

2007 -
2016

Tsongas Accomplishments



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Tsongas is making a difference

Congresswoman Niki Tsongas is known for her roots in the Third District and her years of public service to the region. In Congress, she's worked hard to make a real difference in the lives of servicemen and women serving on our behalf, military families supporting those who serve, and veterans seeking the care and benefits they've earned. She is a leading national voice in the fight against sexual assault in the military and has secured modern resources for soldiers, including better, safer body armor. Tsongas holds several leadership roles; she is the top Democrat on the Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee and formerly served as the top Democrat on the Armed Services Oversight & Investigations Subcommittee; she Co-Chairs the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus, and the Air Force Caucus.

“But nearly all of the new laws enacted in recent years – including a sweeping set of laws signed by President Obama Thursday – are the result of the quiet diligence of Turner and Tsongas, representing a rare example of bipartisanship in Congress.” ***For Tsongas and GOP colleague, a long fight on military sexual assault, by Bryan Bender, The Boston Globe, December 27, 2013***

Tsongas fights for middle class families who are looking for a fair shot at the American Dream, working to encourage job growth and support small business owners trying to grow their companies. Her actions help consumers harmed by predatory and abusive industries, seniors who want to retire with independence and dignity, women who deserve a voice to protect their rights and health, and students seeking to expand their opportunities.

“While true to her liberal Democrat roots, Tsongas has proven she is willing to work with moderate Republicans on immigration reform, small-business tax credits, and creating better educational and job opportunities for all citizens. Niki Tsongas has worked above and below the radar for the benefit of her constituents.” ***The Lowell Sun, October, 2014***

She has become a leader in the push to protect our natural resources, such as the rivers and natural treasures that give the Third District its storied and revolutionary history. Tsongas successfully works in a bipartisan way, repeatedly partnering with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to author and advance legislation. In addition, her accessibility and accountability to the residents of the District she serves remains one of the hallmarks of her office.

The Lowell Sun wrote in 2012: “Tsongas has proven she is one of the more independent lawmakers in Massachusetts. She has shown a willingness to work with Republicans to advance the cause of a stronger economy and military. Tsongas listens, learns and makes the tough choices based on a multitude of information. We can't fault anyone who does their homework, and Tsongas does hers. Congress needs more lawmakers like Tsongas who will elevate civil discussion, embrace bipartisanship and stand up for causes that promote the common good.”

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS



“Niki Tsongas has pulled off something rare in today’s Congress: even though she’s a Democrat, Tsongas has still managed to steer important measures through a Republican-controlled Congress riven by dysfunction. That’s a testament to her political skill, and a good reason for voters in the Third District to send her back to Washington for another two-year term.” *— Boston Globe Editorial Board, October 23, 2014*

- **Tsongas does not accept a paycheck during 2013 government shutdown:** Tsongas did not accept a paycheck during the 2013 government shutdown, instead returning her money to the Treasury. She felt that refusing her paycheck was the right thing to do and a show of support for the hardworking public servants who are being forced to do the same.

“U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas is my hero” again. Tuesday morning, the Lowell Democrat announced she, “would not accept a paycheck for the duration of the government shutdown.” She did it before most other lawmakers jumped on the bandwagon! “At a time when Washington pols are barely hovering above the cesspool, it’s heartening when one of them sees something nauseating and then acts” boldly. No poll or focus group. No days of weighing the fallout. They just do it.” *— Margery Eagan, Boston Herald, October 2013*

- **2016 Healthcare Leadership Counsel Award:** Tsongas was named a Champion of Healthcare Innovation by the Healthcare Leadership Council

for advocating for patient-centered medical progress and quality healthcare.

- **Honored for efforts to address substance abuse:** Tsongas was recognized at Lowell House's annual *Living the Light Gala* in 2016 for her efforts to address substance abuse, in particular the national opioid epidemic. The Lowell House has been providing addiction recovery services to those in need for over 40 years.
- **Tsongas receives award from Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition:** The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) recognized Congresswoman Niki Tsongas at their annual "Give Liberty A Hand" Gala, for her work with constituents on immigration-related issues, as well as her support for immigration reform.
- **Honored in 2016 by New England's Small Businesses:** Tsongas was honored with the 2016 Freedom Award at the Smaller Business Association of New England's annual Innovation Awards Dinner for her contributions to supporting the region's innovation, research and manufacturing in defense-related industries.
- **Tsongas receives Pinnacle Award from Chamber of Commerce:** The Boston Chamber of Commerce awarded Tsongas with the 2014 Pinnacle Award for Achievement in Government. She was recognized along with other local business and community leaders, including Harvard University President Drew Faust.
- **Honored for contributions to Greater Lowell:** Tsongas was one of 50 local women recognized in 2012 for her contributions to Greater Lowell at a luncheon benefitting Lowell's *Women Working Wonders Fund*.
- **Tsongas appointed to Air Force Academy Board of Visitors:** Congresswoman Tsongas has served on the United States Air Force Academy Board of Visitors since first being appointed to the House Armed Services Committee in 2008. The Board of Visitors consists of 15 members appointed by the President and Congress. The Board of Visitors is responsible for providing oversight of the morale, discipline, curriculum, instruction, physical equipment, fiscal affairs, academic methods and other matters relating to the Academy. As a member of the Board of Visitors, Tsongas has continued her important work on sexual assault prevention and response.

- **Awarded the Charles Dick Medal of Merit:** In recognition of her work on behalf of the National Guard and Reserve members, Congresswoman Niki Tsongas was awarded the Charles Dick Medal of Merit in 2010.

When he presented her with the award, the Massachusetts Adjutant General said, "The MG Charles Dick Medal of Merit honors those who provide the legislative leadership that enables National Guard soldiers and airmen to meet their mission. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas' legislative agenda honors National Guard service by providing for health care at home; personal safety while at war; and dignity in retirement. I am honored to join the National Guard Association of the United States and the National Guard Association of Massachusetts in honoring her tireless and substantive support for America's citizen Soldiers."

- **Tsongas supports freezing Congressional pay:** Tsongas has helped introduce legislation to prevent Congress' scheduled pay raise from taking effect and voted to enact and extend a freeze in pay. When Tsongas was elected in 2007, she made a personal decision not to accept automatic congressional pay raises in years when they are in place, choosing instead to donate the amount of the pay raise to charity.
- **Tsongas cuts her own budget and returns money to taxpayers:** Tsongas has repeatedly returned a portion of her Member's Representational Allowance (MRA) to taxpayers. The MRA is the budget that Members of Congress receive annually for expenses associated with the day-to-day operation of their offices such as computer equipment, office supplies, staff salaries, travel between Washington and their home Districts, and rent and utilities for their District offices. Tsongas supports legislation that would mandate that all amounts remaining in a Member's Representational Allowance after the end of a fiscal year to be used for deficit reduction, and voted to cut MRAs by nearly 20% over her tenure so far.
- **NSBA recognizes Tsongas as "Champion of Small Business Innovation":** As a result of her work on behalf of Small Business, Congresswoman Tsongas was named a "Champion of Small Business Innovation" by the National Small Business Association, a national small business group, and the Small Business Technology Council.

Praising her work on the issue ever since coming to Congress, *the president of the NSBA*, a Republican, thanked Tsongas for her "indispensable and politically-courageous efforts" on behalf of small business.

- **Tsongas honored with annual National Park Award:** Several years in a row, Rep. Tsongas has been honored with the Friend of the National Parks award, given by the National Parks Conservation Association for her work

on behalf of preserving and protecting America's national parks and public lands.

