



*Eleventh District – Ohio*

*Congresswoman*  
**Stephanie Tubbs Jones**



*Dear Friends:*

*I am pleased to send you this update on my activities and initiatives during the second session of the 109th Congress. As your Representative, I am devoted to addressing the issues that you have indicated are important such as jobs, healthcare, education, and community reentry.*

*Please feel free to contact my office by phone, fax, mail or email with any of your concerns, or sign up on my website for email newsletters. I look forward to seeing you soon.*

*Sincerely,*

*Stephanie Tubbs Jones*  
*Member of Congress*

## **Ways and Means**

Congresswoman Tubbs Jones serves on the Committee on Ways and Means, considered one of the most powerful committees in Congress because of its jurisdiction over taxes, international trade, pensions, Social Security, health care, and other important economic issues. The Congresswoman has championed economic empowerment, access and delivery of quality health care, economic development, and retirement security.

In March 2006, Congresswoman Tubbs Jones and Congressman Joe Pitts (R-Pennsylvania) introduced H.R. 4751, the “Savings for Working Families Act of 2006.” The legislation provides a tax credit to financial institutions that match the savings of low-income families through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). Individual savings in IDAs are matched on a one-to-one basis, up to \$500 per person per year, although personal contributions into an IDA are not limited. IDA programs are run by community-based organizations in partnership with a qualified financial institution that holds the deposits. IDA funds can be used for college and post-secondary education, purchasing a home, or starting a small business. Those who save in IDAs also receive financial planning education.

Additionally, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones joined Ways and Means colleague Nancy L. Johnson (R-CT) in introducing the Flexible Retirement Savings Act of 2005. This legislation will address the critical issues of long-term care and retirement savings. Specifically, it creates a tax incentive for people to annuitize a portion of their savings as a way to protect against longevity or outliving their savings. In addition, it breaks down artificial walls that discourage people from coupling a life insurance policy or an annuity with a long-term care policy.

The Ways and Means Committee continues to address the issues of Social Security and Medicare Prescription Drugs. Rep. Tubbs Jones continues to oppose the Administration’s proposal to reform the Social Security entitlement program by replacing the systems of guaranteed benefits private accounts.

Though opposed to the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit, Rep. Tubbs Jones continues to provide necessary information to constituents so they can make the best decision about whether to join program and which plan may best meet their needs. Additionally, she continues to fight for an extension of the enrollment deadline which was May 15 of this year. For additional information regarding Medicare Part D please contact the District Office at (216) 522-4900 or the Washington, D.C. Office at (202) 225-7032.

# Your Vote is Your Voice...

## Forums on Election Reform Held in 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

In the aftermath of the last presidential election, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones has made it a top priority to ensure all Americans are guaranteed the right to vote. Legislation and forums have sought to cultivate solutions to the documented cases of voting irregularities that continue to hinder constituents.

The great scope of these various discrepancies, which included problems with equipment, registration and provisional ballot distribution led to Rep. Tubbs Jones's historic objection to the certification of the Electoral College vote on January 6, 2005, in which she was joined by Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA). Subsequent reports from the Election Assistance Commission, the General Accounting Office and the National Commission on the Voting Rights Act have only reinforced the great need for significant voting reform.

The Congresswoman subsequently introduced the Count Every Vote Act of 2005 along with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY). The bill sets concrete guidelines for registration, poll worker training, absentee and provisional ballots and machines, including require a voter-verified paper ballot receipt for all electronic votes. It also works to ensure accessibility for disabled voters and deter voter fraud and intimidation.

Recently, Rep. Tubbs Jones hosted five forums across the 11th Congressional District of Ohio to address these and other issues following the primary elections in Cuyahoga County. These forums allowed the voters of her district to speak of their experiences on and before the primary Election Day in Ohio. These forums were held in the cities of Beachwood, Bedford, Cleveland, East Cleveland, and Euclid. During these forums, the staff of Rep. Tubbs Jones office gathered hours of testimony from voters and poll workers which will be shared with the recently established Election Review Panel that will investigate the election on behalf of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.

