



BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

11th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Representing: Brownsville, Ocean Hill, Crown Heights, East Flatbush, Boro Park, Kensington, Park Slope, Carroll Gardens, Gowanus, Prospect Heights, Lefferts Gardens, Grand Army Plaza, Windsor Terrace, Flatlands and Midwood

July 10, 2009

Congresswoman Clarke Recognizes Caribbean Heritage Month

On Thursday, I had the honor of voting in favor of a Resolution and provided a statement on the Floor of the House of Representatives to recognize the annual celebration of Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

As the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, I have witnessed firsthand the significant contributions Caribbean-Americans have made to Brooklyn, New York, and the entire United States.

The political, social and cultural fabric of this nation has been shaped by many heroes of Caribbean descent, such as former U.S. Representative Shirley Chisholm, former Secretary of State Collin Powell, novelist Jamaica Kincaid, social activists Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X. There are also a number of individuals that have made significant contributions in my home district of Brooklyn, including: Dr. Una Clarke, the first Caribbean born woman elected to the NY City legislature, Lemuel Stanislaus of Grenada; Dr. Henry Frank of Haiti; and Carlos Rosada of Grenada, Chairman of the West-Indian American Day Carnival Association.

Rep. Clarke Gets \$40 Million to Protect the New York Region



Rep. Clarke, Cpt. Michael Riggio, Commissioner Kelly

Securing the Cities is a vital initiative developed to protect New York City and the tri-state area from the threat of an improvised nuclear device or a radiological dispersal device. The program establishes a ring around New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut of state-of-the-art mobile radiation-detection equipment on highways, toll plazas, bridges, tunnels, and waterways. This critical investment will ensure that law enforcement and emergency response agencies have the resources needed to protect our nation's largest city and the tri-state region from the most damaging terrorist threat imaginable.

In coordination with Rep. Peter King, I successfully offered an amendment to the FY 2010 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act to secure \$40 million for Securing the Cities initiative and \$10 million for the procurement of radiation portal monitors nationally. On July 1, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, invited Rep. King and me to discuss the Securing the Cities program at the NYPD SHIELD Conference. Since coming to Congress in 2007, I have worked with my colleagues in the Homeland Security Committee to protect our nation against dirty bomb threats. In fact, my bill the *Radiological Materials Security Act* (H.R. 2070) would help secure domestic sources of radiological materials. Being able to provide the necessary funds for the Securing the Cities initiative is a highlight in my congressional tenure.



Dear Neighbor:

I strongly support a single-payer healthcare system that would cover all Americans. Unfortunately, the Congress is not moving in that direction. While disappointed, I remain committed to the passage of comprehensive healthcare coverage this year.

Any healthcare proposal that passes the House of Representatives must include three key principles of an effective nationwide healthcare system:

- universal coverage;
- a public health plan option; and
- give small businesses meaningful access to healthcare coverage to their employees

Next week, the legislative proposals will be "marked up" in various committees, including the Education and Labor Committee I am member of. I will continue to fight for these principles as we move into the next phase of congressional debate.

Sincerely,
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Small, High-Tech Firms Find a Champion in Clarke

As the nation continues to be crippled by the ongoing economic downturn, we must be even more vigilant in our support for small, minority and women-owned business. They create the new, innovative jobs that will lead us out of a recession and into the future. That is why I went to the Floor to support the *Enhancing Innovation Research Act of 2009*. This bill promotes small business participation in the high-tech sector by reauthorizing the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer grant programs. SBIR is a competitive grant program that awards funds from a reserve of federal R&D dollars that have been set aside for small businesses. The STTR program develops public-private partnerships between small firms and technology laboratories, with the goal of bringing new technology to the marketplace. Eleven federal agencies currently participate in the SBIR program and five participate in the STTR program.

Haiti is Granted Debt Relief



Congresswoman Clarke (second from left) joins her Congressional colleagues on a trip to meet with Haitian President Rene' Pre'val.

After years of hard work, we can celebrate a major milestone in the ongoing struggle to lift one of our closest neighbors out of poverty. On July 1, the IMF and World Bank announced that they were cancelling \$1.2 billion of Haiti's external debt. In February of this year, I joined a bi-partisan group of my colleagues to urge World Bank President Robert Zoellick to consider eliminating Haiti's debt. Despite a humanitarian crisis last year, natural disasters, and food and fuel shortages, the Haitian government persevered and accomplished a series of key economic and social objectives, which made the debt cancellation possible. While this does not solve the many ongoing challenges facing the impoverished nation, it is a positive step for the island nation. Debt reduction allows the government to invest its scarce resources into poverty reduction programs such as healthcare and education, instead of on never-ending interest payments on crushing debt burdens. I stand firmly committed to supporting the Haitian people throughout this hemisphere.

Greater Access for Small Businesses in Procurement at DHS

I am a member of both the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Small Business. This unique position allows me to redouble my efforts to ensure that small businesses have access to homeland security contracting opportunities.

In an effort to facilitate greater opportunities and help you navigate the federal procurement process, the Homeland Security Committee has compiled information about DHS programs, points of contact, and background data in a Business Opportunities Manual.

You can also maintain access to the latest marketing and procurement information by visiting the DHS website at <http://www.dhs.gov/xopnbiz/smallbusiness>. You can also contact the DHS Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization at (202) 447-5555 or email the Committee at: dhsbizops@mail.house.gov.

To access the manual, click on the following link: <http://homelandsecurity.house.gov/SiteDocuments/manual.pdf>
Also see our latest DHS Business Opportunities newsletter: <http://homelandsecurity.house.gov/SiteDocuments/june2009.pdf>

Legislative Spotlight

Earlier this year, I sponsored the Immigration Fraud Prevention Act of 2009, H.R. 1992. This bill would penalize those who engage in schemes to defraud persons seeking legal counsel or assistance in connection with federal immigration laws.

A growing number of fraudulent "immigration specialists" are preying on individuals who retain their services. They promise to help immigrants and petitioners navigate the system, only to charge exorbitant fees and file bogus paperwork. Often, their victims permanently lose opportunities for work authorization or immigration relief while these "specialists" rake in six-figure salaries, with little or no consequences. This must stop.

H.R. 1992 is supported by a number of immigration and legal organizations, including the Council of Peoples Organization, the National Immigration Forum, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, NY Immigration Coalition and the American Bar Association.

The Act is sponsored in the Senate by Senators Feinstein (D-CA) and Kennedy (D-MA), and Murray (D-WA). In the House, current sponsors are Representatives Clarke (D-NY), Conyers (D-MI), Filner (D-CA), Reyes (D-TX) Schiff (D-CA) and Stark (D-CA).