



## Full Biography

Grace Flores Napolitano was first elected to Congress in November, 1998. She is currently serving her sixth 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*

Napolitano has been a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources since the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, and is currently the Chair of the Subcommittee on Water and Power. She has been a long-time promoter of conservation, water recycling, desalination, and groundwater management as solutions to Southern California's water needs. As a legislator, Napolitano has pushed for Native American water rights from rivers flowing on tribal lands, the protection of the sensitive Bay-Delta ecosystem, and the use of water recycling technology to combat drought. In 1999, her legislative efforts began the removal of 10.5 million tons of uranium tailings piled on the banks of the Colorado River in Moab, Utah, a health threat for more than 25 million people living downstream and the surrounding Southwestern ecosystem and tourism sites.

#### *Transportation and Infrastructure Committee*

Napolitano was appointed to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure at the beginning of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. The Committee oversees policy related to America's surface transportation, freight and passenger rail, aviation, inland waterway system, international maritime commerce, Economic Development Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers water projects, and the federal clean water program. On the committee, she has advanced projects and policies that relieve congestion, improve transit, and reduce the negative impacts her district takes on as a primary shipping corridor from the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. Her major accomplishments have been securing funding for the I-5 freeway expansion, separating railroads from roadways to reduce accidents and congestion, purchasing clean energy buses for local cities, and extending the Metro Gold Line into East Los Angeles. She took a leading role in drafting and passing the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act of 2008, which strengthened our railroad safety laws and required the installation of collision-detection safety technology in trains in California and across the country. Napolitano continues to work to promote better transportation for east Los Angeles County, which despite improvements still suffers from frequent traffic jams and one of the most inadequate public transportation systems in the U.S. She also continues to advance the needs of minorities, who are more likely to use mass transit.

#### *Congressional Mental Health Caucus*

In 2001, alarming statistics showing one in three Latina adolescents have contemplated suicide prompted the Congresswoman to establish a school-based adolescent mental health program in her district, which has since expanded to include 11 schools. 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). As co-chair, Napolitano has hosted congressional briefings on children's mental health, veterans' mental health, and suicide prevention. Napolitano and other caucus members pushed to prevent insurance companies

from discriminating against mental illness, an effort that helped bring about the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 and the mental health clauses included in the Affordable Care Act of 2010. The Congresswoman continues her efforts to better address the mental health needs of adolescents, children, minorities and seniors.

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

The Congresswoman is a former Chairwoman of the CHC. The Caucus addresses national issues such as education, immigration, healthcare, and the impact of these policies on the Hispanic community. The CHC cooperates on shared priorities with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the Progressive Caucus. Napolitano has worked with CHC Task Force Chairs to provide leadership on critical legislative and policy priorities, such as ensuring that minority healthcare needs were addressed within healthcare reform and promoting the federal appointment of Hispanics like Justice Sonia Sotomayor. The CHC has offered legislation addressing comprehensive immigration reform, and a nation-wide solution for the country's broken immigration system continues to be a major priority.

#### **In the District**

The Congresswoman is committed to constituent service and improving the economy of the 38th Congressional District. She has consistently secured federal funding for local transportation, water treatment, job training, road and freeway improvements, social services, educational facilities, and other projects. These programs provide vital services to her constituents and add jobs to the local economy.

Napolitano has also taken a leading role in providing mental health care for local adolescents. In 2001, she won a major victory when funds for a pilot project providing school-based mental health services in her district were included in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. Napolitano has since secured more than \$2.3 million for the program, which now includes 11 local schools and serves elementary, middle school, and high school children across the 38<sup>th</sup> District.

#### *Mental Health Task Force*

In 2000, Napolitano established the 38<sup>th</sup> District Mental Health Task Force, asking local health providers, educators and experts to provide her with insight and cooperation in addressing the district's mental health needs. In the past, she has consulted the Task Force on national concerns like mental health parity, preparing for the mental health needs of returning veterans, and comprehensive health care reform.

#### *Local Events*

Napolitano hosts various events throughout the year, including job fairs, workshops on housing loans and foreclosure prevention, military academy appointments, information sessions on federal legislation and policy, and ceremonies 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 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. In 1989, Napolitano's fellow council members selected her to serve as Mayor. During her council tenure, she addressed the city's need for jobs and public transportation.

Following her retirement from the Ford Motor Company in 1992, Napolitano was elected to the California Assembly, where she established herself as a leader in international trade, environmental protection, transportation and immigration. She quickly earned a reputation as a hard worker and a champion for small businesses, women, and economic growth. 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.