



## Full Biography

Grace Flores Napolitano was first elected to Congress in November, 1998. She is currently serving her fifth term representing California's 38<sup>th</sup> District. Her Los Angeles County-based district covers several cities in the Southeast and San Gabriel Valley areas including Norwalk, Pomona, Santa Fe Springs, La Puente, the City of Industry, Montebello, and Pico Rivera, plus the unincorporated communities of Avocado Heights, Hacienda Heights, West Puente Valley, and parts of Whittier, East Los Angeles, Rowland Heights, South San Gabriel, and Valinda.

### Committees and Caucuses

#### *Natural Resources Committee*

The Congresswoman has been a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources since the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress and was selected the Chair of the Water and Power Subcommittee for the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. She has always been an avid promoter of conservation, water recycling, desalination, and sound groundwater management and storage to address Southern California's need for adequate water quality and supply. She is proud of her legislative efforts on a number of fronts – assisting in the implementation of CALFED, a water management plan for the State of California, protection of the fragile ecosystem in the Bay-Delta and promotion of the use of advanced technologies. Her legislative effort in 1999 to begin removal of a 10.5 million ton uranium tailings pile at the banks of the Colorado in Moab, Utah, stands out as a major accomplishment, alleviating a very real danger to the health of more than 25 million people living in 7 states, an ecosystem that supports the Southwest's tourism industry, two national monuments, and a variety of pristine natural habitats.

#### *Transportation and Infrastructure Committee*

At the start of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced the appointment of Napolitano as the most senior new member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, yielding her a voice for her communities on matters of jurisdiction over America's surface transportation, freight and passenger rail, the inland waterway system, international maritime commerce, the Economic Development Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' support of the nation's water resources, and the federal clean water program. Napolitano brings strong background and experience to the Committee with 6 years on the California State Assembly Transportation Committee, and current work on rail safety and congestion relief in the San Gabriel Valley. She will continue her work advocating on behalf of the transportation needs faced in the eastern half of Los Angeles County, which lacks mass transit and has the most congested and underserved transportation system in the country. She will also continue advancing and promoting the ideas of minorities, including the many Hispanic Americans who not only design and build our transportation systems, but use mass transit in greater proportion.

#### *Congressional Mental Health Caucus*

Alarming statistics showing one in three Latina adolescents contemplated suicide has prompted the Congresswoman to spearhead a school-based Latina adolescent mental health program in three local middle schools and one high school. At the beginning of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, Napolitano revitalized the Congressional Mental Health Caucus, which she has continued to co-chair with Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA). The bipartisan caucus included more than 70 members during the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress and over 90 members during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. As co-chair, Napolitano has hosted congressional briefings on children and on veteran's mental health

needs, working on proposals to improve VA mental health services. A key priority is legislation to provide mental health parity in health insurance. The Congresswoman continues these very important efforts to better address the mental health needs of adolescents, children, minorities and seniors.

#### *Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC)*

The Congresswoman, during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, served as Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which continues to address national education, immigration, health, and civil rights issues, and the impact these policies have on the Hispanic community. Coordinated efforts with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus has ensured that shared priorities could be widely addressed, and produced two landmark retreats of the three caucus Chairs. Immense efforts were undertaken following the Katrina tragedy, uniting Members under the common and urgent need to help the Gulf Coast begin recovery. Napolitano also worked with CHC Task Force Chairs to ensure broad leadership on crucial legislative and policy priorities, including reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, efforts to promote and encourage Hispanic representation in filling federal court vacancies, and attempts to pass comprehensive bipartisan immigration reform.

#### **In the District**

The Congresswoman is committed to “constituent service” and to the economic revitalization of her district. She works aggressively with federal, state and local officials to bring in new businesses, higher wage jobs and training funds to the district. She counts as some of her successes for her district a \$2.8 million Labor Department grant for precision and computer numeric control (CNC) machinists, \$4 million to spur reuse and redevelopment of the Northrop Grumman B-2 facility in Pico Rivera, \$1 million for upgrades to Cal Poly Pomona’s Aerospace Engineering Laboratory Facilities, and \$1 million for Central Atmospheric Monitoring Systems in Navy Submarines. These programs provide vital support to growing research and development, helping expand the reach of local academic institutions and enhancing the local economy.

Napolitano has also taken a leading role in suicide prevention among Latina adolescents noting that nearly one-out-of-three has seriously contemplated suicide, the highest rate for any ethnic or racial group in the country. In 2001 she won a major victory when funds were included in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for a pilot project supporting school-based, mental health services in her district. To date, \$1.6 million has been secured for this program now successfully operating in 4 local schools.

#### *Health Consortium*

Napolitano established a 38<sup>th</sup> District Health Consortium composed of health providers, educators and experts throughout the local area. The Consortium helps keep the Congresswoman apprised of key health issues facing her constituents and works with the Congresswoman to devise programs and projects to improve health care and health outcomes for the local area. The Congresswoman also works with the Health Consortium to pursue funding options through California’s Proposition 63 Mental Health Services Expansion and for additional training of nursing professionals at both the entry level (CNAs and LVNs) and RNs with advanced degrees.

#### *Manufacturing Task Force*

A firm believer that manufacturing “matters,” the Congresswoman has initiated a Manufacturing Task Force in the 38<sup>th</sup> district comprised of various small and mid-sized companies. The task force meets as needed to examine key issues and work on strategies that will foster more manufacturing jobs and create a positive climate for manufacturing retention and growth.

#### *Local Events*

Napolitano hosts various events throughout the year, informing residents of the 38<sup>th</sup> District on the impact of federal legislation and policy, and honoring local constituents for their outstanding

achievements. Prominent among these events are the annual Congressional Art Competition and Women of the Year recognition ceremonies.

### **Personal**

The Congresswoman was born and raised in Brownsville, Texas. After high school, she married and moved with her husband to California where they raised 5 children.

Napolitano began her political career as a member of the Norwalk City Council, winning her first election in 1986 by a mere 28 votes. Four years later she won re-election by the highest margin of votes recorded in city history. In 1989, Napolitano was elevated by her council colleagues to serve as Mayor. During her council tenure, she focused much of her attention on providing access to constituents and on redevelopment and transportation issues to address the city's need for jobs and a more diversified economic base.

Napolitano made her way up through the ranks of Ford Motor Company for 22 years. Following her retirement in 1992, she was elected to the California Assembly, and emerged as a recognized leader on international trade, environmental protection, transportation and immigration. She quickly earned a reputation as a hard worker and champion for small business, women, economic expansion and job creation. In 1996 she requested and received the creation of the first new California State Assembly Standing Committee in nine years, the Committee on International Trade, which she chaired until being termed out in 1998. In her six years in the Assembly, she also served as chair of the Women's Caucus and vice-chair of the Latino caucus.

Grace is married to Frank Napolitano, retired restaurateur and community activist. They reside in Norwalk, California and take great pride in their five grown children, fourteen grandchildren and one great grandson.