



# 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

# January 22, 2010



### Rep. Yvette D. Clarke Votes In Support of Haitian People

On January 21, I voted in support of H.R. 4462. I was an original cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation, which will allow individuals to claim any donations to the relief effort as an itemized deduction on their 2009 tax return, instead of waiting to claim it on their 2010 return. This measure will promote timely giving to Haiti, in the days and weeks when the region needs help the most, by providing Americans with an immediate income tax benefit that individuals can claim in 2009, instead of 2010. The bill will also make clear that the many taxpayers making a charitable contribution to victims of the Haiti earthquake through a text message will be able to rely on their cell phone bill when claiming a charitable donation.

I also voted in support of a resolution expressing condolences to and solidarity with the people of Haiti in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of January 12th, 2010. I also was an original cosponsor of this resolution, in which Congress is sending a unified message to the Haitian people that we stand with them as they prepare to rebuild their nation. Haiti is as much a part of us as we are a part of them. Much has been done, but there is still much to do to assist Haiti with its recovery efforts. While it took only minutes for the earthquake to cause the massive destruction in Haiti, for the people of this great nation, it will likely take a generation to rebuild. As a Brooklyn native whose roots are firmly planted in my Caribbean heritage, I want you to know that I will continue to support the people of Haiti. I want Haitians to know that I will do everything possible to see that this nation is rebuilt.

### Beware of TPS Fraud

I am extremely pleased that Temporary Protected Status has been extended to Haitian nationals within the United States. I commend the President and Secretary Napolitano for their dedication to the Haitian people in light this a dark and challenging time. However, I am concerned that fraudulent entities are inflating prices for legal services for the Temporary Protected Status application process. Here is a clarification of the fees for TPS:

- For individuals under 14:
  - \$50.00
- For individuals 14 and over:
  - \$50.00 plus \$80.00 biometric fee
- Note: individuals 14-65 years old must file an Employment Authorization Form along with the TPS application form
  - IF they wish to actually work in the U.S.- \$340.00 fee plus \$50.00 and \$80.00 fees (see above)
  - If they just want TPS, but do not want to work- no additional fee (see above fees)

My bill, [H.R. 1992](#) would help protect immigrants and Haitians from unscrupulous lawyers and so called "immigration specialists" Who prey on some of the most vulnerable people in our society. This is yet another example of why Congress must pass this bill.

Dear Neighbor,

Please join me for *Federal Appropriations 101*, a discussion, presentation, and a Q & A session on applying for federal funds.

Through this discussion, you will:

- Get an overview of the House Appropriations process.
- Meet one-on-one with Rep. Clarke staffers to review applications.
- Learn how to make your project more competitive.

Rep. Clarke and staff will be joined by special guest Nicole Johnson of the City Parks Foundation.

*Federal Appropriations 101* will take place on January 25, 2010 from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm, at 123 Linden Blvd, 1st Fl, Brooklyn, NY 11225 (Between Bedford and Rogers Avenues).

Sincerely,  
Yvette D. Clarke

## Special Briefing on Temporary Protected Status for Haitians

In conjunction with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), I will host a special Congressional briefing on Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians. I will be joined by the District Director of the USCIS New York Office, Ms. Andrea Quarantillo and other USCIS officers.

USCIS will educate the public on exactly what they need to know to file for TPS and how to protect themselves against fraud. **The event will be held on Thursday, January 28, 2010 from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm at Sunny Downstate Medical Center in Alumni Auditorium.**

Should you have any further questions, please contact our office at the 718-287-1142.

## Rep. Clarke Unites with Jewish Leaders for Humanitarian Aid for Haiti



*Rep. Clarke meets with Jewish Leaders in Brooklyn.*

On January 17<sup>th</sup> I joined Brooklyn Orthodox Jewish leaders in support of Haiti relief efforts. Assemblyman Dov Hikand, in coordination with Agudath Israel, Council of Jewish Organizations of Flatbush, Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, Boro Park Jewish Community Council, Masbia of Boro Park/Flatbush, Councilman Matthew Eugene, and Councilman Jumanne Williams, voiced the Jewish community's commitment to the relief efforts in Haiti. I commend the country of Israel for swiftly deploying its

search and rescue and relief delegation in response to the earthquake. Israel's presence in Haiti has greatly impacted the U.N.'s aid to the Haitian people. Additionally, I thank Brooklyn's Jewish community for their support of our Haitian brothers and sisters. Their response to this tragedy has been resounding.

## Moving Forward with Healthcare Reform

A lot of things may have changed in light of the Massachusetts special election Tuesday, but one thing that hasn't changed is the health insurance crisis in America. I have sat down with hundreds of constituents and hosted two town hall meetings, and the message is clear, we need comprehensive health care reform NOW.

As we move forward through the legislative process, I want to produce a final bill that is founded on the core principles of health insurance reform: affordability for the middle class, security for our seniors, and responsibility to our children, and accountability for the insurance industry. In the end, I can only support what I define as a "good" healthcare bill. The bill must provide universal coverage, be affordable, and contain cost containment measures. The inclusion of cost containment measures is critical. Cost containment measures would, in effect, help keep healthcare cost and premiums down.

Saying "no" is not a solution for America. Saying "no" doesn't help one worker keep his or her health insurance. Saying "no" doesn't stop insurance companies from denying children coverage because of pre-existing conditions. I want the American people to know that now is not the time to be complacent. The fight is just beginning and your voices need to be heard. We have come a long way... but the journey is not over.

## Legislative Spotlight

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, I co-sponsored The Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act, H.R. 3734, which will invest in the health and well-being of communities across this nation from the standpoint of economic recovery and environmental protection while providing safe and affordable places for recreation.

The Act provides federal assistance grants (which must be matched with local funds) to rehabilitate urban parks and community recreational infrastructure and for the continued investment in programs that address issues such as juvenile delinquency and issues affecting at-risk youth. Economically distressed communities can use these grants to improve their recreational facilities and infrastructure, and provide healthy options for at-risk children.

The Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act focuses on projects that provide revitalization through:

- providing more places and spaces for engaging in structured and unstructured
- promoting physical activity
- connecting to public transportation, schools, and public housing
- promoting environmental stewardship components

Types of Federal Assistance Grants provided in the Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act:

### Rehabilitation Grants

The rehabilitation grants in the bill will include matching capitol grants to local governments for the purpose of rebuilding and expanding new and existing recreation and facilities

### Innovation Grants

The innovation grants in this bill are matching grants for the personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies, and services for urban parks and recreation facilities to address common problems related to facility operations.

### At-Risk Youth Recreation Grants

The at-risk youth recreation grants include matching grants for existing programs that have demonstrated success in providing alternative activities to children.

### Recovery Action Program Grants

Recovery Action Program Grants are matching grants to local governments for local park and recreation recovery action programs, including resource and needs assessment, coordination, and program development activities to encourage public definition of goals and to develop priorities for overall recreation system recovery.