"I think Niki Tsongas now has a similar reputation to the one Paul Tsongas had, as an advocate for and defender of the National Park Service in Congress. It just speaks to the stature she has on the committee. The fact is that she's in a strong position." *Peter Aucella, assistant superintendent at the Lowell National Historical Park, Lowell Sun, February 13, 2015*

JOB CREATION



Make it in America Domestic Manufacturing initiatives

- **Tsongas efforts boost US footwear industry:** Tsongas has long called for a correction to a serious loophole within the DOD purchasing process that is costing American manufacturing jobs while inhibiting the ability of U.S. military personnel to train in high-quality American-made athletic footwear. She has championed legislation that will close the loophole, boost local and national footwear manufacturing while simultaneously supplying U.S. servicemembers with the best equipment possible. As a result of these efforts, in April of 2014, the Department of Defense announced it would change its policy and provide recruits with American-made footwear. New Balance, based in New England with a major facility in the Third District city of Lawrence, manufactures a compliant shoe and sees the decision as a potential boost to job creation. When the DOD delayed implementation of this new policy, Tsongas partnered across the aisle to coauthor legislation included in the FY2017 defense bill that would require the Pentagon to abide by its own policy change and support U.S. manufacturing.

The Lowell Sun editorial Board wrote: "We applaud Congresswoman Tsongas, who has exhibited remarkable patience with Pentagon officials up to this point, for finally taking off the gloves. On Wednesday Tsongas, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, filed legislation that would require the DoD to honor the Berry Amendment...It's about time someone

held the Pentagon's feet to the fire on this issue, and we urge Tsongas' House colleagues to hit the ground running by overwhelmingly supporting this bipartisan bill.ö

- **Tsongas hosts “Make It In America” Town Hall...**: Tsongas hosted a town hall meeting with local employers and workforce development specialists to discuss ways to grow the domestic manufacturing base and promote policies that keep jobs in the United States rather than having them sent overseas. The town hall was held at the New Balance factory in Lawrence which employs more than 800 Massachusetts workers. Tsongas held the town hall to hear directly from employers about ways to support their efforts to keep jobs in the United States. Experts at Tsongas' town hall all gave detailed input as to how we can nurture American manufacturing, how we can do a better job of training and retraining to meet the high-tech needs of employers, and how we can ensure that good jobs are available at every skill level.
- **...and introduces “Make It In America” Legislation**: After hearing directly from her constituents, Tsongas championed and supported a number of initiatives, including eliminating tax incentives for companies that move their operations overseas and creating incentives for companies that return to manufacture here, as well as a bill to better support a workforce training initiative that takes advantage of the role community colleges can play in working directly with local employers.

Promoting Job Growth in the region

- **Milestone reached in Fitchburg commuter rail project**: The MBTA's opening of the new South Acton commuter rail station, a project years in the making, is an important improvement in service for commuters and an important step in economic development for the region. South Acton is the most heavily patronized station on the Fitchburg Line, and improvements to the new station received significant federal funds, including TIGER grant funding and additional resources through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, both of which Congresswoman Tsongas strongly advocated for.
- **Tsongas working to maintain critical DOD wide food research program, saving jobs**: The Combat Feeding Directorate at Natick Soldier Systems Center is the primary organization conducting research, development, integration, testing, and engineering for combat rations, field food service equipment and complete combat feeding systems for the Department of

Defense and interagency partners like NASA. As a result of Tsongas's persistent advocacy, severe cuts to this program were reversed in the House-passed FY15 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), taking a major step forward in preserving this critical mission, which supports over 100 jobs in Massachusetts.

Support for Small Business

- **Hosts Export Forum in Marlborough for local businesses:** Rep. Tsongas hosted a forum for local companies interested in learning more about resources, opportunities, ideas, and strategies on exporting their products and the overseas marketplace.

James Cox, Northeast Regional Director for the U.S. Commercial Service at the U.S. Commerce Department, said: "It is wonderful to have partners in Congress, like Congresswoman Tsongas, who recognize the value in trade promotion. With that kind of leadership we are strengthening the global competitiveness of U.S. industry, helping to create jobs for Massachusetts workers and firms through the export of goods and services."

- **Haverhill /Merrimack Valley small businesses get boost from Tsongas efforts:** Tsongas has long supported federal programs like the Small Business Administration's microloans. She was in Haverhill in June 2014 to announce \$200,000 in loan funds from the SBA to support small businesses throughout the Merrimack Valley.
- **Eliminating administrative burdens:** In response to concerns from Third District small business owners about the administrative burdens that a new provision requiring them to file additional 1099 forms with IRS would pose on them, Tsongas was one of the first members of her party to push for its repeal. This measure is now law. She also supported repeal of the onerous 3% withholding provisions which, while intended to reduce tax evasion, would have essentially forced small businesses to provide the government with months-long zero-interest loans. This measure is also now law.
- **Supporting the region's medical device companies:** When the Affordable Care Act was being debated, Tsongas opposed the medical device tax and worked to significantly reduce the amount of the tax. One of the goals in paying for healthcare reform was that the groups—such as insurance companies—most likely to benefit from the influx of new customers would help shoulder the costs. Large, well-established device manufacturers with thousands of employees are likely to benefit from thousands of new

customers. But smaller, emerging companies, many of which are located in Massachusetts, may be harmed by the device tax. Because the medical device tax has not been amended to distinguish between large, established companies and smaller, emerging companies and because she recognized the risk this poses to innovative employers in our state, Tsongas voted for its repeal.

- **Tsongas leadership helps save small business innovation research program and District jobs:** As a member of a select group of House and Senate members, appointed by Republican Speaker John Boehner, tasked with crafting a final defense bill, Tsongas was successful in including language, signed into law in 2011, which reauthorized the highly successful Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program for six years. The SBIR program has functioned as a critical job creation tool in Massachusetts and has provided essential R&D funding for local firms while enabling inventors and engineers to start new businesses and deliver needed products to the market. Massachusetts has received the highest number of SBIR grant awards and total dollars, per capita, since the program's inception. However, some members of Congress were advocating changes to the program that would have altered its original intent and put Massachusetts small businesses at a distinct disadvantage. In addition, those changes would have also resulted in the federal government adopting "second best" technology because of arbitrary quotas. The 6-year reauthorization of the program retains its proper focus on true small businesses and provides the certainty our small businesses need to plan ahead, make investments, and expand their workforce.

“Niki Tsongas and Ed Markey, both members of the Bay State's congressional delegation, have been working tirelessly to see SBIR funding approved for the short-term while advocating for the program's more certain future. It makes no sense to discourage the business sector by subjecting SBIR funding to short-term expiration dates, but that's been the case since 2008. Tsongas is pushing for a five- to seven-year window, so businesses can feel secure in building research and development strategies, meet SBIR goals, and be eligible for Phase II funding of \$1 million. We agree.” – *Enhance, expand SBIR grant program, The Lowell Sun editorial, September 22, 2011*

SUPPORT FOR THE THIRD DISTRICT



Congresswoman Tsongas advocates for the residents of the Third District, fostering economic development and public safety through much needed federal assistance.

In 2015, Congresswoman Tsongas' office assisted 1,515 residents of the Third District in navigating the services provided by the federal government. Also in that time span, Tsongas' office has successfully obtained \$1,668,839 in federal benefits for constituents in the Third District. Constituent cases are instances in which a resident of the Third District seeks assistance from the Congresswoman's office, such as help when dealing with a federal agency. Issues range from veterans benefits to immigration issues to health care or IRS inquiries, and much more. She also visited 32 local businesses in the Third District in 2015, meeting with companies small and large to discuss issues of importance to the region's employers and employees.

Public Health & Safety

- **Tsongas initiative leads to support for Teaching Health Centers:** Tsongas led a bipartisan effort to include the Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education program in the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, which was signed into law by President Obama. America's Teaching Health Centers, including the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, were funded for two years due to the inclusion of the Tsongas initiative. Teaching Health Centers train primary

care physicians who then go out to serve in low-income areas, and the funding will allow these organizations to train more doctors and dentists and address a growing need nationwide.

