



# BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

## NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

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

Representing: Brownsville, Ocean Hill, East Flatbush, Flatbush, Crown Heights, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, Park Slope, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights

# July 16, 2010

## Economic Recovery Forum Comes to Brooklyn



Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke delivers opening remarks at CBCF Economic Recovery Forum in Brooklyn, NY on Saturday, July 10, 2010.  
Photo By: Errol Anderson and Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

On Saturday, July 10, 2010, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) hosted an economic recovery forum at St. Francis College in Brooklyn, New York. The forum focused on identifying resources that can assist small businesses in starting, strengthening and growing their businesses in the current economic climate. The forum also helped residents identify housing and community development initiatives in Brooklyn. I commend the CBCF for putting on such an important event.

While we cling to the prospect of good news within our economy, there are major signs that people are still having a hard time getting back to work. Unfortunately, in communities of color, the unemployment rates have been higher than the national average, even before the recession. That is why we must continue to provide the necessary resources for our community to fully participate in true economic recovery. Whether it is through providing access to quality affordable housing or empowering our small business to create more jobs, we must act now.

As the only CBC member on the House Small Business Committee, I understand the interplay between strong small businesses, affordable housing and thriving communities. Without affordable housing and small business growth, community and economic development cannot take place!

I thank the CBCF for providing the forum for our community to have access to important resources and information during this day-long forum. I will continue to fight to ensure that community residents have the tools they need to start or grow their business.

## Rep. Clarke Applauds Easier Access for Veterans

This week, the Veterans Administration announced its plan to improve care of our veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The new rules will make it easier for veterans, including those who may have been denied benefits in the past, to receive the care and benefits they need and have earned.

Our soldiers have sacrificed tremendously for our country, and we have a responsibility to do all we can to support them. House Democrats and the Obama Administration have taken the necessary actions to ensure our veterans are not left behind.

Nearly one in five veterans are diagnosed with PTSD or major depression, and many veterans in New York have suffered silently without the care they have earned. In Brooklyn, it is estimated that over 18,000 of our veterans are afflicted by this disorder. With the reform simplifying the process for a veteran to claim service connection for PTSD, our veterans of both current and past wars will finally receive the VA health care and disability compensation they deserve.

For additional information, go to [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) or call VA's toll free benefits number at 1-800-827-1000.

Dear Neighbor,

As of Monday July 12, 2010, the registration period for Temporary Protected Status for Haitian nationals has been extended to January 18, 2011.

In the wake of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that devastated Haiti on January 12, 2010, the Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano issued Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitian nationals who were in the United States as of January 12, 2010. I am extremely pleased that DHS has extended the deadline allowing these individuals to file for TPS within the United States.

I commend President Obama and Secretary Napolitano for their dedication to the Haitian people during this dark and challenging time. This is indeed a giant symbol of this Administration's support for the people of Haiti.

TPS forms are available online or by calling the toll-free USCIS Forms line, 1-800-870-3676. For more information on USCIS humanitarian programs, visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or call 1-800-375-5283.

Sincerely,  
Yvette D. Clarke

## The American Perception of Immigration Policy

According to a recent Pew Research Center/National Journal survey, Americans have mixed views on the Arizona Immigration Law and the lawsuit filed against Arizona by the Justice Department on July 6th. The Justice Department has stated that “the Constitution and federal law do not permit the development of a patchwork of state and local immigration policies throughout the country.” According to the poll:

- 63 % of Americans want Congress to address national immigration policy;
- 64% of Americans support the Arizona law; while
- 68% of Americans support a way for people in the U.S. illegally to gain citizenship if they pass background checks, pay fines, and have jobs.

The Arizona law creates more problems than solutions to our already broken Immigration system. It is a clear step backwards in truly creating Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR). With 68 % of people supporting a pathway to citizenship, it is clear that addressing CIR at the federal level is the best way forward.

According to the Pew poll, Americans feel the following concerns:

- 80% of Americans are concerned about employment,
- 70% of Americans want the federal budget deficit reduced,
- 66% of Americans want the country’s energy needs addressed,
- 53% of Americans want stricter regulation of financial institutions and markets.

As the debate on immigration and its reform continues to heat up, rest assured that I will work with my colleagues to make sure that Congress addresses this as soon as possible.

## Commemorating the Six Month Anniversary of the 7.0 Magnitude Earthquake Hitting Haiti

July 12, 2010 marked the six month anniversary of the unfortunate 7.0 magnitude earthquake and its aftermath that ushered in a new era for the Caribbean nation of Haiti. Through this disaster we witnessed the great resilience of the Haitian people. We also witnessed the outpouring of compassion, humanitarian aid and support from our global community. While much has been done since the initial response to the disaster, it is clear that there is still much to do in order to return Haiti to a politically, socially, and economically stable and independent nation.

As the Representative of the second largest Haitian immigrant population in the country, I have heard my constituents express the importance of Haitian immigrants having access to Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in light of the earthquake. On behalf of this proud community, I applaud the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for extending the deadline to file for TPS to January 18, 2011. I will continue to fight to ensure that we, as a global community, do not forget that Haiti continues to struggle, and that we cannot abandon the effort as Haiti continues to march towards a brighter future. The international response to this crisis has been commendable, but the restructuring of Haiti cannot continue in the absence of the full participation, resources, knowledge, and expertise of Haitians, the African Diaspora and those sensitive to the plight of Haiti.

Let us never forget that as we unite with the people of Haiti, Haitian-Americans and the Haitian Diaspora to assist with the development of this great nation, we are forever guided by the words etched indelibly on the Haitian flag, ‘L’Union fait la force’...through unity, there is strength!



Rep. Clarke Holds the Haitian Flag as she waits to speak at a rally on Capitol Hill.

## Legislative Spotlight

On Thursday July 15, 2010, the Senate passed legislation to reform regulations of financial firms and markets, end taxpayer bailouts of big banks, and create a consumer financial protection bureau that finally puts consumers first.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act will end the era of abuses by “too big to fail” banks that cost the American people 8 million jobs and \$17 trillion in retirement savings and net worth. The legislation will be signed into law by the President.

Working families in New York and across the country have lost their homes, their jobs, and their retirement savings as a result of this downturn.

The bill has been called the “strongest set of Wall Street reforms in three generations” by Elizabeth Warren, Chair of the nonpartisan Congressional Oversight Panel. The Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act will help curb the risky financial practices that led to the financial meltdown and prevent massive risks from impacting the entire financial system.

The bill creates a process to shut down large failing firms whose collapse would put the entire economy at risk. It also creates the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), a new consumer watchdog devoted to protecting Americans from unfair and abusive financial practices.

The Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act has been endorsed by the AARP, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, Council of Institutional Investors, National Fair Housing Alliance, National Restaurant Association, Public Citizen, SEIU, and US PIRG, among other organizations.