



Congressman  
**Paul E. Kanjorski**



**Report to the 11th District  
Winter 2007**

Dear Friends:

For the first time in twelve years, Democrats will hold a majority of seats in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate. It is clear to me that a majority of Americans expect changes in the way the federal government operates. Our Speaker-designate, Nancy Pelosi, has pledged to restore civility and fairness in the conduct of our business. Such a change is necessary to solve the most pressing problems our country faces, most especially the war in Iraq.

The swift confirmation of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates is an encouraging sign that both the President and the Congress are firmly committed to working together to find a realistic and bipartisan resolution to the war in Iraq. The bipartisan Iraq Study Group, co-chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton, has called for a withdrawal of most American combat troops by early 2008 and an expansion of diplomatic outreach to other nations in the Middle East.

The Congress and the President also need to work together to reduce the federal deficit and restore fiscal discipline to our budgeting process. As Baby Boomers retire and collect the Social Security and Medicare benefits promised to them, it is imperative that we ensure that an enormous debt is not left for their children and grandchildren.

As the second most senior member of the Financial Services Committee, I look forward to crafting legislation that keeps America's economy competitive. We will also be enacting bills to safeguard investors and protect the American dream of homeownership. My leadership on this important committee also gives me an excellent opportunity to attract to Northeastern Pennsylvania financial services firms that need to establish back-up offices outside New York City, an effort dubbed "Wall Street West."

I am deeply honored by the trust you have given me as your representative in Congress. My ability to serve you depends on my understanding your views on the issues before Congress, so I encourage you to take the time to contact me by phone, mail, e-mail, or at [www.kanjorski.house.gov](http://www.kanjorski.house.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul E. Kanjorski".

Paul E. Kanjorski  
Member of Congress

**Congressman Kanjorski's Priorities for the Middle Class**

**Raise the Minimum Wage**

Congressman Kanjorski supports raising the minimum wage incrementally from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour. Raising the minimum wage would benefit seven million Americans and allow them to better provide for their families.

**Provide Affordable Health Care**

Congressman Kanjorski is working in Washington to ensure that all Americans have access to reasonably priced, quality health care. Ideally, all Americans should have health care coverage on which they could rely through a universal health care system.

**Improve Medicare**

Congress has the opportunity to improve the Medicare prescription drug program by authorizing Medicare officials to negotiate with drug companies to purchase prescription drugs in bulk and at a reduced rate. We should also work to eliminate gaps in the prescription drug benefit for seniors.

**Ensure Retirement Security**

Congress must work to ensure retirement security by protecting and strengthening Social Security and preventing its privatization. We must also enact real pension reform that addresses current funding shortfalls.

# Signs of Progress A

**Wilkes-Barre Revitalization:** Public officials and community leaders recently broke ground on the \$22 million Riverfront Commons, which will include two portal entries providing access to amenities at the Susquehanna River, including a fishing and boating pier, a plaza, a performance amphitheater, and walking trails. Congressman Kanjorski has obtained funding for several development projects in Wilkes-Barre, including the new streetlight initiative, the \$19 million Intermodal Center, and the revitalization of the Hotel Sterling. Signs of progress are evident throughout the downtown under Wilkes-Barre Mayor Tom Leighton's leadership, as demonstrated by the new movie theater and bookstore.

