



BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

11th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

New York's 11th Congressional District representing Brownsville, Ocean Hill, East Flatbush, Flatbush, Crown Heights, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, Park Slope, Kensington, Windsor Terrance, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights

July 23, 2010

Wall Street Reform Signed into Law

On Wednesday, July 22, President Barack Obama signed into law the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. This new law will rein in Wall Street, end taxpayer bailouts of big banks, and create a consumer financial protection bureau that 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 have cost the American people 8 million jobs and \$17 trillion in retirement savings and net worth. Working families in New York and across the country have lost their homes, their jobs, and their hard-earned savings as a result of Wall Street’s recklessness and greed. Republicans and the Bush Administration looked the other way as big banks made a buck at the expense of average Americans. The Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act will:

- help prevent the risky financial practices that led to the financial meltdown;
- create a process to shut down large, failing firms whose collapse would put the entire economy at risk;
- create a new consumer watchdog, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), devoted to protecting Americans from unfair and abusive financial practices; and
- protect the economy by bringing previously unregulated firms and financial products into the light via modern and diligent regulation.

Today marks a new era in financial regulation in this country and a great victory for the New York and the American people.

Rep. Clarke Celebrates Africa Day on the Hill



Rep. Clarke along with other Members of Congress, meets with his Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal on Capitol Hill.

On Wednesday, July 22, I joined The Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa and the Congressional African Staffers Association (CASA) in celebrating 50 years of independence for 17 African nations at the first Africa Day on Capitol Hill. We were joined by special guest and keynote speaker, his Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal. I was honored to be among the Members of Congress who presented a copy of House Resolution 1405 celebrating the anniversaries marking the end of colonial rule for the 17 African Nations.

I became a leading cosponsor of this resolution, because we must recognize the importance of good governance and democratic principles which have flourished in many African countries. More than two-thirds of sub-Saharan African countries have had democratic governments over the past decade. Moreover, nations from Senegal to Tanzania, from Ghana to Zambia, have seen successful power transitions in this period. With the passage of H. Res 1405, we honor the hope that resonates in the hearts and minds of the many Africans, African Americans, policy makers, and NGO’s that are committed to Africa’s progress and prosperity over the next 50 years. I am proud to share in this historic moment.



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 Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Janet Napolitano announced Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitian nationals who were in the United States on or before the earthquake. I am extremely pleased that DHS has extended the deadline for these individuals to file for TPS within the United States.

I commend President Obama and Secretary Napolitano for their dedication to the Haitian people in the wake of such a dark and challenging time. This is indeed a unmistakable 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 or call 1-800-375-5283.

Sincerely,
Yvette D. Clarke

House Passes Extension of Unemployment Benefits

On Thursday, July 22, I joined the House of Representatives in passing H.R. 4213, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act, by a vote of 272 to 152. This emergency legislation will extend unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to millions of Americans families.

With New York City's unemployment rate at 9.6 percent, this legislation will provide families the economic resources they need to get through these tough economic times. Despite the signs of economic improvement, the current pace of job creation illustrates the need for government action to help Americans during this tough economic time.

H.R. 4213 extends the Emergency Unemployment Compensation and Extended Benefits programs through November 30, 2010 and retroactively restores benefits to those already receiving benefits. According to analysis from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO), extending unemployment benefits not only aids the unemployed; it will also quickly and effectively stimulate the economy. Unemployment benefits were responsible for creating more than 1 million jobs since the recession started, and adding almost 2 percent to the gross domestic product according to the Economic Policy Institute. In fact, every dollar in unemployment benefits creates \$1.61 in economic activity, according to Economist and former John McCain advisor, Mark Zandi.

I know that the best way to help the American economy is to keep its people on their feet while we continue working to create American jobs. That's why I fought to extend unemployment benefits for the people of New York. New Yorkers and the American people need it, and I am proud to see this legislation go to the President to be signed into law.

Rep. Clarke Fights to Ensure Accurate Count for Brooklyn in the 2010 Census

On Monday July 19, 2010, I participated in a Congressional Oversight and Government Reform Committee field hearing chaired by Rep. Edolphus "Ed" Towns (NY-10) looking into alleged Census fraud at the North East Local Census Office. This has prompted the recount of nearly 10,000 households in our community. As the Representative of the 11th Congressional District, I have been diligent in rallying my constituency to fully participate in the Census process. That is why I am very concerned about the recent incidences of fraud.

Like many of my colleagues in the New York Congressional Delegation, I represent an extremely diverse constituency. In that, I represent a significant elderly population and immigrant population. These extremely vulnerable populations have been historically skeptical of sharing private information with government entities. Therefore when incidences of fraud arise regarding Census information, I am deeply troubled by the potential impact it has on their fragile participation rate.

Census fraud remains a pressing and important issue affecting both the Brooklyn community and the Greater New York Area. I will continue to ensure that the integrity of the Census process is protected and that the residents of the 11th Congressional District are accurately counted for the 2010 Census.

Healthcare Benefits for Brooklyn Small Businesses

More than 81.6 percent of New York small businesses, defined as those with fewer than 25 employees will be eligible this year for tax credits to help pay the cost of employee health coverage. Starting this year, businesses with fewer than 25 workers and average wages of less than \$50,000 will be eligible to receive a tax credit for the health insurance that they provide for their employees. In New York, this means 285,000 small businesses will qualify. Nationally, more than 4 million small businesses—83.7 percent—are eligible in 2010.

In the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Congress and the President recognized that small businesses often struggle to provide health insurance for their workers. This law includes many provisions, such as this tax credit, to help small employers and their workers obtain high-quality, affordable coverage. Targeting those businesses that are most in need, the small business tax credits and other critical provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act will help make health coverage affordable and accessible for America's small businesses.

Legislative Spotlight

On Tuesday July 20, I joined my fellow colleagues in passing H.R. 5283, the Help Haiti Act of 2010, introduced by Congressman Jeff Fortenberry of Nebraska.

This bill normalizes the immigration procedures for certain adopted Haitian orphans that received humanitarian parole between January 18, 2010 and April 15, 2010. It allows their adoptive families, who are U.S. citizens, to apply immediately on their behalves to become legal permanent residents and eventually qualify for citizenship.

As the Representative of the second largest population of Haitian immigrants, Haiti has been an important part of my Caribbean agenda. That is why I am extremely concerned that more than 1,000 paroled Haitian orphans being adopted by American families remain in immigration limbo due to a legal technicality.

It is alarming that these children have to wait two years before they are granted legal permanent residency. If this situation is not addressed, these children are in jeopardy of being separated from their adoptive families and are at risk of being deported back to Haiti where they have no family.

The legal technicality that put these kids in such a precarious position is yet another example of why our nation needs to address Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR). That is why I am committed to working to make immigration reform a reality as soon as possible.

Our national security is at stake; our moral standing in the world depends on it; and the American people, many of whom are first and second generation immigrants, demand it. Therefore, I urge Congress to take a fresh look at the antiquated policies and bureaucratic backlogs that tear families apart and devastate our communities.