



**U.S. Representative  
Debbie Wasserman Schultz:  
Report on the  
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**

[www.RECOVERY.gov](http://www.RECOVERY.gov)

Dear Friends:

We began 2009 with new leadership in our nation and a renewed commitment to get America back on track and restore the American dream for you and your families.

Since the first of the year I've been traveling around South Florida, listening to people, talking with community leaders, and announcing initiatives we've passed in Washington to help South Floridians.

Whether it is housing or the downturn in the economy, South Florida is facing a challenging time. This newsletter details some of the legislation I've been working on to help turn the economy around and save families' homes.

**Many families and small businesses are facing immediate challenges paying bills, finding jobs, or are worried about their future. That's why over the next two months I'll be hosting meetings in South Florida with experts who can explain how the Recovery Act and other programs can help these Floridians.**

**You are invited to attend these upcoming meetings. Whether you want to express your opinion, or need answers to a question, I want to hear from you.**

**1) Town Hall on the Recovery Act:**

**Helping Homeowners and the Unemployed**

**Monday, April 13, 2009, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

City of Weston City Hall, Commission Chamber

17200 Royal Palm Blvd., Weston

(Officials will be on hand to help answer individual questions.)

**2) Helping Small Businesses Access Assistance:**

**Saturday, May 23, 2009 8:00 a.m. (registration begins)**

Broward County Convention Center

1950 Eisenhower Blvd., Fort Lauderdale

(Officials will help small businesses access Recovery Act resources.)

Sincerely,



Rep. Wasserman Schultz hosted a listening session on the economy with local residents in Miami Beach in January.

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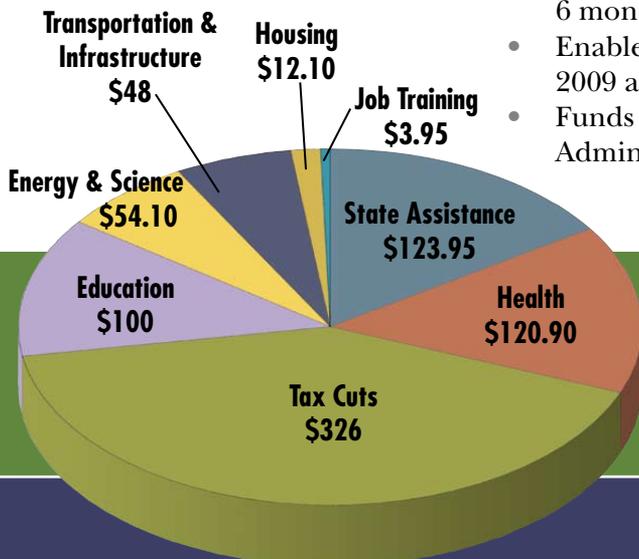
# Help Is On The Way: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act And You



In February, Rep. Wasserman Schultz hosted a Telephone Town Hall meeting with more than 1,500 South Floridians to discuss the economy.

To be notified of the next one, sign-up for our e-newsletter at:  
[www.house.gov/wassermanschultz](http://www.house.gov/wassermanschultz)

## American Recovery & Reinvestment Act Breakdown of Funding (amounts in billions)



### Helping Homeowners

- Provides an \$8,000 tax credit for first-time home purchases. No repayment required.

### Helping Seniors

- Temporary increase in Social Security checks.
- More funding for home-delivered meals.
- Higher loan limits on reverse mortgages.

### Helping Patients

- Provides a 65% federal subsidy for COBRA premiums for up to 12 months for workers involuntarily terminated from jobs.
- Provides \$1 billion for prevention and wellness programs.
- Assists state Medicaid programs with federal matching grants.

### Helping Parents & Students

- Helps families afford college tuition payments for their children with a \$2,500 tax credit.
- Increases funding for Pell Grants and Stafford Loans.
- Adds \$200 million to the Work-Study program that supports undergraduate and graduate students who work while attending college, allowing 133,000 more students to participate.

### Helping The Unemployed

- Funds job training programs in renewable energy industries.
- Extends unemployment benefits until December 2009.
- Increases food stamp benefits for struggling families.

