



Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, Michigan's 13th District

Hill News

News From The Office of Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick

This E-Newsletter is a weekly summary of the events taking place in the United States' Congress that effect the State of Michigan and primarily Michigan's 13th Congressional District.

This Week In Congress:

COUNTY HOUSING LAW

I am outraged that Wayne County has elected to take the homes of many of my constituents for delinquent taxes without allowing them an opportunity to make payment arrangements. In 2003 the Wayne County Treasurer sold 2900 homes from under property owners, 2700 of them in the city of Detroit. On February 25th, the Wayne County Treasurer entered judgment with the Circuit Court to foreclose and sell approximately 18,000 properties in the county, 11,000 in Detroit, if the 2001 delinquent taxes are not paid by March 31, 2004. This has been made legal under PA 123 of 1999 under the General Property Tax Act. In both Oakland and Macomb Counties, before there is an attempt to take an owner's property an attempt is made to set up a pay schedule that will satisfy the delinquent tax bill. This is not happening in Wayne County. I am working closely with State Representative Marsha Cheeks and Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick to amend the current legislation.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

New unemployment figures were released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics this morning. Despite predictions of substantial job growth by the White House, there were only 21,000 jobs created in the month of February and none of them were in the private sector. There were 3,000 more manufacturing jobs lost leaving the national unemployment rate at 5.6%. While Hispanic unemployment rose to 7.4%, African-American unemployment fell slightly to 9.8%.

MEDICARE LAW

In the coming months I will be taking extra steps in making sure my Senior Constituents are informed about the changes in Medicare. In December, President Bush signed into law sweeping changes in the Medicare program. In the new law, the Department of Health and Human Services is prohibited from negotiating lower drug prices, seniors will not be allowed to purchase less expensive drugs from Canada unless HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson gives his approval. Seniors will be able to get a discount card this spring for the purchase of their prescriptions but they will be locked into one discount card for a year while drugs covered by the card and the amount of the discount may change every week. My staff and I will keep you abreast of any seminars or events we may organize.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Last month, Federal Reserve Chairman testified before the House Budget Committee and urged Members to deal with the escalating budget deficit by cutting the benefits to future retirees. This type of action is typical of those who favor the privatization of Social Security. They are hoping to convince you that Social Security cannot be sustained in its current form. This is NOT true. Social Security's financial challenges are manageable and do not warrant a radical restructuring of this country's most successful program. Congress must decide how to balance the income and expenses of Social Security without making the financial deficit worse and without destroying the program's characteristics.

You have received this email because you have subscribed to Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick's e-newsletter updates authorizing Congresswoman Kilpatrick to send to your inbox periodic e-mail updates from my office. If you do not want to receive this email or you have received this email in error, please accept our apologies and reply to this email with the word REMOVE in the subject line and you will not be contacted again.