



Update to the Community:

Winter 2016

Rep. Grace Napolitano

Proudly representing California's 32nd Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives: Azusa - Baldwin Park - City of Industry - Covina - Duarte - El Monte - Glendora - Irwindale - La Puente - La Verne - Monrovia - San Dimas - West Covina

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Napolitano Secures Billions for CA in Transportation Bill

As the only California Democratic conferee appointed to finalize the \$305 billion 5-year transportation bill for the nation, Napolitano secured \$26 billion for California highway construction, safety, and transit programs.

- **Transit Funding** – Approximately \$450 million/yr for LA County region for upgrading rail/bus rapid transit systems: Foothill Transit, LA Metro, Metrolink.
- **Local Control** – Local governments now have more control over federal highway funding than the state.
- **Railway Highway Grade Crossing Program** – \$245 million/yr to help improve goods movement, lessening impact on local communities with construction of highway rail grade separations, e.g. Alameda Corridor East Construction Authority (ACE) throughout the San Gabriel Valley.
- **Positive Train Control (PTC)** – \$199 million in new grants to implement PTC safety systems, technology to monitor position/location of trains, automatically employing braking & safety measures, to avoid future accidents like Chatsworth Metrolink in 2008.
- **Park & Ride** – States can now give local cities ownership of park-and-ride lots in their areas to invest in them & improve performance.
- **Paratransit Coordinated Fares** – Allows all 44 LA County transportation agencies to utilize L.A. Access Services' fare system for transit riders with disabilities.

- **Meal and Rest Breaks for Truckers** – Protects existing state labor law to ensure truck drivers get meal and rest breaks.

*Source: House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

Info: napolitano.house.gov/sites/napolitano.house.gov/files/documents/CAaccomplishmentsFASTAct.pdf



Napolitano discusses completion of Gold Line Foothill Extension with residents of Azusa on September 18. Metro service to begin March 2016 at 6 new stations—APU/Citrus College, Azusa Downtown, Duarte, Irwindale, Monrovia & Arcadia. Info: metrogoldline.org.

Youth ChalleNGe LA County Expansion Update

With Co-Chair McKinley & Congressional Youth ChalleNGe Caucus, Napolitano secured \$150 million for 2016, a \$15 million increase, for new National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Programs (NGYCP), which enhance education levels, life skills, and employment potential of 16-18 year old youth at risk.



Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy cadets discuss transforming experience of NGYCP.

Part of the expansion goal is to establish a new program in LA County; 70% of Sunburst (Los Alamitos) graduates come from LA County (4 from El Monte in December 2015 class). Cal Guard met with LA Board of Supervisors staff in December to form partnership. Updates/Info: napolitano.house.gov/issue/youth-challenge.

To see more successes of NGYCP, CBS Evening News' follow-up on Sunburst graduates 1 year later: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/national-guard-sunburst-challenge-academy-graduates-thrive-in-their-new-lives/>.

57/60 Confluence Construction Begins

Expected to be completed by June 2017.**

Napolitano requested \$10 million with Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA) for critical project to begin to reduce traffic congestion and delays at State Routes 57 & 60, one of the nation's worst bottlenecks for freight congestion. Construction began on November 10; project will generate approximately 5,100 jobs.**

Info: visit napolitano.house.gov/transportation.

**Source: 57/60 Confluence Authority



Rep. Napolitano discusses transportation safety issues in City of Industry on November 10.

Veterans Corps Bill Passes House

Reps. Napolitano/Davis' Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) Veterans Curation Program Act (H.R. 3114), passed on November 17 with 422 votes, moving one step closer to becoming law, allowing the Corps to expand its program to hire veterans, including disabled veterans, to assist in management of archeological and historical collections. Job training includes: computer database/records management, scanning, photographing records and artifacts. "This program is leading to healing and helping veterans re-integrate and become employable in this field," Napolitano said. "We urge the Senate to quickly pass it, so President Obama may sign it immediately into law." Info on legislation: visit thomas.loc.gov.

Proudly Serving San Gabriel Valley Veterans & Their Families

Napolitano's 4th Annual Veterans Assistance Forum

- July 11—At the Azusa CA National Guard Armory over 100 Veterans met one-on-one with VA representatives, received physical/psychiatric exams, and participated in workshops on mental health, women warriors, education & financial planning, and veteran homelessness. The City of Azusa, LA VA Regional Office and VA Long Beach Healthcare System representatives, California National Guard members, and many local volunteers contributed to successful assistance to Veterans and their families. Questions on VA claims/benefits, call 626-350-0150 or napolitano.house.gov/resources/veterans.



VA representatives discuss claims with Veterans at forum in July.

Request to Establish Veterans Health Center in SGV

- Napolitano co-authored an August 25th letter to VA Secretary Robert MacDonald with Reps. Judy Chu (CA-27) & Adam Schiff (CA-28), requesting assistance in establishing a Veterans health center in the San Gabriel Valley, home to more than 45,000 Veterans, resulting in VA partnering with Pasadena Community College (PCC) to place a Veterans health center on campus to provide primary health, mental wellness, & therapies to **all** area Veterans.
- The VA & PCC are finalizing the plan's details. Updates/Info: napolitano.house.gov/issue/veterans.