- In 2016, Tsongas co-authored bipartisan legislation to make this two-year funding permanent.

“The Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, the site of our nation's first Community Health Center-based residency program in 1994, is so grateful for Rep. Niki Tsongas' leading role in Congress' passage of this landmark bill. Her efforts ensure access to needed medical care for patients on several fronts,” said **Dr. Joseph Gravel, Residency Director & Chief Medical Officer at the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center.** “Our family medicine residency program will be able to continue to train needed family doctors for the Merrimack Valley. We are nationally known for attracting the best and the brightest young physicians choosing primary care careers, but we and other Community Health Centers needed Rep Tsongas' support. She not only did so but rallied her colleagues to support training doctors in community settings which improves the health of those communities and reduces healthcare costs.”

- **Gun violence prevention efforts:** Rep. Tsongas believes that law abiding citizens have a constitutional right to own firearms, whether for sport or personal protection, she also believes that our laws should be able to ensure that firearms are used safely and responsibly and do not end up in the wrong hands. She has worked with her colleagues to bring attention to the need for Congressional action to prevent gun violence in all its forms.
 - *House Democrats sit-in:* Tsongas joined Representative John Lewis, an esteemed colleague and moral authority in the Congress, and the entire Democratic caucus at a sit-in on the House Floor on June 22 and 23, 2016. Their efforts amplified the voices of the majority of the American people ó and the majority of gun owners ó who want Congress to take action to address gun violence. During the sit-in, House Republicans adjourned and recessed the House of Representatives without bringing gun violence prevention legislation up for a vote.
 - *Hosts roundtable with victims' families:* Following the sit-in, Tsongas co-hosted a roundtable event with Rep. Joe Kennedy and Rep. Stephen Lynch at UMass Boston, where the parents of gun violence victims told their stories and urged Congress to take action to prevent other families from having to endure such tragedies.
 - *Brings Third District voices to Washington:* During a speech on the House Floor in 2016, Rep. Tsongas read directly from letters sent to

her by teenagers from the Third District of Massachusetts. These young people wrote to her expressing concern about gun violence in America and their own communities.

- *Makes recommendations to VP Biden and Task Force:* After the tragedy in Newtown, President Obama assigned Vice President Biden to head a commission that would examine gun violence in America. In January 2013 Tsongas submitted a letter to Vice President Biden outlining recommendations collected from district stakeholders aimed at curbing gun violence
- *Joins task force:* Tsongas is a member of the House Democratic Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, which is examining ways of reducing and preventing gun violence and has compiled a comprehensive set of policy proposals and legislative initiatives.
- **Combating the Opioid & Substance Abuse epidemic:** While the entire country is experiencing the significant impacts of the opioid and heroin epidemic, the New England region, including the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Third Congressional District have been one of the most affected areas. As such, Rep. Tsongas has taken several proactive steps to address the epidemic.
 - *Introduces bipartisan legislation:* Tsongas coauthored a bill with Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH) in 2016 to increase flexibility in how existing federal funding can be used to combat the heroin epidemic, including expanding drug treatment programs for incarcerated individuals.
 - *Seeks input from 3rd District residents:* In 2016, she sent a letter to President Obama's Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) urging the federal government to use information and recommendations from stakeholders in Massachusetts as they develop a national approach to combating the opioid crisis.
 - *Children & Opioids:* Tsongas led a bipartisan group of House Members in sending a letter to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding the use of OxyContin by children as young as 11 years old. The letter urges the FDA to reconsider its decision to approve OxyContin for use by children and instead allow an Advisory Committee to gather public input and expert testimony before making an official recommendation. The group did not

disagree with the use of pediatric medication, but had major concerns over methodology used to arrive at guidelines for doctors and recommended their study be reconsidered.

- *A resource for the community:* Tsongas launched a webpage on her website dedicated to providing information and resources on the opioid epidemic. She and her staff regularly engage local, regional, state and national experts, law enforcement and public safety officials to get firsthand advice and information. In addition, Michael Botticelli, White House Director of National Drug Policy, spoke to residents at the Congresswoman's Third District Day per her invitation.
- *Helps secure funding for local substance abuse programs:* Rep. Tsongas strongly supported two Lowell grant applications, sending letters of advocacy on their behalf to the Department of Justice. Lowell was awarded the two DOJ grants totaling over \$1 million to support local opioid research and training programs.
- **Joins delegation to advocate for FEMA disaster funding:** After sustained advocacy by the members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation, including Rep. Tsongas, FEMA awarded \$120 million in disaster assistance to Massachusetts for costs associated with 2014's historic snowfalls.
- **Assistance to first responders:** Since taking office, Tsongas has been a federal partner to public safety and has worked tirelessly to ensure our first responders have the resources necessary to do their jobs safely and efficiently. Tsongas has been a strong advocate for programs such as the AFG and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), which are the two main federal programs supporting local fire departments. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) was created because fire departments often have difficulty purchasing proper equipment. A ladder truck for a local fire department can run upwards of one million dollars and outfitting one firefighter with turnout gear and breathing apparatus can exceed \$5,000. In addition, departments must fund training programs for paid and/or volunteer firefighters

- For example, in 2016 Lowell and Lawrence both received funding to purchase new fire trucks. Lawrence received \$500,000 to purchase a new pumper engine, while Lowell received \$1.2million to buy an aerial ladder truck and a heavy rescue truck.

“I am grateful for Congresswoman Tsongas’ efforts to work with our community and secure federal assistance to upgrade our public safety equipment,” *said Marlborough Mayor Arthur Vigeant*. “Federal grant opportunities like the SCBA grant are a valuable component to supplementing our local resources and help ensure our first responders have the resources and equipment they need.”

- Below are a more examples of some of the communities that Tsongas has recently helped secure federal AFG grants:
 - Fitchburg - \$435,364
 - Clinton - \$278,255
 - Townsend - \$142,500
 - Pepperell - \$32,300
 - Devens - \$200,134
 - Lunenburg - \$50,806
 - Marlborough - \$22,500
 - Stow - \$22,971
 - Gardner - \$16, 364

"This grant will allow the city of Gardner to purchase equipment that will save the City a lot of money," *said Gardner Mayor Mark Hawke*. "I appreciate the strong working relationship I have with Congresswomen Niki Tsongas."

- **Tsongas leads Mass. Delegation in support for Mass. Firefighting Academy:** Tsongas strongly supported the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy’s application for federal funding, including leading a 2015 letter of support signed by the entire Massachusetts Delegation. Subsequently, the Academy was awarded \$260,000 in 2015 to improve search and rescue training.
- **Lawrence Fire Department was awarded \$6,622,000 from the Department of Homeland Security:** This allowed the Lawrence Fire Department to rehire 23 firefighters who were laid off due to budgetary cutbacks. The funds also helped the department hire 15 new positions at the department for a total of 38 positions.

- **Law Enforcement Video Sharing (LEVIS) for the Lowell Police Department:** The Lowell Police Department received \$150,000 in federal funds secured by Tsongas to support Phase 1 of their Law Enforcement Video Sharing program. The program allows for video surveillance and transmission of video data from remote sites, along with the purchase and installation of 14 new cameras in identified criminal hotspots to better ensure public safety.
- **Funds secured to hire police officers in Lawrence:** Congresswoman Niki Tsongas helped to secure a \$750,000 COPS grant from the Department of Justice that would allow the Lawrence Police Department to hire 6 police officers. The City of Lawrence has struggled with rising crime in the face of significant budget shortfalls which forced deep cuts to the police force. Tsongas met with former Police Chief John Romero on several occasions to discuss ways to bring federal resources to Lawrence for crime prevention and repeatedly lobbied the Department of Justice for the COPS grant that was awarded. Additionally, in 2009, Tsongas helped to obtain funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that enabled the Lawrence Police Department to hire 7 officers, for a total of 13 new positions.
- **Drug prevention program gets boost from Tsongas efforts:** Tsongas helped secure \$280,000 to help the Essex County Sheriff's Department continue their "Towards No Drug Use" (TND) program which teaches drug abuse and violence prevention to students at high schools throughout Essex County.
- **Public safety communications upgrade for the Haverhill Police Department:** At the request of Congresswoman Tsongas, the Haverhill Police Department received \$400,000 in federal funding to update and replace its existing public safety communications system. Replacing handheld and cruiser radios will dramatically increase the department's ability to protect the citizens of Haverhill as well as provide a reliable lifeline for officers.

