



# 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*

# August 7, 2009

## Rep. Clarke Fights for Small Businesses

On July 29, the House Small Business Committee held a hearing to examine ways in which the Small Business Administration (SBA) can improve its economic development, technical assistance, and capital access programs by eliminating waste, fraud and abuse.

At that hearing, I urged the head of the SBA, Administrator Karen Mills, to make significant improvements in programs such as the HUBZone program, women and minority access to capital programs, and improved coordination of Federal agencies' efforts to include small and disadvantaged businesses in their procurement strategies. Administrator Mills agreed to partner with me in making significant improvements in those areas with a special focus on services for women owned and minority businesses.

I am working closely with the SBA in three key areas that I believe will have a significant economic impact on Brooklyn: access to capital; greater access to federal, state, and local contracts; and growing the size and capacity of minority and woman-owned firms.

In the new economy, it is important that citizens understand that there are resources available to them as they seek creative ways to increase economic prosperity for them and their families. I am focused on improving opportunities for my constituents, particularly as we emerge from the current economic turmoil and strive to future success.

You can view a portion of my interaction with Administrator Mills by going to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeWOg5eqm-U>

## Homeland Security Announces Reforms of Immigration Detention System

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Assistant Secretary John Morton announced on Thursday that ICE is undertaking a major overhaul of the agency's immigration detention system.

As the first of many concrete steps ICE is taking to implement comprehensive detention reform, the agency is creating an Office of Detention Policy and Planning (ODPP). The role of this office is to design and plan a civil detention system tailored to addresses ICE's needs. Dr. Schiuro, who will report directly to the assistant secretary, will lead the ODPP with support from detention and health care experts.

The ODPP will evaluate the entire detention system in a methodical way, with seven areas of focus, each with benchmarks for progress.

For more information visit: <http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/0908/090806washington.htm>



Dear Neighbor:

Do you need healthcare coverage? Do you have questions about your existing Medicare or Social Security benefits? Are you confused about which agency to go to for help? Would you like to find out about more benefits that you may be entitled to?

On **Tuesday August 18**, I will be hosting a **Community Health Benefit Forum** to provide information about these issues. I have invited representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Social Security Administration (SSA), Department of the Aging (DFTA), and the New York Human Resources Administration (HRA).

The Forum will be held in the **Community Room of 123 Linden Boulevard (first floor) between 2-4pm**. This is not a discussion about congressional healthcare reform legislation. This is an opportunity to hear from state and Federal health officials about existing coverage and assistance programs that are available to you.

Sincerely,  
*Yvette D. Clarke*  
Member of Congress

# Post-9/11 GI Bill: Honoring our Nation's Heroes

Last year, Congress enacted the new GI Bill for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (the "Post-9/11 GI Bill") to restore the promise of a full, four-year college education for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. This year, Congress extended those college benefits to all children of fallen soldiers (with no minimum military service needed to qualify). On August 1, veterans started receiving college education benefits under the new GI Bill for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The measure provides up to four years of education benefits at a college or university for individuals with at least 90 days of active duty service on or after September 11, 2001 who have been honorably discharged from service. The benefits are correlated on a sliding scale to the total months served. To receive full benefits, you must have served on active duty for three years. This program will pay for:

- tuition and fees of up to the maximum in-state tuition and fees at a public institution in your state;
- a monthly housing allowance at the location of the school, based on the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents; and
- an annual books and supplies stipend of up to \$1,000.

These benefits are generally payable for up to 15 years following release from active duty.

All of the children of service members who have died on active duty since September 11, 2001 qualify for the full education benefit, regardless of the length of military service of their parent; these benefits expire 15 years after the 18th birthday of surviving military children. To apply for a certificate of eligibility for the new college benefits please visit the VA website at:

<https://www.gibill.va.gov/>.

## In Local News



Lincoln Road (between Bedford and Rogers Avenue)-photo credit: Brooklyn Botanic Gardens

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Lincoln Road R&B Block Association and the Mid-Atlantic Block Association for winning the Greenest Block in Brooklyn Contest. The Greenest Block in Brooklyn Contest is a project of Brooklyn Botanic Garden's GreenBridge program in cooperation with Borough President Marty Markowitz. The first prize winners of this year's contest were Lincoln Road R&B Block Association, for the greenest residential block, and the Mid Atlantic Block Association for the greenest commercial block.

The Green the Block Contest was designed to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's environment. Right here in the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, community groups such as the Lincoln Road R&B Block Association and the Mid-Atlantic Block Association, are working hard towards the beautification of our community and greening our environment. I commend them on their efforts.

## Legislative Spotlight

On May 4, 2009, I sponsored H.R. 2070, the Radiological Materials Security Act. This legislation will protect Americans by decreasing the likelihood of an attack using radiological devices. To accomplish this aim, the bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to:

- Develop a classification system for information regarding radiological materials and share the assessment with appropriately cleared participants;
- Develop a terrorism self-assessment tool to determine risk and provide it to the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which will disseminate to its system facilities;
- Recommended practices for securing high-risk radiological materials;
- Make available infrastructure protection grants to owners and operators of facilities housing high-risk radiological materials.

Additionally, the H.R. 2070 directs the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission to:

- Update and enforce regulations for the security of radiological materials;
- Maintain and update a nuclear materials events database to track radiological materials; and
- Requiring the owner or operator of a facility containing high-risk radiological material to implement facility security plans to address vulnerabilities.

Lastly, the bill directs the Secretary of Energy to provide technical assistance with the Department of Homeland Security, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, state and local authorities and participating facilities.

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Science and Technology will be holding a Field Hearing to examine the risk of dirty bomb attacks and best practices for securing high-risk radiological materials on September 14, 2009 in New York.



Rep. Clarke, Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer, Chairman of the Mount Obama Committee Mr. Ivor Jackson, and acting Governor-General Eustace Francis

On Tuesday Aug. 4, 2009, Rep. Clarke attended a ceremony in Antigua and Barbuda honoring President Barack Obama on his birthday and saluted him as a symbol of black achievement by naming Antigua's highest mountain "Mount Obama".