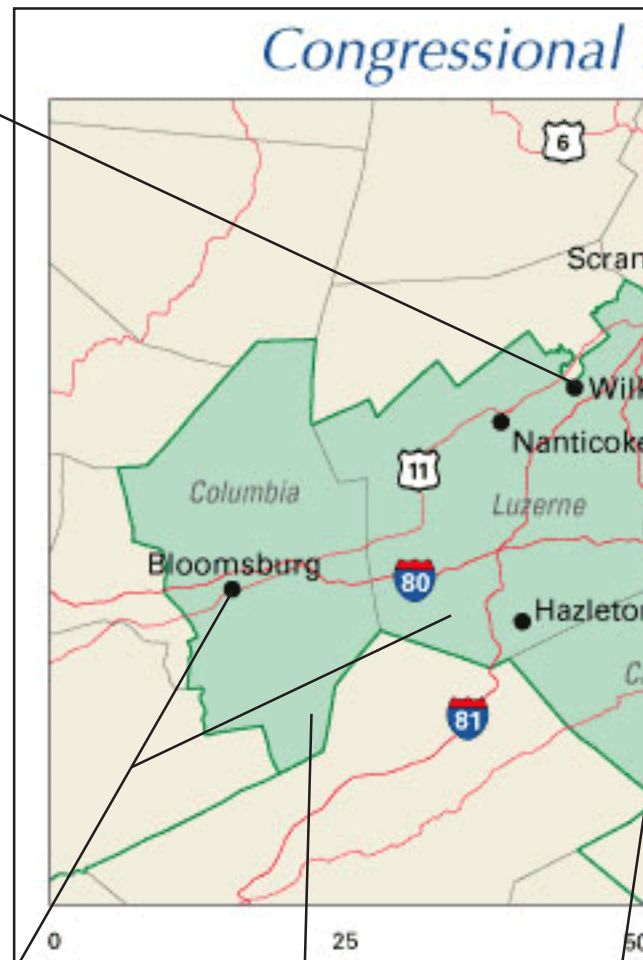


Luzerne County Commissioner Todd Vonderheid, Congressman Kanjorski, Jackie Parker of Governor Rendell's Action Team, County Commissioners Stephen Urban and Greg Skrepenak, and Colonel Peter Mueller of the Army Corps of Engineers (from left to right) break ground on the Riverfront Commons.

**Wyoming Valley Levee Raising Project:** According to the Army Corps of Engineers, the levee prevented more than \$1 billion in flood damage to the Wyoming Valley in the past two years alone. This ongoing flood control project remains a top priority for Congressman Kanjorski. The major flood-control portion of the levee was completed in 2003 and continues to provide Agnes-level protection to the Wyoming Valley.

**Firefighter Investment and Response Enhancement grants:** Sugarloaf Fire Company Inc. received a \$110,675 federal grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that will allow the company to purchase a new water tanker. Congressman Kanjorski has helped 97 local fire companies in the 11th District obtain more than \$10.5 million in grants since the program began.

**Bloomsburg Floodwall:** With Congressman Kanjorski's strong support, federal authorization to move forward with the Bloomsburg flood control project is expected to be included in the next Water Resources Development Act. Because of its location between the Susquehanna River and Fishing Creek, Bloomsburg is highly susceptible to flooding, as was demonstrated by the severe flooding in June of this year.



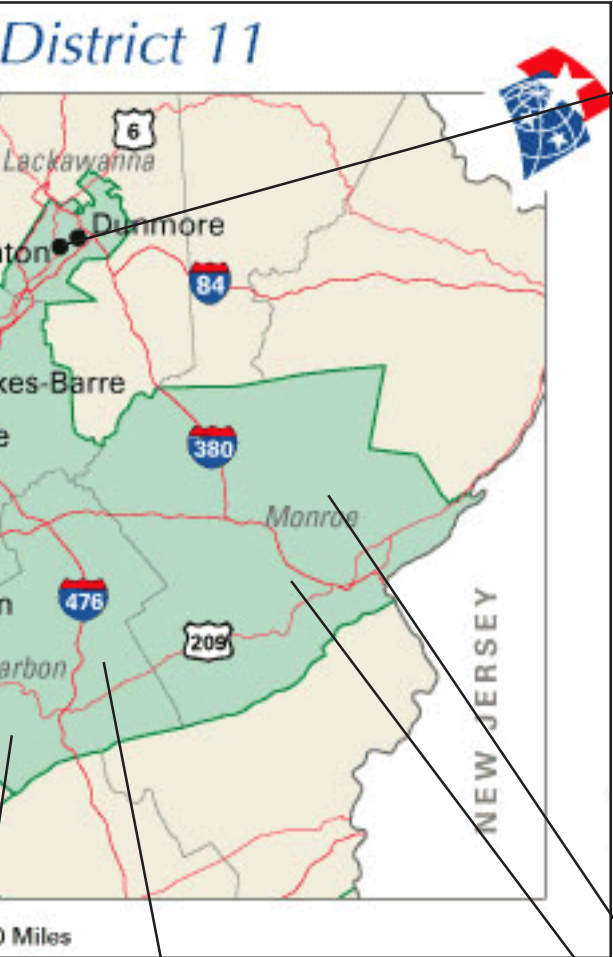
**Bulletproof Vest Grant Partnership:** Congressman Kanjorski recently helped secure federal funding for 16 municipalities in the 11th District, including Hemlock Township, Berwick, Catawissa Borough, and Salem Township. More than 100 municipalities in the 11th District have received these grants since the program's inception in 1999.