- **IT Upgrade for the Maynard Police Department:** At Tsongas' request, the Maynard Police Department received \$150,000 in federal funds to support technical upgrades for a new public safety building. The town raised over 90 percent of the funds required for the construction of their new building - requesting the remaining 10 percent. One of the nine Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regional bunkers is located within the Maynard PD's jurisdiction. Police officers have routinely responded to calls for assistance from FEMA, including routine patrols of the greater region and responding to suspicious vehicles.

Economic development & other local funding

LOWELL

- **Lowell receives coveted federal infrastructure grant:** The City of Lowell was awarded a \$13.4 million TIGER grant by the U.S. Department of Transportation in 2015 to help repair and take ownership of the 8 canal bridges throughout the City. The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant program was created by Congress in 2009 and awards the most promising local infrastructure proposals with investments in road, rail, transit, and port projects that advance critical infrastructure goals for the United States. Congresswoman Tsongas and Senators Warren and Markey strongly supported the City's grant application, weighing in personally with U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx to ensure he understood the value of this project to the City and to the Commonwealth. This was the first time the City of Lowell has received a TIGER grant award.

“This is exciting news,” **said Lowell City Manager Kevin Murphy.** “The grant is probably the largest award the City of Lowell has received in the past ten years. This was a complete team effort between Congresswoman Tsongas, the University, and the City of Lowell. It's a great example of what you can accomplish when everyone works together. It just makes for a better city.”

- **Secretary Foxx visits Lowell at Tsongas invitation to see TIGER projects:** U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx visited Lowell in October 2016 at the invitation of Rep. Tsongas to see firsthand the incredible impact the City's TIGER grant will have on economic development, infrastructure, transportation, public safety and more. Secretary Foxx joined Rep. Tsongas, Senator Ed Markey and local stakeholders for site visits and tours of TIGER grant projects, and a roundtable discussion at UMass Lowell about the impact of federal funding and the importance of local stakeholder collaboration.

“I thank Congresswoman Tsongas and the Senators for their leadership in supporting critical transportation and infrastructure investments here in Lowell and across the nation,” **said Secretary Foxx.** “This U.S. DOT TIGER grant is doing more than repairing and replacing bridges, it is improving safety, boosting the economy, and helping connect more people to jobs, education, and opportunity.”

- **Lowell Riverwalk Expansion, Canalway Improvements:** Tsongas helped secure \$712,000 in federal funds as well as a \$1,000,000 grant from the Department of Transportation for the expansion of the Riverwalk in the city of Lowell and for improvements to the downtown Canalway. The federal funding will be used for the development of the “Mile of Mills” Riverwalk along Bridge Street which will increase pedestrian traffic, while supporting the City’s long term vision for the Riverwalk.
- **Helping make improvements to the Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA):** With strong support from Tsongas, the LRTA received \$2.5 million in reallocated federal funding for the reconstruction of the Gallagher Terminal Parking Garage. The LRTA has begun work on this modernization project, which will replace the 30-year-old structure with a state-of-the-art parking garage. Tsongas also helped secure \$3.5 million in federal funds to install 1,900 solar panels on the roof at the LRTA’s maintenance facility. The solar array will provide 99.9% of the power for the facility which will lower energy consumption and deliver cost savings to the city.

Jim Scanlon, Executive Director of the Lowell Regional Transit Authority said in a statement:
“We are very appreciative of the federal funding and send thanks to the Congresswoman for all she is doing for transportation in the region and thanks to Governor Patrick and his team who really recognized the need the LRTA had at the Gallagher parking garage to do something and do it quickly. This funding invests in a critical component of the LRTA and will push us into construction.”

- **Tsongas champions Lowell National Historical Park and Hamilton Canal District, Lowell’s signature economic development project:** The extraordinary transformation of Lowell began when the Lowell National Historical Park was established within the city’s core, the first urban national park of its kind in the United States. Tsongas has strongly supported public investment in the Park which has leveraged millions in private investment in the redevelopment of Lowell’s historic Hamilton Canal District. Fifteen acres of vacant and underutilized land in the Jackson, Appleton, and Middlesex Street area known as the Hamilton Canal District are being redeveloped into a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood spanning the Merrimack, Pawtucket and Hamilton Canals. When complete, the Hamilton Canal District in the heart of Lowell will create nearly two million square feet for commercial, retail, and housing space,

as well as hundreds of new jobs and an estimated \$400 million in annual tax revenue for the City.

- **In 2016, another milestone was reached in the Hamilton Canal project:** In July, 2016 Rep. Tsongas announced a federal investment of more than \$2 million to build a second bridge in the District, creating better circulation and access, as well as attracting additional public projects and spurring private investment. EDA estimates the project could create up to 150 jobs and leverage \$60 million in private investment.

“The Hamilton Canal District is the centerpiece of the future vision of downtown Lowell,” *said State Senator Eileen Donoghue*. “I can’t say enough about how great the partnership between state, local, and federal government has been. Governor Patrick understands the significance of this project for our city and Congresswoman Tsongas has been essential in securing the necessary federal funding.”

- **Tsongas bill signed into law eliminates roadblock so Hamilton Canal project can advance:** President Barack Obama signed a bill authored by Tsongas to authorize the transfer of federal land to the City of Lowell to help advance the city’s signature economic development project. The bill was one of three that Tsongas has had passed out of the highly-partisan Natural Resources Committee. During committee and House consideration of the bill, the Republican full and subcommittee chairmen both praised it.

Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT), one of the most conservative members of the House, stated: “I really don’t have a question on this because Ms. Tsongas has done a good job on this bill,” calling it a “great bill” that would spur economic development in the community.

- **Improving the Canal Street Bridge:** The renovation of the Canal Street Bridge was a major milestone in the development of the Hamilton Canal District. Improvements to the bridge were made possible with a \$2 million federal grant secured by Tsongas and matching state funds. On the same day the bridge reopened, officials broke ground on a new office building at 110 Canal Street.
- **Expansion of Lowell Community Health Center:** Congresswoman Tsongas helped secure nearly \$800,000 in federal funds that was used to expand the Lowell Community Health Center and renovate the Hamilton Crossing on the Hamilton Canal in Lowell.