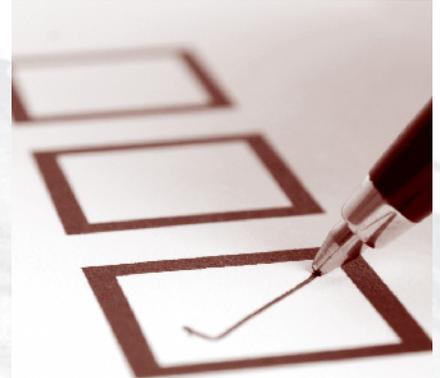


Rep. Tubbs Jones joins colleagues during a press conference in calling for Congress to reauthorize the voting rights act.

The independent study group formed by the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections will be focusing on the administrative, training, procedural, and technical aspects of the election. Congresswoman Tubbs Jones said of the events, "I believe that a dialogue between the community and those investigating the election is essential to the success of the investigation and the rectification of the problems that troubled the county on May 2nd."

General findings from the forums included:

- When the machines worked well, there were very few problems with voting or the poll workers;
- People enjoyed the ease with which they could cast a vote, and;
- When problems occurred, they were most often attributed to poor poll worker training and insufficient assistance from the Board of Elections.



## Reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act

Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones joined a number of her colleagues in Congress in calling for passage of the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006 (H.R. 9). She along with members of the Congressional Black Caucus and both the House and Senate majority and minority offices worked extremely hard over a number of months to reach a bipartisan and bicameral agreement on this legislation. The Voting Rights Act had strong support from both Democrats and Republicans alike and passed the House on July 13th, 2006.

## National Security

### A New Direction for America

Earlier this year, Congresswoman Tubbs Jones joined Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and a host of her House and Senate Democratic colleagues in support of “Real Security: The Legislative Agenda to Secure America and Restore Our Leadership in the World.” The Real Security Agenda is part of the Democratic “New Direction for America,” a larger comprehensive legislative agenda to work toward the common good of all Americans.

The Real Security Agenda would:

- Ensure unparalleled military strength and honor our troops;
- Stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction;
- Protect America from terrorism, and respond effectively to natural disasters;
- Make 2006 a year of significant transition in Iraq with the responsible redeployment of U.S. forces; and
- Free America from our dangerous dependence on foreign oil.

“The United States must be prepared for both present and future threats,” stated Rep. Tubbs Jones. “Through this plan we will strengthen local communities’ preparedness by fully implementing the 9/11 Commission’s recommendations and ensuring Ohio firefighters, emergency medical workers, police and other front-line responders are fully trained, staffed and equipped. Additionally, we will invest in developing and producing alternative fuels from our country’s heartland, and promote hybrid and flex-fuel vehicle technology to achieve energy independence by 2020.”

Additionally, Rep. Tubbs Jones hosted a town hall meeting on port security issues at the new Idea Center at Playhouse Square in Cleveland where members of the community were able to come and ask questions of Port Authority, City and County officials regarding port security.

## The 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Military / Veterans Advisory Committee

Earlier this year Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones formed the 11th Congressional District Military/Veterans Advisory Committee. This organization seeks to provide the Congressional office with suggestions and input on how to better serve our military community throughout the district. The committee includes veterans from every faction of the armed services and from very diverse backgrounds.

Earlier this year Rep. Tubbs Jones in conjunction with the Louis Stoke Veterans Affairs Medical Center hosted a Veterans Information Fair. This fair is designed to provide information to veterans on how to successfully obtain their health benefits to cover health care costs. During this event Congresswoman Tubbs Jones was able to visit East Cleveland resident and Shaw High School graduate Sgt. Shurvon Phillips where she presented him with a Congressional Proclamation. Sgt. Phillips recently returned to Cleveland after suffering serious injuries in Iraq. He received a Purple Heart for his service.

Currently, the Advisory Committee is working on gathering information for the Veteran’s History Project (<http://www.loc.gov/vets>). Congress created the Veteran’s History Project (VHP) in 2000 as part of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The mission of the Veteran’s History Project is to collect and archive the personal recollections of U.S. wartime veterans to honor their service and share their stories with current and future generations. The Project also collects stories from homefront civilians who worked in support of our Armed Forces.

Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones is in the process of setting up interviews with Veterans in the 11th Congressional District of Ohio. If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact the District Office at (216) 522-4900.