**Market Towns Initiative:** Lehigh, Palmerton, Jim Thorpe, and Lansford are part of a downtown revitalization initiative of the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. Congressman Kanjorski has secured funding to preserve the region's unique cultural and historical qualities and to enhance economic development.



Jim Thorpe was one of the first "Main Street" revitalization efforts of the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor.

# Around the District

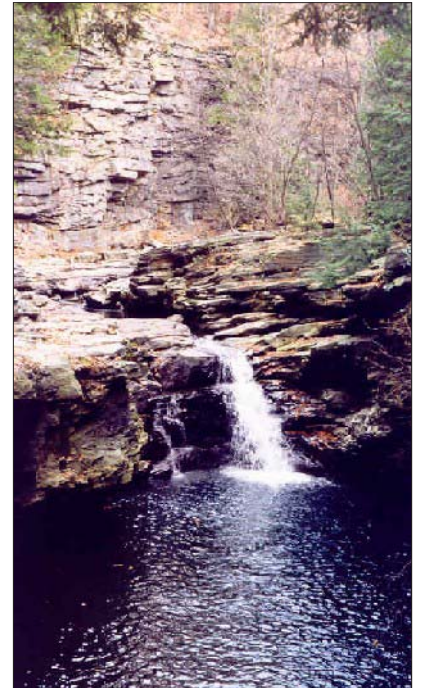


**Scranton Renaissance:** A vibrant downtown attracts business, and Congressman Kanjorski supports the revitalization that has taken place in downtown Scranton under the leadership of Mayor Chris Doherty. Congressman Kanjorski has secured \$2 million for infrastructure improvements, including the restoration of Lackawanna Avenue, as well as several economic development grants for the city, including \$400,000 for Nay Aug Park.



Scranton's Historic District, courtesy of National Park Service

**Lackawanna County Flood Control Projects:** Congressman Kanjorski helped secure funding for the Olyphant Flood Control project, which was recently dedicated. The \$17 million first portion of the Scranton Flood Control Project has been finished, and the entire project is slated for completion by 2008.



Nay Aug Park, courtesy of Lackawanna River Corridor Association

**Transportation Funding:** The six-year Transportation Bill passed in 2005 included \$800,000 for the widening of Route 443 to ease the congestion of this major Carbon County artery. Working with Pennsylvania's senators, Congressman Kanjorski secured more than \$51 million for 41 projects in the 11th Congressional District.

**Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge Study Act:** Congressman Kanjorski was the lead sponsor of a bill that authorizes a study of 30,000 acres of land in Monroe County that includes at least six endangered species for possible establishment as a national wildlife refuge. Congress passed the bill unanimously, and it became law in October.



Northeastern Pennsylvania meets federal guidelines for the establishment of backup facilities for Wall Street firms.