- **Tsongas secures funding for innovation and tech center at UMass Lowell:**
Tsongas helped secure \$5 million in federal funds for UMass Lowell's New Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center. The 84,000-square-foot state-of-the-art research and academic facility is a hub for developing advanced manufacturing and other technologies: preparing students for emerging job sectors, fostering industry partnerships and offering cutting-edge research that could transform our understanding of science, energy and medicine. The EITC will continue UMass Lowell's century-long history as an engine of innovation and an industry training ground.
- **Supporting the City of Lowell as a national model for energy improvements to Historic Districts:** Tsongas aggressively supported a \$5 million federal grant award from the Department of Energy's Better Buildings program for the Carbon Neutral Downtown Park and Preservation District. The City of Lowell in partnership with the state's historic preservation office and the Lowell National Historical Park is using this grant to show that historic preservation and energy efficient building construction are compatible and is the first city in the country to take this approach. According to former City Manager Bernie Lynch, "This project will put numerous people back to work, reduce the utility costs associated with our downtown real estate, help protect the environment, and reinforce Lowell's emerging image as a progressive community on the rise."
- **Middlesex Community College downtown historic building redevelopment:**
Tsongas helped to secure \$195,000 in federal funds to renovate the historic Rialto Building in downtown Lowell for use by Middlesex Community College's performing arts and music programs. MCC's performing arts and music programs and activities serve not only students enrolled in courses at the college, but also the Lowell public school system, the National Park Service, and other public and private agencies and organizations with which the college regularly collaborates.
- **Tsongas secures funds for Lowell General Hospital Expansion Project:**
Tsongas helped secure \$428,000 for the Lowell General Hospital Expansion Project which is designed to enhance the hospital and provide contemporary, clinically efficient facilities. The green-design six-story expansion project includes a new emergency department, private rooms, access to outpatient services, and growth areas for surgical services. Lowell General Hospital is one of the community's most venerable institutions, contributing to the health, welfare, vitality, and economic success of the City. It serves more than a quarter

of a million patients each year. In addition, Lowell General Hospital is one of the City's largest employers.

- **Local Asthma Prevention gets boost from Tsongas efforts:** Tsongas secured a \$425,000 federal grant that will be used to prevent asthma among children living in public housing in Lowell as part of UMass Lowell's Healthy Homes Initiative. In recent years, the percentage of children in Lowell with asthma has been higher than both the state and national average. Asthma disproportionately affects low-income families and minority communities and is one of only four such programs nationwide to receive these federal funds.

LAWRENCE

- **Strengthening Couples program gets boost from federal funds:** Family Service in Lawrence received \$382,470 for their Strengthening Couples Program, a healthy marriage and relationships education/skills program for low-income Latino couples in Greater Lawrence. Tsongas strongly supported Family Service's grant application and wrote a letter of support to the Department of Health and Human Services.

“We are thrilled that Congresswoman Tsongas was able to secure resources that will help us make Lawrence families healthier and stronger, and Family Services is a great partner to take on the task,” *said Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera.*

- **Greater Lawrence Family Health Center awarded HHS grant for nearly \$3 million:** GLFHC was awarded \$2,918,871 in 2015 to go towards supporting the GLFHC's Community Health Centers, as well as their Healthcare for the Homeless programs in Lawrence and surrounding communities. Congresswoman Tsongas, a strong advocate for Community Health Centers, wrote several letters in support of the GLFHC's grant applications.
- **Tsongas introduces legislation to help create more urban green space:** Tsongas's Groundwork USA Trust Act was developed in consultation with the non-profit group Groundwork Lawrence and would create a dedicated federal funding stream to ensure support for the 20 existing Groundwork programs nationwide, enabling other cities to launch similar initiatives.

“This legislation is extremely valuable to Lawrence and well as other underserved communities; it supports our efforts to leverage public, private, and foundation dollars for building truly sustainable communities,” *said Heather McMann, Executive Director of Groundwork Lawrence*

- **Clean energy collaboration facilitated by Tsongas:** Tsongas worked to bring together National Grid and Soltas Energy, a provider of solar energy solutions, so that a rooftop solar array of 2,000 panels could be installed on the rooftop of the historic Everett Mills in Lawrence. Lawrence-based Solectria Renewables built the converters for the solar array, making the project a prime example of the economic benefits of clean energy technology both in reducing costs and supporting emerging domestic industries. The project created jobs in Lawrence and will provide clean, accessible and affordable power for the 35 diverse businesses at the Everett Mill.
- **Lawrence wins top prize in Boston Federal Reserve Working Cities Challenge:** The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB) announced the City of Lawrence as the top winner of their Working Cities Challenge. The Working Cities Challenge is an initiative launched by the FRBB in May 2013, designed to support and sponsor small Massachusetts cities that foster opportunities for success to low-income residents. Several Third District communities were considered for this prestigious award, with support from Congresswoman Tsongas.

Lawrence Mayor Daniel Rivera said: "This is the real story of Lawrence – the story that doesn't get told. It's a story of partnership and tenacity that will overcome tough challenges. The City is delighted by this recognition, and we are ready to get to work."

- **Bringing increased transportation options to the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority:** Tsongas helped to secure \$392,000 for the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) which will help purchase fourteen new buses to serve residents of Lawrence, Andover, Haverhill and Methuen.
- **Transforming textile mills along the Merrimack River:** Tsongas helped to secure \$743,500 in federal funds for the Union Crossing project in Lawrence which will transform a former textile mill along the Merrimack River into a mixed-use development to include family and workforce housing, commercial space and community facilities. Union Crossing is expected to produce approximately 200 new permanent jobs. It will also create an effective and innovative model for investing in older urban centers that combines best practices in both historic preservation and green building design to create a new neighborhood that is equitable, affordable and sustainable.
- **Securing funds for the Lawrence Gateway Project:** Tsongas helped to secure \$166,000 in federal funds for the Lawrence Gateway Project (LGP), which is a series of integrated public and private sector investments designed to revitalize

the city's economic, environmental, residential, infrastructural, cultural and historical characteristics.

- **Northern Essex Community College Allied Health and Technology Center:** NECC's new Allied Health and Technology Center will revitalize downtown Lawrence, and will help the city better meet its educational, training, and economic needs by preparing more Lawrence residents for jobs in high-demand health care fields. Tsongas helped to secure \$381,000 for the 44,000 square foot facility which will feature a Health Education Simulation Center, where health care students will receive hands-on experience in simulated environments such as a hospital intensive care unit and operating room, an ambulance, and a doctor's office. The building will also include classrooms and computer labs and a Career Planning and Advising Center where students will receive academic and career counseling.
- **Helping Merrimack Valley seniors avoid health care fraud:** Tsongas helped to secure a \$270,000 federal grant that Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley (ESMV) will use to help elder residents of the Merrimack Valley avoid fraudulent Medicare scams. Since 1999, ESMV's has administered a Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program which reaches out to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries to help them avoid, detect, and prevent health care fraud.

FITCHBURG

- **Fitchburg Art Museum recognized with national honor:** Rep. Tsongas nominated the Fitchburg Art Museum for The National Medal for Museum and Library Service. As a result, the museum was a finalist for the 2016 Medal.

"Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale said even being nominated by Tsongas is quite an honor. The nomination speaks volumes of the importance of this institution and of her as our representative," he added. Fitchburg Sentinel & Enterprise, February 24, 2016

- **Federal partnership key to Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line extension:** At the end of 2011, Congresswoman Tsongas helped to sign a project construction grant agreement which will enable substantial improvements to the Fitchburg MBTA Commuter Rail Line. The \$270 million project, which includes double tracking along the line, construction of a new Littleton train station, and an extension of the line to a new commuter rail station at Wachusett, will shorten commute times, improve service, and create jobs.
- **A boost to the Fitchburg Community Health Connections Center:** Tsongas, Congressman Jim McGovern and former Congressman John Olver helped the

new Fitchburg Community Health Connections Center (FCHC) facility acquire \$10.7 million in federal funding. Tsongas has been a longtime supporter of community health centers, and the affordable, quality health care they provide to millions of people across the country.

- **Fitchburg wins top prize in Boston Federal Reserve Working Cities Challenge:** The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB) announced the City of Fitchburg earned the second-highest award in its Working Cities Challenge, an initiative launched by the FRBB in May 2013. The Challenge is designed to support and sponsor small Massachusetts cities that foster opportunities for success to low-income residents. Several Third District communities were considered for this prestigious award, with support from Congresswoman Tsongas.

Former Fitchburg Mayor Lisa Wong said: "Working collaboratively with the Federal Reserve will help Fitchburg implement our shared vision of success and inclusion for the downtown and university areas. We are excited that our hard work on finding solutions at the systems change level is being recognized and supported by a multi-year grant."

