



BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

11th 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

May 14, 2010

Clarke's First Annual Congressional Art Contest Brings out Brooklyn's Budding Young Artists

On Friday, May 14 2010, I hosted the Annual Congressional High School Art Contest at the Brooklyn Children's Museum and was blown away by the creative talent of our youth. These works of art truly embody the best artistic talent that our community has to offer.

I am thankful to the Brooklyn Arts Council for judging this prestigious contest. And while it was very difficult to choose a winner, this year's winner was Anna Chen, a 9th grader from Midwood High School. Her artwork will be displayed as a part of a National Exhibit in the U.S. Capitol.

The talent displayed by these young people demonstrates the value of art education in our schools. We must continue to harness their skills, and direct their creative talents toward positive outlets that will enhance our community.

Small Businesses Are Still Feeling the Credit Crunch

On Thursday, May 13, 2010, the Congressional Oversight Panel, responsible for monitoring developments related to stabilizing our financial system, released a report entitled, "The Small Business Credit Crunch and the Impact of the TARP." The report concluded that "Unfortunately, small business credit remains severely constricted."

The report's findings are troubling to say the least. I have been pushing for more resources for increased small business lending-especially for those in our hardest hit and underserved areas- for some time.

The report also indicates that, "Data from the Federal Reserve shows that lending plummeted during the 2008 financial crisis and remained sharply restricted throughout 2009. Some borrowers looked to community banks to pick up the slack, but smaller banks remain strained by their exposure to commercial real estate and other liabilities. Unable to find credit, many small businesses shut their doors, and some of the survivors are still struggling to find adequate financing."

It is clear, now more than ever, that we need all options on the table to address this critical issue, as small businesses create most of the new jobs in our economy.

Small business lending deserves more focus and I will continue to fight for a more favorable environment so small firms in the 11th District can borrow in order to grow and create sorely needed jobs. I call for a renewed effort by lawmakers, financial institutions, and small business stakeholders to come up with more solutions to address the small business lending crisis.



Dear Neighbor,

It is not too late to participate in the 2010 Census. If the Census Bureau did not receive your completed census form, as a courtesy, a census taker may visit your home briefly to complete the form in person. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share your information with anyone, including other federal agencies, immigration authorities or law enforcement agencies.

The census taker will never ask to enter your home. If a census taker visits you, here's what you should do:

- Ask to see their ID. All census workers carry official government badges marked with just their name; they may also have a "U.S. Census Bureau" bag.
- If you're still not certain about their identity, please call the Census Bureau at (347) 328-2540 or (866) 861-2010 to confirm they are employed by the Census Bureau.
- Answer the census form questions for your entire household (you must be at least 15 years old to answer questions) so that the census taker can record the results for submission to the Census Bureau.

Let us all do our part to have our voices heard.

Sincerely,
Yvette D. Clarke

Rep. Clarke Pays Homage to Brooklyn Legend, Lena Horne

On Sunday, May 9, 2010, Hollywood actress, jazz singer, civil rights activist, and Brooklyn native, Lena Horne passed away at the age of 92. Ms. Horne was a trail-blazing performing artist whose life exemplified her commitment to social justice, peace, and civil rights.

A major contributor to the arts, Ms. Horne's legacy as a Broadway star, movie actress, and Grammy-award winning recording artist will never be forgotten. Her long career was punctuated by a number of notable firsts and industry accolades. She was the first African American woman to perform with a white band ensemble, the first black performer to play the Copacabana nightclub, and among the first African Americans to sign a long-term Hollywood film studio contract. Industry recognized her talents with four Grammy Awards, the Recording Academy Lifetime Achievement Award, a Tony Award, and a Kennedy Center Honor.

A member of the NAACP since the age of two, Ms. Horne was an avid supporter of the civil rights movement. Ms. Horne participated in numerous civil rights rallies and demonstrations, including the March on Washington in August 1963. Joining Eleanor Roosevelt, Ms. Horne worked to pass anti-lynching legislation. President Obama called Horne Brooklyn's gift to culture.

Celebrating the Faces of Tivoli Towers

On Saturday, May 8, 2010, I had the opportunity to attend the Brooklyn Historical Society's multimedia exhibit which highlighted the residents of Tivoli Towers. On display was the work of curator and photographer Delphine Fawundu-Buford. Brooklyn residents also had the opportunity to watch the documentary "Tivoli, A Place We Call Home" by filmmakers Scott Braithwaite and Anthony Clouden Jr. The essence and strength of the residents of Tivoli towers were captured through their documentary and photos.

During the last decade, residents of Tivoli Towers have demonstrated a resilience and determination that is to be commended. Through this exhibition, people saw the memories, struggles, perseverance, and dedication that many of residents represent.

As we all know Tivoli Towers has been a part of the Brooklyn community since 1974, housing generations of Brooklyn residents. In 2006, residents faced being displaced due to the change of management of the towers. Illustrating a strong sense of community, tenants unified to stay in the towers. Democracy is not a spectator sport and sometimes you have to fight for it. The residents of Tivoli Towers know this concept all too well.

Throughout the process, my office has continuously been engaged with the community, Stellar Management, the tenant board, housing authorities and residents about the conditions of the Towers. My staff and I have attended numerous community meetings and forums, monitoring the situation and providing assistance. Last month, my office assisted in extending the deadline to submit comments regarding the rent increase proposed by Stellar Management. This extension would allow residents the opportunity to contest the rent increase, allowing their voices to be heard.

As the fate of Tivoli Towers remains unclear, we do know that the people continue to embody the true spirit of New York. It was an honor to visit this exhibit, recognizing Tivoli Towers and its residents. As the U.S. Representative of the 11th Congressional District of New York, I am proud to be the voice of such a resilient and fortified people.



Rep. Clarke discusses the importance of the Tivoli Tower Exhibition at the Brooklyn Historical Society.

Legislative Spotlight

As the Chairwoman of the House Homeland Security subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Science and Technology, it is one of my top priorities to ensure that our nation's cyber space and computer systems are safe from attack. Cybersecurity is a major emerging threat and challenge to our national and economic security.

That is why I am a proud cosponsor of H. R. 5247, the Executive Cyberspace Authorities Act of 2010. The legislation would elevate the Cybersecurity Coordinator to a Senate confirmed Director position and give the director more powers to direct federal government cyber security activities.

The legislation would allow the director to review and approve each civilian federal agency budget relating to the protection of information technology (IT) infrastructure.

The bill would also require each civilian agency include with its annual budget request:

- a review of threats faced by the agency to its information security systems;
- a plan to secure the agency's IT infrastructure, based upon National Institute of Standards and Technology guidelines and recommendations; and
- a report on development of secure identity and authentication processes.

Cybersecurity is a key tool in our national security infrastructure. Cyberspace has no borders or boundaries, so it is critical that we establish specific entities to monitor them.