

CONGRESSMAN
**FRANK
PALLONE**



CENTRAL NEW JERSEY REPORT

Pallone Fights Cuts in Superfund Program Making Polluters Pay

The federal Superfund program that manages the cleanup of some of New Jersey's most hazardous toxic waste sites has made it possible for many people in our community to enjoy a cleaner and healthier environment.

But recent actions by the Bush Administration jeopardize the future of this critical program and the cleanup of several Superfund sites in our community.

Polluters Aren't Paying

Traditionally, the Superfund program was funded through a tax on oil and chemical companies that ensured polluters would pay for cleanup. But the polluter tax expired in 1995 and since then Congressional Republicans and President Bush have refused to reauthorize the program. With no new funds coming into the pro-

gram from the oil and gas companies, all the money in the fund will dry up at the end of this year, leaving taxpayers to bear all cleanup costs.

CIC Cleanup Halted

As a result, cleanup at several New Jersey Superfund sites have slowed or, even worse, stopped because of a lack of funding. At the Chemical Insecticide Corp. (CIC) site in Edison, cleanup has slowed despite a commitment from the EPA that the site would receive funding through 2005. Cleanup efforts have been scaled back and the EPA has suspended cleanup of the most heavily contaminated areas. While 50 percent of the contaminated soil at the site has been removed, chemical drums, arsenic and PCB-contaminated soil remain.

I have called on the EPA Administrator to immediately restore funding so cleanup can be completed.

Pallone Bill Makes Polluters Pay

Families living near CIC and other Superfund sites should no longer be forced to endure the adverse health affects created by pollution at these sites, simply because the White House refuses to address the problem.

That's why I introduced legislation to reinstate the Superfund tax to make sure that polluters, not taxpayers, pay for the cleanup of contaminated sites. The federal government has a responsibility to ensure that polluters are held accountable for the messes they create.

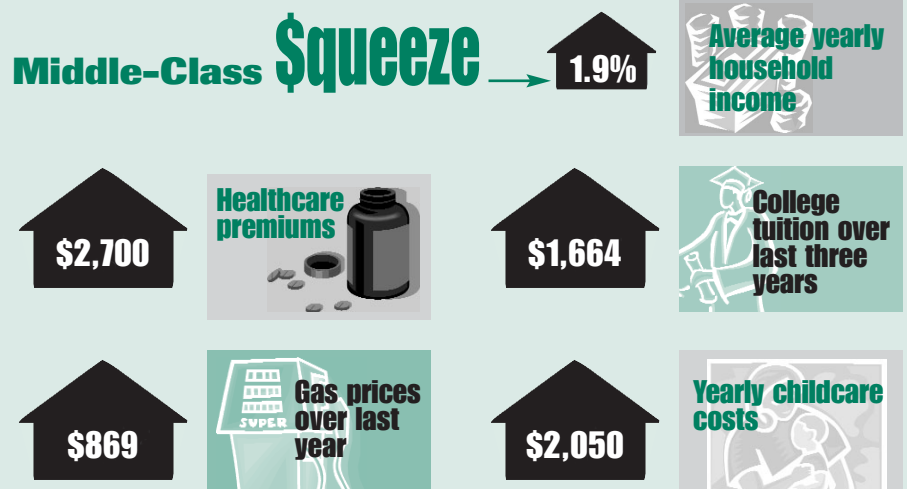
Middle-Class Families Feeling the "Squeeze"

Middle-class Americans notice their paycheck doesn't stretch as far as it used to. While the White House insists the economy is improving, many Americans are wondering what happened to the higher wages normally associated with a recovery. Today, the jobs being created here in New Jersey pay, on average, \$21,551 less than the jobs they replace.

Over the past three years, Americans have only seen their wages increase an average of 1.9 percent. That's less than a \$1,000 increase for an American making \$50,000 a year. While wages have stalled here in New Jersey, healthcare, college tuition, childcare and gasoline costs have increased on average \$6,283.

See chart →

I'm fighting for four economic provisions that would help workers by: eliminating tax incentives that ship jobs overseas, enacting a highway bill that creates 1.8 million high-paying jobs, providing a healthcare tax credit to small businesses so they can provide health insurance to their employees, and reducing healthcare costs.



Pallone Holds Public Meeting on Mercury in Trenton

More than a third of the mercury deposited on New Jersey's land and waters comes from coal-fired power plants and incinerators downwind of our state. The Administration recently proposed a new environmental rule that would weaken mercury regulations for these plants and delay clean air standards mandated by current law.

In April, I held a public meeting in Trenton to discuss the public health, environmental and economic impact the new mercury rule would have on New Jersey.

During the meeting, public health advocates gave public statements on the serious health risk mercury poses to children, pregnant women and women of childbearing age. Environmental and fisheries experts discussed how mercury pollution in New Jersey's waters has resulted in statewide fish consumption advisories.

I then submitted all the public comments to the EPA in Washington. Thanks to the sharp criticism of concerned residents, the Administration announced that it would delay a decision until December.



Pallone, left, hears from state officials, public health specialists and environmental experts at a public meeting in Trenton on mercury pollution.

Pallone Secures Federal Funds for Middlesex County

I have secured \$175,000 in additional federal funds for the expansion of the Robert Wood Johnson Children's Hospital in New Brunswick that will allow the facility to expand and address the state's growing child and prenatal health-care needs.

The House approved \$2 million in federal funds to construct a parking garage that will serve the hospital's cancer center and the UMDNJ-RWJ Medical School. The garage will ease congestion and make it easier for people to visit New Brunswick and access the hospital and medical school.

Over the last several years, I have secured \$6 million in funds for the South Amboy Intermodal Transportation Station. Now the House has approved an additional \$8 million to complete the second of two project phases that calls for the construction of an elevated platform, the addition of handicapped accessibility, and overall safety upgrades.

Pallone Forms Higher Education Advisory Committee, Includes Rutgers & Middlesex Community College

Recently, I formed a Higher Education Advisory Committee consisting of administrators, faculty and student body representatives from local colleges and universities, including Rutgers University and Middlesex Community College. The Committee will meet with me to discuss issues of concern to the higher education community. At our first meeting, we discussed the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which will determine funding levels for Pell Grants, existing student loan programs, and institutional aid programs.

Rep. Pallone's District Offices – Reaching Out to You

If you have a problem of a federal nature or want to obtain information on legislative issues, contact these offices, open weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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New Brunswick 08901
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