Services for Vets: Visit or Call

- “Feds Hire Vets.” Gives vets priority for government jobs. www.fedshirevets.gov
- “Post-9/11 GI Bill” and “Montgomery GI Bill” college tuition. www.gibill.va.gov
- VA Home Loans buy or refinance a home. www.homeloans.va.gov
- Medical treatment and benefits www.vba.va.gov or call the El Monte Office at (626) 350-0150 for VA case assistance.
- “Coaching into Care” help family & friends to assist veterans with mental health issues. 1-888-823-7458 or visit www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching/
- Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) - 1-800-342-9647 - www.ptsd.va.gov for assistance.
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) - 1-866-966-1020 www.dvbic.org for resources

Water/Drought Update

August 27— Napolitano joined local residents and leaders of industry, government, research, and academia at Cal Poly Pomona, to continue the critical dialogue on Southern California's water future. Over a dozen speakers, panelists, and approximately 150 attendees discussed recent findings, examined new technologies, and proposed ways to achieve sustainability as our region faces an ongoing drought crisis. “The water forum helped me better understand the drought in California and why we must act now for our future,” said Vincent Herrera of La Puente, a student at UC Riverside. “It gave me an in-depth insight into what our local water agencies are doing to ensure we have an adequate supply of water.” Public/private sector technology leaders will further examine our water future in San Francisco this February. Info: napolitano.house.gov/issue/water.

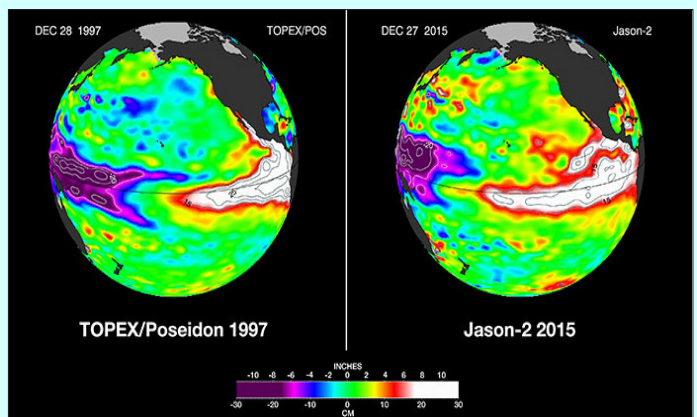


Rep. Napolitano addresses California's ongoing drought with local stakeholders, students, and experts at SoCal Water Forum in August. Info: napolitano.house.gov/issue/socal-water-forum-presentations-panelists.

El Niño Storm Readiness & Safety Resources/Websites

El Niño has arrived with heavy rains and flooding, as expected. Resources/Websites:

- **County**
www.lacounty.gov/elnino
www.lacounty.gov/emergency/alert-la/
LA County using hashtag #LARain on Facebook & Twitter
- **State**
www.storms.ca.gov
- **Federal**
www.elnino.noaa.gov
www.fema.gov/el-nino



Satellite images of El Niño in 1997 (left) may help predict intensity of storms for current El Niño (right).

Tackling Homelessness, Keeping Residents Safe

Azusa Police Department and the City of Duarte asked Congresswoman Napolitano for assistance with concerns that homeless encampments along the 605/San Gabriel Riverbed on Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) property were fire potentials and in danger of being



Rep. Napolitano discusses safety and homelessness issues with LA County officials near Azusa on August 25.

swept down river when El Niño rains hit the area. She then convened an urgent meeting of local, county, state, and federal agencies at Corps HQ for joint action: attending were Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the Corps, LA County Fire/Sheriff's Department, Azusa PD, EPA, local officials, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, to develop a plan that would mitigate the potential fire situation and provide services to homeless. "Our main concern is for the safety and well-being of homeless along the riverbed" Napolitano said. "We are continuing to work to provide shelter, mental health services, and other support services for our region's homeless populations living in the encampments." If you, or someone you know, are experiencing homelessness, fleeing domestic violence, are a runaway, or are in need of information on services, visit www.lahsa.org.

Honoring the Life of Nohemi "Mimi" Gonzalez

December 4—El Monte resident Nohemi Gonzalez, the 23-year-old Cal State Long Beach student who was killed in Paris on November 13, 2015, was remembered in Downey at a memorial service where Napolitano praised a precious life lost much too soon. Congresswoman Napolitano reminded all to remain vigilant in the face of terror as she and her colleagues work to protect America from threats abroad and at home. Nohemi graduated early from Whittier High School, became a first-generation college student, and while studying at the Strate College of



32nd District remembers Nohemi "Mimi" Gonzalez.

Design during a semester abroad program was fatally shot. She is survived by her mother, Beatrice and step-father, Jose Hernandez.



