



Serving New York's 12th Congressional District – Brooklyn · Lower Manhattan · Queens

CONGRESSWOMAN NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

SUMMER 2009

Increased Resources for New York's Community Health Centers

New York's 50 Community Health Centers offer free or low-cost medical care to 1.1 million in the state and account for almost 12,000 jobs. To reach even more families in underserved neighborhoods, Congresswoman Velázquez is working to increase funding for these important medical centers.

"With escalating costs making health care harder to afford, community health centers are a necessary resource for many hard-working families," said Velázquez. "These centers open their doors to everyone, ensuring no person seeking basic medical treatment is ever turned away."

She joined colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to introduce the "Access for All America Act of 2009," which would expand quality health care available for New York City's working families. Community health centers save New York-

ers money by offering preventative care and cutting down on the need for emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

"With more than 2.5 million in our state lacking health insurance, this is an investment that will create new jobs while taking strides to ensure a healthy future for New York City," Velázquez said.



In March 2009, Congresswoman Velázquez met with patients and their families at the Lutheran Family Medical Center in Sunset Park.

Velázquez Equips New York Small Business Owners with Tools to Prosper

Congresswoman Velázquez held a workshop on May 11 in New York City to help small business owners gather information about assistance in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and learn about new federal contracting opportunities.

Velázquez is working to provide

entrepreneurs from across Brooklyn, Queens and the Lower East Side with the resources needed to grow their firms and create new jobs for the community.

"I will continue to help our City's small business owners, the hard-working people that create jobs and drive

innovation. Their success can help lead the nation in the economic recovery," she said.

The Recovery Act includes tax relief for entrepreneurs, expands lending programs for small businesses, and provides funding for local infrastructure projects.



Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez talks with a small business owner about the benefits of green technology during a tour of Brooklyn's Navy Yard in April 2009.

Legislation Passed to Strengthen Entrepreneur Resource Centers

As Chairwoman of the Small Business Committee, Rep. Velázquez led the House in passing bipartisan legislation to help small businesses succeed. The Job Creation Through Entrepreneurship Act of 2009 (H.R. 2352) increases resources for entrepreneurial development programs, including seven Small Business Development Centers and five Women's Business Centers in New York City.

"In New York City, small firms create 3 out of every 4 new jobs. Supporting small business is essential to strengthening our neighborhoods and putting New Yorkers back to work," Velázquez said.

The legislation was approved by the House of Representatives and is now being considered in the Senate.

New Initiatives Safeguard Renters and Working Class Families

For years, working class families and minority communities have been targeted by predatory lending practices. These risky loans are a major driver behind the home foreclosure crisis affecting New York City. To stop this practice in its tracks, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act (H.R. 1728).

"This bill includes protections to ensure loans are never extended to someone who can't pay it back," said Velázquez, who is the City's senior Member on the U.S. House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity.

Congresswoman Velázquez included measures in the bill to protect renters in New York City. One initiative requires the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Treasury Department to develop a program to stabilize apartment buildings at risk of foreclosure. She also is working to create a public outreach campaign that would educate low-income and first-time home buyers about the benefits of home inspections.

"The mortgage crisis has taken a tough toll on our neighborhoods," Velázquez said. "These initiatives ensure New York City families are able to stay in their homes and will stop the foreclosures that are damaging our communities."

Hate Crimes Hotline Offers Protection to New York's Diverse Population

After last year's deadly attack in Bushwick, we saw how hate crimes can have a devastating impact on individuals and entire communities. Sadly, this type of crime often goes unreported to the authorities. Congresswoman Velázquez recently introduced a bill (H.R. 2684) to combat this problem by creating a National Hate Crimes Hotline.

"We are taking steps to provide a safe place for victims of hate crimes to be heard. A National Hate Crimes Hotline

would allow New Yorkers and victims across the country to safely report to the police and find vital assistance," Velázquez said.

Victims will be able to call the hotline to anonymously report hate crimes to the police and receive information about counseling and services in their area. By accurately tracking these crimes, local authorities will be able to improve responsiveness and increase prevention efforts.

Federal Resources Boost Innovative Community Programs

In recent weeks, Velázquez has visited community organizations throughout the 12th Congressional District to present federal funding in support of their innovative programs.

She has met with neighborhood children, families and seniors who

benefit from these efforts, as well as the dedicated staff who carry out the programs.

"These resources give New Yorkers the opportunities needed to improve their lives and create a positive future for their children," Velázquez said.

The Congresswoman worked to secure \$3.5 million for local initiatives that help working families lead healthy and productive lives. This year, efforts receiving these resources include youth crime prevention programs, women's health initiatives, a local farmers market and nursing home improvements.



• **City Parks Foundation:** \$150,000 to support free cultural, educational and recreational programs for youth at parks and recreational centers throughout the 12th Congressional District.

• **Commission on the Future of the Latino Community in NYC:** \$122,821 for the establishment of a small business and economic development commission.

• **Communilife, Inc.:** \$167,000 for "Life is Precious" demonstration projects to address the alarming rates of depression and suicide in Brooklyn communities.

• **Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation:** \$122,821 for the Cypress Hills Economic Revitalization Initiative (CHERI) to stimulate the neighborhood's economy, address the subprime lending crisis and educate residents about protecting their assets over the long-term.

• **Dance Theatre Etcetera:** \$71,000 to expand the "Tolerance Through Arts" initiatives at local schools, after-school programs and community centers.

• **Discipleship Outreach Ministries:** \$95,000 to provide mobile and on-site mental health services.

• **Gouverneur Healthcare Services:** \$380,000 to improve the nursing facility with homelike kitchens, bathing, dining and recreational areas.

• **Graham Avenue Business Improvement District:** \$94,000 to support a farmers market on Cook Street.

• **Grand Street Campus Arts Department:** \$100,000 for its programs that engage at-risk students in the world of art, both as participants and audience members.

• **Highland Park Community Development Corporation:** \$200,000 for the Values Education Through Cooperative Activities (VETCA) Program, which fosters real life cooperation and instills positive societal values.

• **Hudson Raritan Estuary - Gowanus Canal Environmental Restoration Project:** \$239,000 for the Army Corps of Engineers to continue its feasibility study for the environmental restoration of the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn.

• **Lower East Side Girls Club:** \$250,000 for the expansion of after-school programs, including leadership development, entrepreneurial training, financial planning, academic support and civic engagement programs.

• **Lutheran Family Health Center Network:** \$438,000 to support the Women's Health Services Initiative providing access to breast cancer screening and prenatal sonograms for medically underserved communities.

• **Red Hook Community Justice Center:** \$350,000 to support the youth crime prevention program, which provides at-risk youth with much-needed social services.

• **Safe Routes for Seniors and Kids:** \$712,500 for New York City to build upon its existing Safe Routes to School program and reduce the number of accidents involving pedestrians.



The Lower Eastside Girls Club welcomed Congresswoman Velázquez to their center in June 2009 to tell her about the organization's successful youth empowerment programs.

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