Haverhill

- **Support given to Haverhill Veterans Housing:** With help from \$260,000 in federal funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, a program Congresswoman Tsongas voted to create, the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center (VNEOC) opened two new housing units in Haverhill for previously homeless Massachusetts veterans. The veterans that will live in the new dwelling on Cedar Street have worked with VNEOC to find employment and transition back into the community.
- **Haverhill Intermodal Parking Facility:** In 2011, the Haverhill Intermodal Parking Facility officially opened. The new garage provides an additional 315 parking spaces for the Haverhill Commuter Rail Station and nearby newly-renovated mill buildings. The presence of the garage in downtown Haverhill will significantly boost economic development and job creation. More than \$8 million in federal monies helped to fund construction of the garage including a \$475,000 federal appropriation that Tsongas previously helped to secure for construction of the garage.
- **Haverhill Bridge TIGER Grant enables modernization:** Congresswoman Tsongas helped secure a \$10 million TIGER (Transportation Improvements Generation Economic Recovery) grant for repairs to the Merrimack River Railroad Bridge in Haverhill. The bridge is used by Commuter Rail, Amtrak,

and freight trains daily but is in need of improvements. The funding will update and improve the bridge in the short term and over the long term will ultimately relieve congestion on busy streets, connect smaller communities to major urban areas, reduce emissions, spur economic growth and create jobs.

- **Solar Panels for the Haverhill Citizens Energy Efficiency Project:** The Haverhill Citizens Center serves hundreds of residents every day, including many of Haverhill's elderly population. It houses Haverhill's Council on Aging, Cultural Council, Veterans Offices, Recreational and Youth Services Programs. The building suffers from tremendous energy inefficiency, yet its original 1960's design was supposed to capitalize on cutting edge energy efficiency measures, including solar and geothermal possibilities which were never realized. Tsongas secured \$238,000 to help renovate and install solar panels at the Haverhill Citizens Center, which may also be used as a model for an energy efficiency project that preserves original infrastructure.
- **Helping Haverhill students stay in school:** Tsongas helped to secure a new \$700,000 federal grant that is helping Haverhill students to stay in school. The grant is funding a new program entitled Youth Engaging for Success (YES) that will help identify middle school students in Haverhill who may be at risk of dropping out and help them stay in school. The grant funds will also enable Haverhill High School to add staff to its existing support programs, a move that allows more students to participate in Haverhill's successful Jobs for Bay State Grads, the Success Academy and Haverhill High Alternative night school program. A YES summer school program to help address the transition from 8th to 9th grade will also be added.

MARLBOROUGH

- **Invites Mayor to State of the Union in spirit of bipartisanship:** Tsongas invited Republican Mayor of Marlborough Arthur Vigeant to be her guest at President Obama's 2015 State of the Union Address in Washington, D.C. Cities such as Marlborough are playing a major role in the manufacturing and tech boom happening in Massachusetts, which is why she invited Mayor Vigeant to the State of the Union, to hear firsthand the President's plan for supporting a "Make it in America" agenda that will continue to grow jobs, economic development and manufacturing.

Arthur Vigeant, Mayor of the City of Marlborough and guest of Rep. Tsongas at tonight's State of the Union, released the following statement: "I am honored to attend the State of the

Union Address as Congresswoman Tsongasøguest. We share a common interest in putting party lines aside to strengthen our economy and do whatø best for the Marlborough community. I look forward to hearing the Presidentø vision for the upcoming year and working with Congresswoman Tsongas to move our city forward.ö

- **Leads downtown walking tour of Marlborough businesses:** In May 2015 Tsongas continued her longstanding practice of visiting local business owners by conducting a downtown walking tour of some Marlborough companies and restaurants, to hear about new economic development ideas and the issues important to small business owners.
- **Local company receives SBIR support for body armor development:** To help support the development of their groundbreaking technology, Marlboroughø Xtalic received a \$100,000 SBIR grant. Tsongas led the successful fight to reauthorize the SBIR program which has been described as the governmentø most successful research and development program, and has been vital to creating jobs and fostering innovation in Massachusetts. Xtalicø innovations utilize very high strength, light-weight metal that the military uses for a variety of applications. This technology could also potentially be used to develop lighter-weight body armor for troops in the field, which Tsongas has fought for since being elected to Congress.

METHUEN

- **Secured funding for Methuen I-93 rotary improvement:** Tsongas obtained \$900,000 in the Interstate Maintenance Discretionary Fund within the Federal Housing Administration budget for this project. She also supported the Surface Transportation Extension Act that was enacted in 2012, authorizing \$105 billion in funding for transit and highway projects. The funding included \$1.2 billion for Massachusetts, of which the state will be reimbursed \$55 million, or about 80 percent of the Methuen Interchange project. Ground was broken on the project in 2014.

öOn the congressional level, the seeds of this rotary design were sown to some degree by former Rep. Marty Meehan and his successor, Niki Tsongasí Tsongas also joined others in Congress by supporting an \$105 billion transportation bill that included \$1.2 billion for Massachusetts. Because of that, the state will be reimbursed for 80 per-cent of the projectø cost.ö *The Lowell Sun Editorial Board, July 7, 2014*

- **Tsongas assists Methuen company expand and remain in the city:** Century Box Company is a second generation family owned business. In recent years,

Century Box has struggled with the demands of meeting customer needs while operating in an undersized facility. The owners were aggressively recruited by two other states offering substantial incentives to relocate and were tempted to leave Massachusetts due to the constraints of the size of their facility.

Congresswoman Tsongas worked with Polartec, the abutting land owner, to consider selling a parcel of land adjacent to Century Box to accommodate the 57,000SF expansion doubling the size of the building. Century Box is investing \$5.25 million in the building expansion and new equipment and will double the size of the workforce from 89 to 188 full time jobs. Congresswoman Tsongas's office facilitated meetings with the City of Methuen Planning and Development staff, Massachusetts Office of Business Development, Massachusetts Workforce Development and Massachusetts Development staff. As a result of these discussions the company received a 10 year TIF with the city valued at \$126,720 and an Economic Assistance Coordinating Council approval of \$1.1 million in EDIP Investment Tax Credits.

SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES

- **Concord's Barrett's Farm preserved:** Tsongas' bill to protect Colonel James Barrett's farm in Concord, was signed into law by President Obama in March 2009. The bill allowed this historic site, which was the impetus for the British march on Concord and Lexington, to be brought within the boundaries of Minute Man National Park, so that current and future generations can learn about the important role it played in the birth of our nation.
- **Through Tsongas efforts, Federal Transit Authority commits \$3.2 million for an expanded rail trail parking lot in Ayer:** Former Congressman Marty Meehan secured \$3.2 million to build a new Ayer Parking Facility for both rail commuters and the thousands of visitors utilizing the Nashua River Rail Trail for recreation. However, when the state failed to provide the required 20% match, the federal funds were put at risk and Congresswoman Tsongas's office immediately worked with Town of Ayer planning and historic boards, Montachusett Area Regional Transportation (MART) officials and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Community Development (EOHCD) to creatively finance the required 20% match. The Ayer funding was due to sunset in 2011, but officials credit Tsongas for convincing the FTA to keep the funding in place for the long-contemplated project.
- **Bringing clean energy options to Lancaster:** Tsongas helped to secure \$500,000 in federal funding to build 4,500 solar panels (making it the largest

such site in the state) on a capped former town landfill in Lancaster. The 831-kilowatt field will be used to offset Lancaster's energy use for its public buildings, as well as stimulate the local economy through investment and job creation. It will also offset 878,000 lbs of CO2 emissions annually, and will produce approximately the same amount of electricity as 35,000 barrels of oil.