Rep. Tubbs Jones greets Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert during a joint meeting of Congress. During his speech, Olmert vowed to fight terrorism stating “We will not surrender to terror.”  
(Photo Courtesy of Gerald Herbert, AP)



Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones meets with members of the 11th Congressional District Military/Veterans Advisory Committee to discuss what Congress should do to better serve the military community of the 11th Congressional District.

## Empowering the Community through Homeownership

Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones has been at the forefront of issues regarding homeownership. As former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Housing Task Force, Rep. Tubbs Jones has hosted the With Ownership Wealth (WOW) Conference in Cleveland.

During the last three Congresses, she introduced Predatory Lending Practice Reduction Act and the Community Economic Development Expertise Enhancement Act (CEDA) of 2005 also known as the “SEED” Act.

The Predatory Lending Practice Reduction Act calls for federal certification of mortgage brokers and agents and stiffer penalties for violation of federal law. Additionally, it will authorize funding for Community Development Corporations to provide training and education. Additionally, she recently sent a letter to the Committee on Financial Services requesting a field hearing to address the current foreclosure crisis in Ohio. The SEED Act seeks to provide community development corporations (CDCs) with technical assistance, core operating support, and guidance on ways to improve their operations.

She recently expressed her support of the recent expansion to Cuyahoga County of the “Don’t Borrow Trouble” campaign to combat predatory lending, and the addition of a new foreclosure prevention education component. Cuyahoga County had an estimated 10,000 foreclosures in 2005, four times more than in 1998, and among the highest in the nation. This program, sponsored by the County and Freddie Mac, provides counseling help available to the thousands of homeowners who need advice about their home loans, are in danger of defaulting on their payments or are facing foreclosure.

One of the first steps toward creating wealth is homeownership. The equity from owning a home is often the only means to secure funding for a new business, college tuition, or retirement.



## Wal-Mart-Bank... What's Next?

Earlier this year, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones testified before the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) urging them to reject the Industrial Bank Charter Application of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Rep. Tubbs Jones was joined in this effort by 39 of her colleagues in Congress.

“I oppose Wal-Mart’s application for an ILC Charter because of their demonstrated predatory business model,” state Rep. Tubbs Jones. “If Wal-Mart expands its operations into banking, there is nothing to stop them from expanding their operations into the retail banking industry. This not only threatens community banks and credit unions but national banking institutions as well.

“There is also the issue of the potential failure of a bank of this nature. What if Enron or WorldCom owned banks? The failure of these companies would have not only been detrimental to the many employees who lost their jobs and retirement plans but it also would have been a tremendous blow to local and national financial systems.

“Community banks and credit unions have a vested interest in the communities in which they serve. They fund and support local businesses and they are community partners. Additionally, community bankers live in these communities, and their children attend school in these communities. If Wal-Mart bank decided to abandon a town, the repercussions would be devastating to the survival of a city, even a region. Therefore it is important that we continue to have a diversified financial service industry that remains strong through fair and healthy competition.”

“Additionally, Wal-Mart is a drain on the American taxpayer. According to PolicyMatters Ohio, ‘the annual public (state and federal) bill for Medicaid, food stamps and cash assistance received by Wal-Mart employees and dependents is more than \$36 million, of which about \$10.7 million is paid by the state of Ohio.’

“It is important that we continue to have a diversified financial service industry that remains strong through fair and healthy competition. I continue to encourage the FDIC to oppose this application. We cannot allow Wal-Mart’s demonstrated predatory business model to infiltrate the banking industry.”

## Community Reentry

For 25 years Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones has been deeply involved in prisoner reentry issues. While Cuyahoga County Prosecutor, she helped establish the 'Pretrial Diversion Program,' as well as the 'Municipal Drug Court.' Both programs still exist and continue to help ex-offenders move on with their lives and become productive citizens of society.

Prisoner reentry is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. The facts are clear -- meaningful reentry programs significantly diminish the chance that ex-offenders will return to prison. These programs save taxpayer dollars and increase public safety. Therefore, investing in enhancing reentry services in order to end the cycle of recidivism is critical. This is the purpose of both The Second Chance Act and The Fugitive Safe Surrender Program.

