



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

November 20, 2009

Rep. Clarke Hosts Telephone Town Hall Meeting: Coping with the National H1N1 Vaccine Shortage

On Thursday, November 19th, I hosted the second in a series of telephone town hall meetings on how New York City is coping with the national shortage of the H1N1 vaccine. Special guest, Dr. Aletha Maybank, the Assistant Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene of the Brooklyn District Public Health Office, outlined New York City's strategy to make the H1N1 vaccine available to residents.

Currently, New York City expects to have 200,000 dosages for the H1N1 Vaccine available every week. 62% of the vaccine has been distributed through pediatric practices, 38% through our schools and student clinics, and 22% through our hospitals.

As Chair of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology, I have federal jurisdiction over DHS's role in preventing the spread of the H1N1 virus. On October 24th, President Obama declared the H1N1 virus a National Emergency. Following this announcement, my subcommittee held a hearing entitled, "Real-Time Assessment of the Federal Response to Pandemic Influenza." Although we went into this pandemic better prepared than we had been in the past, we were not fully prepared to meet the pandemic when it started this year.

The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services are leading our Federal response efforts. It is clear that DHS Secretary Napolitano and HHS Secretary Sebelius have set the tone for responding to this pandemic with their strong leadership and commitment to the Nation. I look forward to our continued partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, The Department of Health and Human Services, and other relevant agencies as we work to prevent a widespread catastrophic influenza pandemic from occurring.

Rep. Clarke Addresses UN Regarding Climate Change and the Fate on Island Nation

On November 12, I had the opportunity to address the United Nations at a forum hosted in conjunction with the Columbia Consortium for Risk Management and the Alliance of Small Island States. The forum was entitled "Developing Technical and Financial Solutions for the Survival of SIDS: Looking beyond Copenhagen." The event provided real opportunity for a diverse array of individuals to come together to address issues surrounding climate change.

As the Representative of one of the most diverse Congressional districts in the country, with a large Caribbean immigrant constituency, I remain very concerned about the affects of climate change on Small Island Developing States. Often times, we forget that these nations' economic stability is directly affected by global warming. Earlier this year I voted in favor of the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 so that as a nation we can begin to reduce carbon emissions and transition to clean sources of energy. As the U.S. works to minimize the effects of global warming, it is important to assist small island developing nations as they continue their economic development.



Dear Neighbor:

I invite you to attend an informational forum on the 2010 United States Census. I will be hosting the forum on Tuesday, December 8th at Mount Zion Church (203 East 37th street, Brooklyn NY 11203) from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

As the Representative of the 11th Congressional District, where less than 35% of our citizens participated in the 2000 Census, it is important that our community improves its Census questionnaire response rate. This forum will focus on the importance of the Census, including how the Census affects Federal funding formulas and the redistricting process.

The Informational Forum will comprise of key officials in the community, including:

- Representatives from the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President
- Representatives from the Office of the Governor
- Representatives from many different posts at the Census, including key note speaker, Allison Cenac, Assistant Census Manager

If you have any questions, please contact my office at 718.287.1142.

Sincerely,
Yvette D. Clarke

Rep. Clarke Discusses Child Nutrition with Former NBA Star John Salley



Rep. Clarke and John Salley meet on Capitol Hill to discuss child nutrition.

On Wednesday, November 18th, I sat down with former NBA Champion John Salley to discuss the importance of providing more vegetarian options in school lunches. I commend Mr. Salley for his dedication to the improvement of school lunches. According to the centers for disease control, child obesity is at an all time high at 17% in the state of New York. Unfortunately, children don't always have access to healthy foods, and Mr. Salley's push for more vegetarian food is a step in the right direction. As a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I believe that this could be a wonderful initiative that will help combat childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity can lead to adverse effects on growth; including long-term medical consequences such as a greater risk of hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. That is why I continue to push for the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. Healthy children go on to be productive citizens for our nation and I am confident that Mr. Salley's campaign to improve our school lunches will help our children excel in the classroom.

Rep. Clarke Co-Sponsors the Emergency Influenza Containment Act

The H1N1 pandemic is rapidly spreading across the United States. In 48 of 50 states, H1N1 is now officially "widespread" – the highest of CDC's category of contagion. As of November 6th, 129 children have died from H1N1.

One of the critical factors contributing to the spread of this virus is the inability of millions of American workers to stay home when they're sick. The CDC is telling everyone to stay home if they're sick. But the simple fact is that the 50 million American workers who have no paid sick leave cannot afford to follow this advice. It's estimated that an individual who comes to work with H1N1 will infect 10% of their co-workers. In addition, many people have no paid sick leave – and therefore will be under pressure to work even when sick. Many are employed in jobs where their illness can easily be spread to the broader public.

To leave this problem untreated during a time of pandemic is simply irresponsible – to hard-working employees and to the broader public. This is why I co-sponsored the Emergency Influenza Containment Act (H.R. 3991). The Act:

- Guarantees a sick worker up to five paid sick leave days a year if an employer 'directs' or 'advises' a sick employee to stay or go home.
- Covers both full-time and part-time workers (on a pro-rated basis) in businesses with 15 and more workers. Employers that already provide at least 5 days' paid sick leave are exempt.
- An employer can end paid sick leave at any time by informing the employee that the employer believes they're well enough to return to work. Employees may continue on unpaid leave under the Family Medical Leave Act or other existing sick leave policies.
- Employees who follow their employer's direction to stay home because of contagious illness cannot be fired, disciplined, or subjected to retaliation for following directions.
- Takes effect 15 days after the President signs it into law and sunsets after two years.

Employers will be able to limit the spread and cost of contagious disease within their workforce more efficiently. By limiting the potential for infecting co-workers and the public, this Act will go a long way toward securing our nation's health during a time of emergency.

Legislative Spotlight

On Thursday November 19th, I co-authored legislation which was introduced by Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay. The bill, entitled the "Subcontractor Fairness Act of 2009", holds prime contractors accountable for subcontracting proposals that they submit as a part of a Federal contract bid in the civilian or defense context.

Current law requires companies competing for Federal contracts for more than \$550,000 to include 'acceptable' sub-contracting plans. Too often, prime contractors begin preliminary discussions and work with smaller subcontractors in order to increase their chances of securing the contract award.

It is important that we hold prime contractors accountable. Prime contractors often use the sub contractors for work. However, when the contracts are awarded, we find that the sub contractors are often dropped. This act aims to close this loophole.

This bill would:

- require bidders for contracts greater than \$550,000 (\$1,000,000 for construction bids) to submit copies of agreements with intended subcontractors as part of the bid;
- create a valid contract between prime contractor and sub-contractor at the time the contract is awarded to the prime contractor;
- require that the agreement include the identity of the subcontractor, the scope of the work to be performed under the purported agreement and the dollar amount of the subcontract; and
- make the effective date 60 days after enactment.

As the only Congressional Black Caucus Member on the House Small Business Committee, I believe in the importance of raising a voice for the veteran-, women-, and minority-owned firms. Small businesses are the corner stone of this economy and hold the key out of this recession and we must provide them with all available resources for their successful growth.

Office of Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke (NY-11)

Washington Office: 1029 Longworth House Office Building | Washington, DC 20515 | Phone: (202) 225-6231 | Fax: (202) 226-0112
District Office: 123 Linden Boulevard Fourth Floor | Suite 200 | Brooklyn, NY 11226 | Phone: (718) 287-1142 | Fax: (718) 287-1223