

CONGRESSWOMAN NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR NEW YORK'S 12TH DISTRICT

Spring 2008



Roundtable Brings Together Housing and Financial Experts to Discuss Solutions to City's Mortgage Foreclosure Crisis

On January 24, Congresswoman Velázquez brought together more than 50 local housing experts, finance professionals and policymakers at a roundtable discussion on the mortgage foreclosure crisis. The participants shared their ideas on how to address the worsening situation that is threatening New York City homeowners.

"It's time to focus on viable solutions and on the eradication of predatory lending practices that led to this



crisis," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "We need to find ways to keep working families in their homes while protecting investments in flourishing neighborhoods across the City."

Congresswoman Velázquez firmly believes that developing solutions to this crisis must be a collective effort. Incorporating the suggestions gathered at the event, she is working with colleagues in Congress to craft a housing package that will provide support to struggling homeowners in New York and across the nation.

Chinatown Entrepreneurs Learn About Small Business Resources

Congresswoman Velázquez spoke to more than a hundred small business owners from the Lower East Side and Chinatown during a small business forum held in Manhattan on Wednesday, February 20.



Running a business means making difficult decisions, yet entrepreneurs often don't know where to turn for advice or assistance. The Small Business Information and Education Day, sponsored by Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) and the Renaissance Economic Development Corporation (REDC),

provided an opportunity for Chinatown business owners to learn about the resources currently available.

As the Chairwoman of the Small Business Committee, Congresswoman Velázquez will continue her efforts to ensure that New York entrepreneurs have access to affordable capital, adequate health care coverage, assistance with rising energy costs and the guidance needed to help grow their businesses.

RESOURCES FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS:

Visit one of the seven Small Business Development Centers in New York City. Find the nearest center by calling (800) 732-SBDC or visiting <http://www.nysbdc.org>

Federal Grants Assist Local Organizations

Bowery Residents Committee: \$2,776,664. For programs providing housing and employment training to the homeless.

Lutheran Medical Center: \$500,000. For substance abuse and HIV/AIDS services.

South Brooklyn Legal Services: \$183,333. For services to prevent housing discrimination.

Chinese-American Planning Council: \$195,000. For counseling, English language and vocational training programs.

To find out more about how your organization can apply for a federal grant, please visit Congresswoman Velázquez's website at www.house.gov/velazquez/constituents/grants.html.

Congresswoman Velázquez United with Community Advocates

Congresswoman Velázquez joined more than 700 community members and city and state officials at the Make the Road New York Community Assembly on February 23. The rally, held in Flushing, Queens, focused on initiatives to ensure equal treatment for all members of New York City's diverse population.

Congresswoman Velázquez advocates in Congress to improve education, housing and economic opportunities for New Yorkers – many of the same issues Make the Road New York identifies in its policy platform.

Make the Road New York represents 4,000 members, 95-percent of whom

are Hispanic. The organization works to empower Latinos – and the City as a whole – by creating employment opportunities, fighting poverty and promoting equality.

Recovery Tax Rebates Offer Relief to Working Families

The economic stimulus package passed by Congress and signed into law in February will provide relief to working families who are struggling with the high costs of gas, health care and groceries. It will also help to jumpstart our economy.

Congresswoman Velázquez announced that the recovery rebate will put hundreds of dollars into the hands of more than 8.3 million New York residents, including thousands of seniors and disabled veterans. The package also expands financing opportunities for people who are in danger of losing their homes and pro-

notes investment in small business.

What do I need to file to get a recovery rebate check? Most taxpayers simply need to file a 2007 income tax return. There is no additional form needed; the IRS will automatically send the rebate check to you.

When will I receive my rebate? The first checks are expected to go out in May, and will continue to be issued through the spring and early summer.

For more information, visit the Internal Revenue Service's website at www.irs.gov or call 1-800-829-1040.



Congresswoman Velázquez celebrated the Year of the Rat at an event in Lower Manhattan's Chinatown on Sunday, February 8, 2008.

Send Us Your Feedback:

If you have any comments about this newsletter, visit www.house.gov/velazquez and click on 'Contact' to email the Congresswoman.

Congresswoman Velázquez Reminds Consumers about the National Transition to Digital TV



New Yorkers should begin to prepare for the nationwide transition to digital television. Effective February 17, 2009, anyone who owns an analog

television and receives their television signal over-the-air – either through a rooftop antenna or rabbit ears – will need a converter box to make sure their television set keeps working.

DID YOU KNOW? The federal government will provide coupons to help consumers pay for the converter boxes. Every household is entitled to two \$40 coupons, each of which may be applied toward the cost of one converter box. You can obtain the coupon on-line at www.dtv2009.gov,

or by phone at 1-888-DTV-2009 (English) and 1-866-495-1161 (Spanish).

Digital television will bring improved reception, more channels and more choices for families in the District. Congresswoman Velázquez encourages consumers to take advantage of the available coupons to help make the transition to digital television as affordable as possible.

New Website Provides Resources for You!

Congresswoman Velázquez recently launched a new website to ensure that NY-12 residents have access to the variety of resources provided by her office. The new site includes information on the services to District residents, the Congresswoman's legislative record, events in the community, and contact information for all offices in New York City and Washington, DC. Visit the new site at www.house.gov/velazquez.

DID YOU KNOW? You can sign up to receive this newsletter via email. Just visit www.house.gov/velazquez and click on the e-newsletter icon.



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VISIT MY NEW WEBSITE: www.house.gov/velazquez