### Helping Small Businesses

- Provides tax credits to businesses that hire unemployed veterans and youth who have been out of work or school for more than 6 months.
- Enables businesses to write off 90% of losses from 2008 and 2009 against taxes assessed over the previous 5 years.
- Funds new grants and low-cost loans from the Small Business Administration.

For more information on these programs visit  
[www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov)

# Fighting to Save Families' Homes

*"Mortgage foreclosures lay at the very heart of our financial crisis. Until we stop this bleeding, we cannot hope to stabilize the housing market and truly rescue our economy."* —Debbie Wasserman Schultz speaking on behalf of the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act, 2/26/09



Rep. Wasserman Schultz was one of 19 original co-sponsors of key anti-foreclosure legislation, the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act (H.R. 1106), which passed The House of Representatives in March. This legislation establishes an important piece of President Obama's comprehensive Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan. **The details of the President's plan, including an eligibility quiz for homeowners struggling to make their payments, can be viewed online at: [www.makinghomesaffordable.gov](http://www.makinghomesaffordable.gov)**

The Helping Families Save Their Homes Act seeks to help the estimated 7-9 million households facing possible foreclosure by including incentives that encourage lenders to renegotiate affordable mortgages for homeowners who are underwater, at risk of foreclosure, or nearing bankruptcy.

Specifically, the bill fixes the Hope for Homeowners program, implemented October 1, 2008, which was designed to get more families into affordable mortgages by:

- reducing current fees that have discouraged lenders from voluntarily participating and
- offering new incentives for lenders to negotiate loans.

To help families who have exhausted options for relief, the bill also allows bankruptcy judges to modify the terms of a loan for existing primary residence mortgages.

Currently, the mortgage for a primary residence cannot be modified in bankruptcy — unlike every other secured debt, including second homes, investment properties, luxury yachts, and private jets.



Rep. Wasserman Schultz (center) was joined by Kirk Fordham, CEO of the Everglades Foundation (left) and Rep. Klein (FL-22, right) announcing Everglades restoration construction projects for Florida.

## Jobs & The Everglades: \$183.4 Million for Restoration

*"Our river of grass is a vital natural resource that we must restore and protect. The \$183 million coming this year will help insure Florida's children can experience the river of grass in the future, while we employ their parents today."*

— Rep. Wasserman Schultz speaking in March about the significance of these funds for Floridians.

The fiscal year 2009 federal budget includes \$183.4 million in funds for Everglades restoration which goes a long way toward fulfilling the federal government's commitment to help restore the Everglades. When fully funded, these projects are expected to create more than 1,000 jobs for Floridians.

If you'd like me to keep you up-to-date on these and other issues, contact my office at the phone numbers listed on the cover, or visit my Web site at [www.house.gov/wassermanschultz](http://www.house.gov/wassermanschultz) and sign up for my electronic newsletter.

Official Business

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.



If you are out of work, log onto [www.floridajobs.org](http://www.floridajobs.org) to find a job or file an unemployment claim.

This site will instruct you how to seek unemployment compensation, and will also lead you to a directory of jobs available in Florida.



## How the Recovery Act will Affect Florida

Funding for state and local governments will prevent widespread layoffs and service disruptions for Florida residents. We are investing in our state, creating jobs, and helping stabilize the business community — a win-win for our state. Here is how the stimulus will help Floridians:

Jobs Created or Saved by Recovery Act:	207,000
Unemployment Insurance Beneficiaries Receiving Higher Benefits:	761,227
Families Receiving "Making Work Pay" Tax Credit:	6,890,000
Students Receiving Increases in Pell Grants:	397,183
Additional Students Receiving College Tax Credit:	195,000
Food Stamp Participants Receiving Higher Benefit:	1,725,000
Children Receiving Child Tax Credit:	877,000
Taxpayers Protected by the AMT Patch:	1,075,000
New Emergency Unemployment Compensation Beneficiaries:	169,784

Go to [www.house.gov/wassermanschultz](http://www.house.gov/wassermanschultz) for a complete list of Florida projects and programs.

Rep. Wasserman Schultz met with local officials in February to discuss how federal recovery funds could help the regional economy.

