

**REP.
RUSH
HOLT**

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

www.holt.house.gov

Since 1994, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has protected women from violence, abuse, sexual assault, and sexual predators. VAWA funds community programs to aid law enforcement officers and prosecutors, reduce domestic violence and child abuse, develop training programs for victim advocates and counselors, and train probation officers who work with released sex offenders. VAWA also has led to the creation of battered women's shelters, including five in our area (please visit www.njcbw.org for more information).

I strongly supported the 2006 VAWA reauthorization, which extended and improved existing

programs, including better economic security for victims of violence and enhanced protection of victims' personal information.

This year, Congress appropriated, with my support, \$400 million for VAWA programs, \$17.4 million more than the previous fiscal year and \$30 million more than the President's budget. This funding will continue efforts to end domestic and sexual violence and help support critical new programs preventing violence and the sexual abuse of children, young adults, and Native women. ▸

**THE NEW JERSEY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE IS 1-800-572-SAFE.
Nobody should ever hesitate to make a call if they are at risk.**

REPRESENTATIVE RUSH HOLT

*As your Representative,
I am here to help.
Contact me anytime.*

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To learn more or to send me an e-mail, go to: www.holt.house.gov

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PRSRT-STD



REPRESENTATIVE RUSH HOLT

Report To New Jersey Women

JANUARY 2008

Dear Friend,

One of the highlights of my job as your Representative is meeting with constituents and learning what is on their minds. Women in Central New Jersey face a range of challenges, and I am working to ensure that our government is doing its job to address the problems they raise.

I am writing to update you on some of the issues on which I am working for you. I am fighting to strengthen education, to improve the quality of and access to health care, and secure our families' freedoms and opportunities.

I also continue to fight for issues that uniquely affect women. For example, I helped lead the effort to ensure equal pay for equal work by cosponsoring the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2007, which rectified an unfair Supreme Court decision concerning sex discrimination in the workplace. Additionally, as a cosponsor of the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act, I am working to heighten the federal government's investment in breast cancer research.

This newsletter is part of the ongoing dialogue that is at the heart of our representative democracy. I want to hear from you. If you are unable to attend one of my upcoming town hall meetings and want to let me know what you want your government to do or need help resolving a bureaucratic problem, please contact me by phone (toll-free at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT) or e-mail (www.holt.house.gov).

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Rush Holt
Member of Congress

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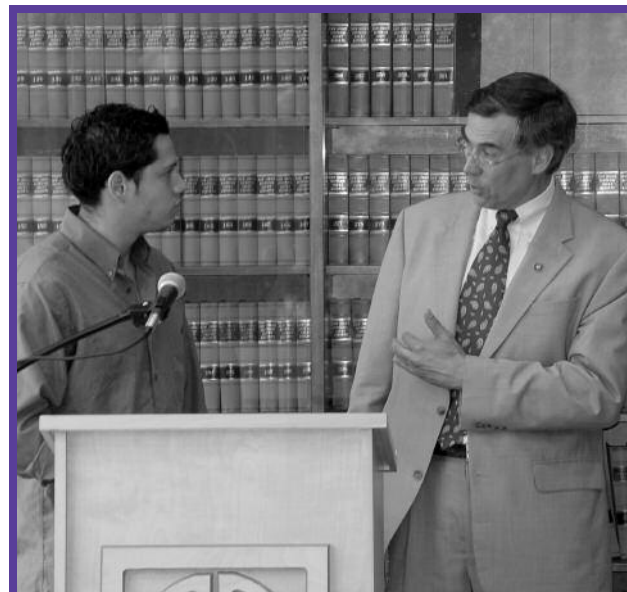
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Please visit my website at www.holt.house.gov to learn more about what I am working on for you and to sign up for my weekly e-mail newsletter, the [eGenda](#).

As a former college teacher, I believe higher education is more important than ever to America's economic prosperity, security, and health. This year, Congress passed – and the President signed – the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007, which provides the single largest investment in higher education since the GI bill. This new investment comes at no new cost to taxpayers by cutting excess subsidies paid the student loan industry. Over 61,000 students in New Jersey take out need-based loans for four-year schools each year, incurring an average of over \$14,000 in debt. Other aspiring students are holding off on going to college – or skipping it altogether – because they don't believe they can afford it.

The bill we passed will cut interest rates in half on subsidized student loans over the next five years, saving the typical student borrower \$4,400 over the life of a loan; will increase Pell Grant scholarship amounts by \$1,090 over five years; and will provide tuition assistance for students or loan forgiveness for graduates who commit to public service, such as public school teachers or law enforcement.

The legislation also contains my initiatives to improve foreign language and math and



Rep. Rush Holt, joined by Julian Bonilla, a student at Middlesex County College, discusses his inclusion of year-round Pell Grants in the College Cost Reduction Act. Students like Bonilla will benefit from the provision, as Congress passed the bill and President Bush signed it into law in 2007.

science education and will make college more affordable for part-time students. ▶

911 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The first bill introduced – and passed – in the 110th Congress in January was legislation to implement all the recommendations of the independent 9/11 Commission.

This was a necessary and overdue step to make America safer and more secure.

H.R. 1 increases risk-based homeland security funding, strengthens information sharing and emergency communications for first responders, requires 100 percent screening of air and shipping cargo inspection, and engages other countries in reducing extremism.

The bill will also help improve the intelligence we need to prevent wars, to intercept terrorists, and to protect Americans around the world.

As a nation, we have made great strides in achieving equality and fairness in the workplace. Unfortunately, a U.S. Supreme Court decision issued earlier this year struck at the principle of equal pay for equal work and weakened protections that employees have enjoyed for over 40 years since passage of the Civil Rights Act.

In *Ledbetter v. Goodyear*, a majority of the Court ruled against Lilly Ledbetter, a 20-year veteran employee, who had filed suit when she discovered that sex-based pay discrimination had resulted in her earning 20 percent less than the lowest paid man in the same position. She did not learn for

years that she was paid less and filed a complaint when she learned. The Court ruled that the 180-day statute of limitations on her claim meant that she had no claim because she had not filed years before. This was a patently unfair decision.

In order to address this decision, I cosponsored the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which would clarify that the statute of limitations on sex discrimination cases would apply from the date of an employee's most recent paycheck. This bill passed the House this summer and is pending Senate action. I am hopeful it will be enacted into law. Workers need protections and assurances that they will be treated fairly. ▶

Consumer Product Safety

Over the last few months, we have all heard troubling revelations about the prevalence of lead tainted products, including toys, from China. I am working in Congress to provide greater consumer protections for families. Recently, I cosponsored the Safety Assurances for Every (SAFE) Consumer Product Act, which would ban lead in children's products and require independent third-party testing on children's products before the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) certifies that they are safe. The bill provides more funding and strengthens the authority of the Commission to order recalls of

hazardous toys. I have also called for the resignation of CPSC Chairwoman Nord because she is not doing enough to protect our nation's children. Chairwoman Nord has opposed efforts in Congress to give her agency additional authority and resources to better inspect and test consumer products.

I encourage you to visit www.holt.house.gov/toysafety.shtml to learn more about these efforts as well as for helpful tips, online resources, and information about the latest products recalled. ▶



Rep. Rush Holt discusses science education with students at Biotechnology High School in Monmouth County.