



# BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

## NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

### 11<sup>th</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Representing: Brownsville, Ocean Hill, Crown Heights, Greater Flatbush, East Flatbush, Kensington, Park Slope, Carroll Gardens, Gowanus, Prospect Heights, Prospect Gardens, Grand Army Plaza, Windsor Terrace, Flatbush and Midwood

# March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

## Rep. Clarke Celebrates International Women's Day



Dear Neighbor,

I am encouraging all of my constituents to fill out the 2010 Census form.

On Monday, the United States Census Bureau began mailing out advance letters, informing households that the 2010 Census form would be arriving within the next few weeks.

National Census Day is Thursday April 1st, 2010. You should aim to return your completed forms by then. The Census Bureau will process completed forms in April and analyze the received data by the end of the year.

It is important that every single household complete and return the form. Less than thirty five percent of my constituency participated in the 2000 Census, and our community must improve our Census questionnaire response rate in order to secure our fair share of critical public resources.

Census data is used to distribute more than \$400 billion in federal funds to tribal, state, and local governments each year. Results from the 2010 Census will help each community get its fair share of government funding for schools, roadwork, community facilities, and other special programs that are imperative for the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of New York.

The data provided is invaluable, but as they say at the Census, "We can't move forward until you mail it in."

Sincerely,

Yvette D. Clarke



Rep. Clarke Addresses Woman Advocacy Groups on Strengthening Women-Owned Small Businesses on Capitol Hill for International Women's Day

On Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010, I attended an International Women's Day reception at the White House. Women leaders from the President's Cabinet, the U.S. Congress, and the civil rights community celebrated this important day that falls in the midst of National Women's History Month. Earlier that day, I spoke at an economic forum where women leaders and advocacy groups gathered to create a long term strategy to bolster women's ability to create wealth. Women of every race, ethnicity, social class, and background have for centuries made many substantial - and often unrecognized - contributions to the development of our society. This month, it is especially important

that we all remember those who came before us, and continue to advocate for those who will follow us. As a Member of the Congressional Women's Caucus, I will continue to push legislation relating to women's issues. That is why in October 2009, I introduced HR 3771, The Veteran, Minority and Women-Owned Construction Business Mentorship and Grant Assistance Act of 2009. This legislation aims to build capacity for small women-owned businesses so that they can better compete in the global market. I encourage all Americans to recognize and celebrate women's historic achievements by commemorating National Women's History Month. Let us also take this opportunity to honor women within our own families and communities.

## Rep. Clarke Encourages Continued Donation to Haiti

This week, the House passed bipartisan legislation to speed up the tax deduction for charitable contributions for Chile and extend the tax deduction deadline for contributions to Haiti. April 15<sup>th</sup> is the new deadline for taxpayers to donate to Haiti earthquake victims and claim the donation on their 2009 tax return. Previously enacted legislation allowed taxpayers to claim such donations for 2009 only if they were made before March 1.

American donations for earthquake relief in Haiti have surpassed \$1 billion, a true testament to the compassion that permeates our nation. However, our job is far from over. I applaud my colleagues for voting in support of this bill which will continue to encourage charitable donations that are necessary to provide critical relief to the victims of these tragic disasters. They also help to lay a foundation for the upcoming rebuilding process. I encourage all Americans to take advantage of these extensions.

## Rep. Clarke Asks President Obama to Create the Haitian Enterprise Development Fund

On Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, I sent a letter to President Barack Obama requesting that he issue an executive order to establish a Haitian Enterprise Development Fund (HEDF). An Enterprise Development Fund would create the lasting economic stability Haiti needs to fully recover from the devastating Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake.

The purpose of Enterprise Development Funds is to encourage economic development through loans and equity investments in small to medium-sized businesses. These funds are available to countries experiencing financial difficulty. The development of this initiative would be a lengthy process, but I am fully committed to seeing the idea come to fruition. Through the use of Enterprise Development Funds, Haiti can experience sustainable growth and wealth for years to come.

It is imperative that we act now to establish a Haitian Enterprise Development Fund. I want to thank former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young for making this suggestion in the February 5, 2010 issue of Politico.

On Wednesday, I attended a White House press conference hosted by President Barack Obama. With Haitian President René Préval in attendance, President Obama addressed the nation concerning America's response efforts to assist Haiti.

I look forward to working closely with the Obama Administration, Haitian President René Préval, and former U.N. Ambassador Young on this endeavor and similar solutions for Haiti.

## Rep. Clarke Encourages Participation in the Fourth Annual School Survey from NYC's Department of Education

As a Member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I am urging all public school parents, teachers, and students to participate in the Fourth Annual School Survey from the New York City Department of Education. These surveys will ask questions relating to school safety, communication, engagement, quality of education, the learning environment, expectations, opportunities for teacher collaboration, and measure how well our students are prepared for postsecondary success. This is an opportunity for all education stakeholders to voice their opinions and concerns directly to NYC Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein and his administration. I wanted to share the following information from the NYC Department of Education with you. I hope you will join me as we strive together to ensure that our students receive the best education in the most productive learning environments.

Parents will receive the survey in bright green envelopes in their children's backpacks, at school events, or in the mail. Students in grades six through twelve will complete their surveys at school. Both parent and student surveys are available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/surveys> and on paper in nine languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Any parent who has not received a survey by the end of March should contact his or her school or call 311 to request one. Once completed, parents can return their confidential, completed surveys in the pre-addressed and stamped envelopes provided. Parents who do not have Internet access at home can complete the survey online at their local public library branch after they sign up for a free library card. Teachers will be able to complete their survey online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/surveys>. All surveys are due April 23, 2010.

## Legislative Spotlight

This week, I cosponsored H.R. 4564, the Support the Emergency Jobs Program and Assistance for Families Extension Act: A Proven Job Creation Program.

The Emergency Contingency Fund (ECF) created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, was established to help states with increasing expenditures on subsidized employment programs, as well as basic assistance for struggling families.

H.R. 4564 would extend and improve the ECF so that states and localities can continue to create jobs. Innovative use of ECF creates thousands of jobs. For example, Los Angeles County used the ECF to fund its Jobs NOW program and create 10,000 jobs in less than a year.

At least 29 states have implemented some version of the Jobs NOW program, but without an extension of the Emergency Fund, states may soon reduce or eliminate subsidized employment programs, and cut assistance to needy families. 60,000 jobs that would otherwise be available to low-income parents will disappear if the Fund expires.

Workers will benefit beyond the paycheck by getting hands-on experience in a setting where they can develop new skills and enhance existing skills. Businesses benefit by getting the help they need to grow or expand while temporarily reducing payroll costs.

Extending this jobs program for one year and making it easier for states and localities to access the funds, will both create and preserve jobs. I am happy to support this legislation, and I will continue to fight hard for job creation.