daniel Botnik, Executive Director, CHJCC, and Rabbi Yanky Herzog, Secretary, CHJCC (not pictured), where a discussion of possible federal funding for certain much needed programs was held. A community mediation center is among the programs brought into Crown Heights by the Council.