- **Horizons for Homeless Children**: Tsongas helped to secure a \$95,000 federal appropriation for Horizons for Homeless Children (HHC) which operates a network of Playspace Programs in the Third District and throughout Massachusetts. These programs provide homeless children in shelters with the opportunity to benefit from developmentally-appropriate play opportunities, mitigating the harmful lifelong impact of homelessness on those children.

Communicating with Constituents

Congresswoman Tsongas's office has corresponded more than **465,000** times via mail with constituents of the Third (and former Fifth) District since she took office, providing information on topics of interest and answering questions.

Third District Constituent Testimonials:

Shane Eastman – Lancaster, MA: "I contacted Congresswoman Tsongas's Lowell Office for assistance with a complicated issue my family and I encountered with the VA Healthcare System. Congresswoman Tsongas's staff did an exceptional job and continually followed up with me until my problem was resolved. I had gone through the normal channels of communication with the VA but was unable to fix my issue until I had contacted her office. I appreciate the Congresswoman's help and am thankful for the assistance."

Kenneth Gerace – Ayer, MA: "Earlier this year, my Social Security benefits had been interrupted and I was unable to sort the problem out on my own. I then contacted Congresswoman Tsongas and her staff worked with Social Security to fix the issue. Their intervention made sure my family and I were able to make ends meet and we thank the Congresswoman for all of her efforts."

Arthur Basdanes – Lowell, MA: "For several months, I had been working to resolve an issue related to my retirement from the IRS. After having a difficult time navigating the process, I contacted Congresswoman Niki Tsongas's Office for assistance. The Congresswoman's staff responded immediately and worked on my behalf to solve my issue. I'm very appreciative for the Congresswoman's assistance and would recommend contacting her office to anyone in need of assistance."

In nine years, Congresswoman Tsongas's office has helped more than **14,774** individuals and organizations in the Third District. For example, Tsongas's office

has assisted constituents cut through IRS red tape, navigate immigration processes, get answers on housing issues, and receive veterans' benefits.

- **Works closely with family and consulate to award WWII veteran France's highest military honor:** In 2016, Dracut resident Frank Polewarczyk was inducted into the French Legion of Honor. Rep. Tsongas' office worked closely with him, his family and the French Consulate to navigate the application process and ensure Mr. Polewarczyk received this prestigious award. Rep. Tsongas was honored to be on hand on Lafayette Day in Boston to see the honored bestowed upon Mr. Polewarczyk.
- **Assists local family to award posthumous Purple Heart to WWII veteran:** Tsongas' office played an instrumental role in helping the family of deceased WWII Veteran Carmelo A. Sciacca retrieve his service medals and honors, including the distinguished Purple Heart. Tsongas helped the family navigate the process and worked on the family's behalf to help secure the veteran's records and awards.

Tsongas investigated, and with the assistance of her aide Patrick Kenney, found out that the Purple Heart was indeed earned by Carmelo Sciacca. They then gathered the Sciacca and Roy families in her office on Union Street in Lawrence for a ceremony to award the medal posthumously. *Tsongas presents Purple Heart posthumously, by Tom Duggan, Valley Patriot, April 15, 2015*

- **Tsongas hosts Third District Day in Washington, D.C.:** Tsongas continues a great tradition by regularly hosting Third District Day, a unique opportunity for residents to interact with lawmakers, public officials, media personalities, business leaders and more, as well as provide a firsthand look at how the Capitol works. Open to the public, Tsongas invites residents from all around the Third District to come to Washington, D.C. to attend this day-long seminar that provides in-depth insight on a wide variety of issues facing Massachusetts and America as a whole. It is always a meaningful day full of interesting and productive discussions. The 2016 event, which was the 20th of its kind, featured presentations by: General Mark Milley, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, Tina Tchen, Assistant to the President/Chief of Staff to the First Lady, Washington Post Columnist Dana Milbank, Michael Botticelli: White House Director of National Drug Policy, Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey and many more.
- **Veterans Advisory Committee:** Soon after her election to Congress, Tsongas formed a Veterans Advisory Committee, which brings together local veterans, military families, elected leaders, veterans' agents, and other

veterans care representatives to identify ways to better serve District veterans and their families. Tsongas consults with members of the Advisory Committee when crafting legislation to assist veterans, such as the PTSD bills that she introduced in 2008 and legislation to accelerate the development of lighter weight body armor.

“Locally, we have advocates in our local congressmen -- U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas, a Lowell Democrat who's made veterans issues a high priority.” *The Lowell Sun Editorial Board, May 27, 2014*

- **Visiting and partnering with employers in the District:** Tsongas has made it a priority to visit local companies and employers in all parts of the District to discuss ways to support them at the federal level. The District is home to pioneering companies like American Superconductor, New Balance, Raytheon, Nuvera Fuel Cells and many others. She has taken recent visits to:
 - *Masy Bioservices* ó woman-owned biotechnology in Pepperell
 - *ReWalk* - A company in Marlborough that makes exoskeletons for injured veterans, and many others
 - *Wachusett Brewery* ó brewhouse in Westminster
 - *Accutronics* ó electronics manufacturer in Chelmsford
 - *New England Die Cutting* ó family owner manufacturer in Methuen
 - *Shaker Workshops* ó A Gardner furniture maker

Elizabeth Penny from the GGCC, who helped arrange the event, said this was not the first time the congresswoman has visited a Gardner business. “She has come three times to see what challenges small business owners face when starting a business in North Central Massachusetts,” *Ms. Penny said.* ó *The Gardner News, March 24, 2014*

Tsongas has always said that she can be a better advocate for the innovative work being done in the District when she has seen it firsthand.

"We were extremely pleased to host Congresswoman Niki Tsongas at our corporate headquarters in Marlborough,” *said Mr. Nobuhiko Tamura, a top executive at Sunovion in Marlborough.* “Sunovion is very committed to strengthening the community where our employees live and work and ensuring a thriving life sciences industry in Massachusetts. We had the opportunity to discuss several important topics and ideas with the Congresswoman and her team and look forward to working together to achieve these mutual goals.”

- **Hosts 2014 Immigration Forum:** Tsongas hosted a free immigration workshop at the Senior Center in Lawrence, open to the public that included presenters discussing topics such as Eligibility for Lawful Permanent Residence, The Naturalization Process, Rights & Responsibilities of U.S.

Citizenship, and Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law. Attendees met directly with immigration experts from the Congresswoman's staff, representatives from the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) to ask questions and discuss their own individual situations.

- **Connecting with residents through ‘Congress on Your Corner’ events:** Shortly after her election, Tsongas started her *Congress on Your Corner* program which regularly takes her to local supermarkets and other high traffic venues in the Third District on weekends to meet face to face with constituents. Tsongas has made accessibility to the people she represents the hallmark of her office and spends most days that Congress is not in session visiting with the residents and communities that make up the District.
- **Hosts Town Halls & Telephone Town Halls:** On perhaps the biggest legislative issue of the past several decades, the Affordable Care Act, Congresswoman Tsongas held four town hall meetings to hear directly from her constituents on health care legislation being considered by the House of Representatives. Congresswoman Tsongas also hosted nearly a dozen telephone town hall meetings on health care, as well as numerous meetings with seniors, physicians, hospitals, nurses and other health care stakeholders in the District. She regularly hosts telephone town hall meetings to hear from residents in an efficient way, allowing them to speak directly to her from the comfort of their own homes about the issues important to them.
- **Establishes eNewsletter Program to reach out to residents:** Tsongas sends out a regular eNewsletter to more than 8,000 and counting residents to provide her perspective on legislation before Congress and to solicit opinions, ideas, and input from her constituents.
- **Innovative Cities Conference:** Tsongas hosted a Congressional policy hearing in Lowell that featured testimony from a series of experts regarding the economic growth and improved livability of small to mid-sized cities. The hearing was part of a three day innovative cities conference in Lowell that Tsongas helped organize. Tsongas, who has made the health and growth of the nation's cities a major priority as part of her work in Congress, is using the recommendations made by the panelists at the hearing as part of her efforts to encourage the formation of a comprehensive national urban policy. Tsongas wants to ensure that small to mid-sized cities like those in the Merrimack Valley are included in national urban policy so that it is not

focused exclusively on larger cities like Chicago, New York, or LA.