**Wall Street West:** Following the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, Congressman Kanjorski realized that Northeastern Pennsylvania is an ideal location for backup facilities for Manhattan's financial services firms. With the assistance of Governor Ed Rendell, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania received a \$15 million federal grant for training in information technology and financial services.

**Rail Link To New York City:** Congressman Kanjorski has played a key role in supporting the restoration of a passenger and freight rail line connecting Northeastern Pennsylvania with metropolitan New York City. With his strong support, the six-year Transportation Bill included authorization language allowing the project to move forward.



In May, the railroad authorities in Lackawanna and Monroe counties merged to form the Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority. This new agency is working with New Jersey Transit to complete the environmental study phase of the project.

The Stegmaier Building, Suite 400M  
7 North Wilkes-Barre Blvd.  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702  
(570) 825-2200 / (570) 825-8685 (fax)

The Scranton Life Building  
546 Spruce St., Scranton, PA 18503  
(570) 496-1011 / (570) 496-6439 (fax)

102 Pocono Blvd., Mount Pocono, PA 18344  
(570) 895-4176 (by appointment only)

2188 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6511 / (202) 225-0764 (fax)

Toll Free: (800) 222-2346  
e-mail: paul.kanjorski@mail.house.gov  
Web site: <http://www.kanjorski.house.gov>

Congressman Paul E. Kanjorski  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Official Business  
- union bug -

Resident  
11th Congressional District  
PENNSYLVANIA

THIS MAILING WAS PREPARED, PUBLISHED AND MAILED AT TAXPAYER EXPENSE.

## **INSIDE:** - A message from Congressman Kanjorski for a new direction



- Moving forward across  
Northeastern Pennsylvania

- Help with  
heating bills

- What you should include in  
an emergency kit



### **Transition Assistance for Returning Veterans**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) maintains an active Transition Assistance Program and Disabled Transition Assistance Program (TAP/DTAP) throughout the United States and around the world for veterans readjusting to civilian life.

The VA encourages all separating service members to contact their respective Transition Centers to determine when VA Transition Assistance Briefings are scheduled. These briefings provide information that will help you make the transition to civilian life easier by identifying many of the VA benefits available to you. For more information, you can visit <http://www.seamlesstransition.va.gov/transition.asp>.

In addition, veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan have reported increased occurrences of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms. For more information on PTSD, you can log onto the Web site of the VA's National Center for PTSD at [www.ncptsd.va.gov/](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/). If you feel you may be experiencing the effects of PTSD, please call the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center's Mental Health Clinic at (570) 824-3521, ext.7737 or 7738.

For further information about local services available to veterans, please call the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center toll-free at (877) 928-2621 or (570) 824-3521. The VA Medical Center is located at 1111 East End Blvd., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Northeastern Pennsylvanians have consistently shown great generosity. You can learn more about local volunteer opportunities by visiting [www.kanjorski.house.gov](http://www.kanjorski.house.gov).

### **Help with Heating Bills**

With the help of federal funding, Pennsylvania offers heating assistance for residents who meet certain income requirements through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). For more information, please call toll-free (866) 857-7095. Individuals who are hearing impaired can call (800) 451-5886.

In addition, many local utility companies have Home Energy Assistance Programs available to help customers in need. You should call your local utility company to see if there is a program available.

### **Emergency Planning**

Pennsylvania is the most flood-prone state in the nation, and it is important for you to understand the risk your family and your home face. For more information, please visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) or call my office at (800) 222-2346.

The Red Cross suggests that you should identify where you can go if you and your family must evacuate. The Red Cross also suggests preparing an emergency supplies kit for a three-day period that includes:

- 1) First aid kit and essential medications
  - 2) Canned food and can opener
  - 3) At least one gallon of water per person per day
  - 4) Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags
  - 5) Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
  - 6) Special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members
  - 7) Written instructions for how to turn off electricity, gas, and water if authorities advise you to do so
- For more helpful tips, visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).