The State of Ohio has one of the largest populations of ex-offenders reentering the community. In 2001, about 24,000 ex-offenders returned to their respective communities in Ohio. Of those ex-offenders, an estimated 6,000 returned to Cuyahoga County, about 5,000 to the City of Cleveland. Statewide, about 40 percent of ex-offenders returned to prison in 2001. In Cuyahoga County, about 41 percent returned to prison. Such high recidivism rates translate into thousands of new crimes each year and wasted taxpayer dollars, which can be averted through improved prisoner reentry efforts.

The "Second Chance Act of 2005," H.R. 1704 allocates \$110 million towards a variety of re-entry programs. One of the main components of the bill is the funding of demonstration projects that would provide ex-offenders with a coordinated continuum of housing, education, health, employment, and mentoring services. This broad array of services would provide stability and make the transition for ex-offenders easier, in turn reducing recidivism.

Additionally, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones introduced legislation which formally authorizes, for the next three fiscal years, a federal appropriation to fund the Fugitive Safe Surrender Program within the Justice Department.

Peter J. Elliott, United States Marshall for the Northern District of Ohio, in cooperation with Dr. C.J. Matthews, Senior Pastor of Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, initiated the idea for the Fugitive Safe Surrender Program to structure a faith based project that encouraged felony fugitives to voluntarily surrender, without offering amnesty. The program proved to be so effective, that the Department of Justice has scheduled eight more sites across the nation in conjunction with faith based organizations to affect safe havens for fugitive surrender.

This legislation is another critical step in breaking the cycle of criminality in this country.

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## Understanding the Appropriations & Grant Processes

Every year, by way of the ten annual House Appropriations Committee spending bills, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones' office requests federal earmarks for programs and projects in the District which meet yearly criteria set by the office. Our office also assists organizations within the district with securing funding through grants.

A federal earmark is a statutory directive by Congress to a federal agency to permit an entity to apply for agency funds outside of the competitive process while grants are competitive applications for funds based on the nature of the request, the priorities of the agency, the funds available, the relevance of the requests and its priority compared to other national programs of similar size, mission and need.

In years past, the office has been able to secure over \$90 million in earmarks for projects in the 11th Congressional District, including over \$25 million dollars for the Euclid Corridor Project; over \$650,000 for Metro Health Hospital; over \$100,000 for the Karamu House After School Arts Program for At Risk Youth; millions of dollars for NASA Glenn research projects; and, a myriad of economic development, transportation and job creation projects. Additionally, Rep. Tubbs Jones helped secure over \$11 million in grants for the 11th Congressional District including \$2.5 million for local fire departments.

Although the process for securing a government grant and an appropriations earmark are decidedly different, both are pathways to federal funding for legitimate and successful existing programs. Those interested in submitting earmark requests to the office for Fiscal Year 2008 should contact the District office at (216) 522-4900 in December for further information.



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## Internship and Military Academy Opportunities

An internship in Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones' District and Washington, D.C. offices offers high school students, college students or graduates the opportunity to experience, first hand, the various challenging functions of the U.S. House of Representatives. An internship also allows students to develop skills useful for academic leadership and career enhancement. Our 2005 interns are doing great things in 2006: Lauren Weaver-CBC Intern in Washington, D.C.; Aaron Wasserman-Summer District Staff Member; Joe Wieder-Washington, D.C. Intern; Brian Wood-first freshman ever elected treasurer of Miami of Ohio's Associated Student Government; Jay Finch-Villanova University student admitted to the Univ. of Cambridge, England, as a visiting scholar, fall 2006; Daniel Blakemore-intern for Senator Hilary Clinton's New York Office.

Over the past year, several of our DC interns have found themselves re-established in Congressional offices as full-time staffers. Former 2004 interns Colleen Gaydos, Andrew Dawson and Jamila Porter have sailed to new heights securing employment in the offices of Senator Mike DeWine, the Ways and Means Committee Minority Staff and Senator Barack Obama respectively.

In addition to internships, Congresswoman Tubbs Jones is able to nominate up to 10 area students to military service academies. All candidates applying for a nomination must be citizens of the U.S. and legal residents of the 11th Congressional District in Ohio. They must be at least 17 years of age and not past their 22nd birthday on July 1 of the year of admission to the academy.

If you are interested in future opportunities for internships or Military Academy nominations, please contact the District Office at (216) 522-4900 or the Washington, D.C. Office at (202) 225-7032.



Rep. Tubbs Jones discusses her duties as a Member of Congress with Cleveland Public School Students