Outpouring of support at candlelight vigil for Nohemi's family on November 18 at El Monte City Hall.

World Boxing Council & Baldwin Park USD Promote Youth Mental Health



Napolitano, Chair of the Mental Health Caucus, discusses mental health legislation and stigma reduction with young boxers who encouraged Sierra Vista students to always ask for help.

December 15—To assist students and prevent depression during holidays, World Boxing Council (WBC) & Baldwin Park USD hosted "**Keeping the Happy in the Holidays**," a free event for students, parents, faculty, and the community at Sierra Vista High School. WBC President Mauricio Sulaiman, World Champions & Professional Athletes donated boxing supplies to school, raffled tablets and other boxing gifts. Info/Photos: [facebook.com/repgracenapolitano](https://www.facebook.com/repgracenapolitano).

LA County Mental Health Services/Awareness

Napolitano's successful pilot program, begun in 4 schools, now serving 25 schools in LA County with county financial support, with 2 on the waiting list, educates on warning signs and symptoms of mental illness, so students can see on-site clinicians with the goal of promoting mental wellness, reducing stigma, and ensuring a brighter future for our youngsters.

The Mental Health in Schools Act – H.R. 1211

Patterned off pilot program, \$200 million/200 schools nationwide, on-site school based mental health services.

Consortium – A dedicated group of volunteer local mental health professionals and advocates meets quarterly with great speakers to discuss/share mental health related information, advising the Congresswoman on public mental health policy and related issues. Topics include: youth, women, faith-based, veterans, legislation. Anyone interested in mental health is invited. Call Barbara Dickerson at 626-350-0150. Info: napolitano.house.gov/issue/mental-health.

Updates from Congress

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M.C.
PRSRT STD

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

Casework: Assisting Local Residents with Federal Agencies

Arnita (West Covina)—When the Social Security Administration (SSA) owed her money, benefits were being reduced to pay for healthcare; she contacted our District Office. Case was re-examined and SSA determined it owed repayment. “I am really pleased with what the office did for me,” said Arnita. “Without the office’s help, I probably wouldn’t have received the money. I am so grateful to them.” She received a five-month refund and the premium is no longer deducted from her monthly payment.

Luzbiminda (Baldwin Park)—Needing an expedited hearing with SSA, she contacted our District Office; case was reconsidered and SSA granted her request. “I was able to get the earliest SSA hearing, expedited by your assistance when I requested it due to 3rd denial of my Permanently Disabled Application,” said Luzbiminda. “I am thankful for all the assistance Carrie and the office has given me.”



Rep. Napolitano discusses medical issues with a patient at West Covina Kidney Care Dialysis Center in October.

Velvet (West Covina)—Her employer, the U.S. Postal Service, said she owed money for the “approved” time off she took. After a congressional inquiry, her case was reconsidered, resolved, and debt was forgiven. “Because of the office’s help, my case came to a most favorable conclusion.” said Velvet.

Constituent Services Guide

- **Academy Nominations:** H.S. students recommendations to U.S. military academies
- **Flags:** U.S. Capitol-flown American Flag with certificate on a specific day, only if given one month’s notice
- **Immigration/Naturalization:** We inquire on your visas, work permits, legal residency, naturalization
- **IRS:** Assistance with difficult tax problems
- **Military:** Hardship discharge, extension of leave, compassionate reassignment, medals
- **Passports:** Emergency expediting the passport process.
- **Presidential Greetings:** Presidential greetings for special occasions (birthday for 80 + years, anniversary for 50+ years, wedding, baby’s birth) must be requested at *least one month before*.
- **Seniors:** Medicare, Social Security, disability, and Supplemental Security Income issues
- **Small Business:** SBA loans, government contract opportunities, seminars, info
- **Veterans:** Info: VA hospitals, pensions, benefits, education, home loans, military records
- **Tours:** Help plan your trip to D.C. 6 weeks advance notice; 6 months if you inquire a White House tour.

We are ready to help you cut through “red tape,” secure the services and benefits paid for by your tax dollars. More about “casework,” visit <http://napolitano.house.gov/serving-you/help-federal-agency>.

INTERNSHIPS

DC—Unpaid interns may answer phones, run errands, research legislation for the Member & legislative staff, attend hearings/briefings, and answer constituent letters on issues before the House. For info, contact Morgan Leonard at 202-225-5256.

El Monte—Unpaid interns answer phones, conduct research, and receive hands-on training on responsibilities of Federal, State and local governments, assist experienced staff with casework/events, and learn the value of constituent services. For info, contact Licett Figueroa at 626-350-0150.

2016 Coming Events

April.....Art Contest
May.....Women of the Year
June.....Congressional Prayer Breakfast;
Veterans Forum
July.....Women’s Leadership Forum
August.....Small Business & Export Seminar
November.....Military Academy Day

For specific dates, visit napolitano.house.gov/events or call the El Monte Office at 626-350-0150 for latest info.