- **Tsongas hosts Public Safety Grants Forum:** Congresswoman Niki Tsongas has hosted several forums to help provide local first responders with the resources and information they need to secure public safety grants from the Federal and state government.
- **Tsongas hosts agriculture roundtable with District Farmers:** The District is home to more than 800 farms, ranging from dairy herds to wholesale nurseries to apple orchards. Since taking office, Congresswoman Tsongas has made the agricultural economy in the District a priority. Most of these are family farms which face unique challenges in an ever changing agricultural climate. Congresswoman Tsongas regularly hosts roundtable discussions with District farmers to talk about issues affecting them and their businesses as well as policies that they would like to see enacted at the Congressional level. Tsongas has also toured local farms, helped to secure grants and other forms of federal assistance for farmers, and solicited their opinions when formulating federal farm and nutrition policies.
- **Tsongas holds jobs forum in Lawrence:** Tsongas hosted a jobs forum in Lawrence with local employers, labor groups, and city and state representatives to solicit ideas and discuss policies needed to help drive job creation and reduce unemployment. The forum entitled: *Lessons from the Frontline: A Jobs Creation Roundtable* examined topics such as, what is working in the local economy, what are the opportunities and obstacles to promoting hiring in local communities, what role do tax incentives play in where businesses locate and whom they hire, and what should be done at the federal level to help employers create jobs.
- **Helping organizations navigate the Federal grants process:** Tsongas hosted a forum at UMass Lowell to help localities, first responders and non-profit groups take advantage of the stimulus funds and annual Agency funding distributed through formula and competitive grants. Participants in the forum heard from experts on topics such as navigating the federal grants process, best practices for grant research and writing as well as strategies for collaboration and regionalization in the grants process.
- **Sharing new information about housing grant opportunities with District cities and towns:** Tsongas hosted a forum in Lawrence with representatives from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to inform the cities and towns in the District of the federal resources available

to help mitigate the harsh impacts of the current housing crisis and to help communities recover from the challenges presented by the growing number of foreclosures in these neighborhoods. Grant funding for municipalities was included in a significant housing bill passed by Congress and more than a dozen communities from throughout the District were able to participate in the Forum.

- **Nonprofits Roundtable in Lawrence:** Congresswoman Tsongas hosted a roundtable in Lawrence with nonprofit organizations to talk about their needs and ways the federal government can provide support to them as they work to address issues like hunger and poverty.
- **Hosts annual forum for students interested in military academies:** The annual event highlights opportunities to attend the United States Service Academies, participate in local University ROTC programs, and serve in each of the armed services. Students and their families will be able to interact with representatives of each of these organizations and to explore the array of benefits military service can provide.

“It was nice to have her. She was very attentive and listened to all our concerns. She sees issues from many sides.” *New England Peptide CEO Sam Massoni, after Tsongas visited his facility in 2015. Gardner News, May 5, 2015, U.S. Rep Tsongas Visits Local Company*

EDUCATION



As a teacher at an alternative school and a dean at Middlesex Community College ó the Commonwealth's largest community college ó Tsongas witnessed firsthand the impact education has on an individual and a family. Massachusetts, where the first public schools in America were established, has always made education a priority. Tsongas believes we must treat education as an investment in our future, as it is also the key to our nation's global competitiveness, affecting everything from the economy to clean energy.

Middlesex Community College President Carole Cowan praised Congresswoman Tsongas: "It doesn't surprise me at all the Niki realizes the values of our community colleges," ***Cowan said.*** "As a Dean at Middlesex for 10 years, Niki saw first-hand that we can provide everyone an opportunity to be successful in college. Keeping tuitions affordable and making sure that financial aid is an attractive asset for our students is paramount. We are lucky to have Congresswoman Tsongas as our partner, because she knows that legislation like this will help keep our workforce development strong and meet the emerging needs of our community partners."

- **Supports funding to teen center in Lowell:** The U.S. Department of Education awarded United Teen Equality Center, Inc. (UTEC) in Lowell \$300,000 to support educational services, especially HiSET (GED) preparation, and job training in their social enterprises for formerly incarcerated young people from Lowell and Lawrence. Congresswoman Tsongas strongly supported UTEC's application and sent a letter to the Department of Education on UTEC's behalf.

- **Financial literacy bolstered by Tsongas amendment:** In July, 2014 the House of Representatives passed a bipartisan amendment to H.R. 4984, the *Empowering Students Through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act* that would connect students with the financial management resources they need to be successful. The bipartisan amendment was authored by Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-MA), Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA), Rep. Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX), Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL) and Rep. Tom Petri (R-WI). This bipartisan amendment would direct universities and the Department of Education to introduce students to the financial management resources provided by the Financial Literacy and Education Commission.
- **Lowell & Lawrence receive millions in pre-school funding:** Tsongas pushed for Massachusetts communities to receive \$15 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Lowell and Lawrence were awarded portions of the grant. In Lowell, 156 4-year-olds from low-income families will get a chance to attend full-day/full-year preschool thanks to the funding.

U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas, who helped push for the Bay State to get the grant, said it will help continue the state's longstanding investment in young students. *City to get \$2.85 million from preschool-ed grant, by Rob Mills, Lowell Sun, December 11, 2014*

- **Ensuring access to Higher Education for all students:** Tsongas has hosted multiple financial aid roundtables bringing together state and local elected officials, higher and secondary education counselors, as well as representatives from local lending institutions to discuss issues related to higher education accessibility and affordability.
- **Making higher education more affordable:** Tsongas has long supported Congressional action to keep student loans affordable. She has voted in support of legislation to keep rates low and has urged for a comprehensive, long-term plan. She penned an OpEd in 2012 for the Andover Townsman, putting forth the idea to keep student-loan rates low by repealing oil subsidies.
- **Promoting the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education:** Tsongas is a member of the STEM Caucus and has cosponsored a number of bills to improve STEM education, including legislation to create a refundable tax credit for students pursuing undergraduate degrees in STEM education and legislation to incent partnerships in renewable energy as part of a comprehensive program to enhance STEM instruction in high school and college.

- **Providing quality primary and STEM education to children on military bases:** Through the annual defense bill in 2013, Tsongas helped to secure \$36 million for construction of an elementary school at Hanscom Air Force Base, which is currently under construction. She followed this up with further support in subsequent defense bills. Tsongas is also a strong advocate for the DOD's STARBASE Program, a nationwide program that provides Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education to elementary school students. There are 76 academies in 40 states providing hands-on STEM lessons for elementary students, primarily 5th graders. Tsongas has continuously advocated for funding of this important and effective program, writing letters of support to leaders of both parties urging them to support STARBASE. The only STARBASE program in New England is located at Hanscom AFB, where students from Lowell, Lawrence and Fitchburg have all participated in the program.
- **Visit to Fitchburg school highlights student nutrition:** In January 2016 Rep. Tsongas visited South Street Elementary in Fitchburg, along with local officials, to highlight the importance of school nutrition programs. She ate lunch and talked with the kids, as well as school officials and teachers.

"I think it's important for (lawmakers) to come see what's going on in the schools," *Lucius [Director of Nutritional Services Jill Lucius] said.* "I'm extremely proud of our program. I think my staff does a great job, and I feel like we really have a chance to make an impact here with the health of our students." *Fitchburg S&E, January 20, 2016*

- **Keeping kids healthy so they perform better at school:** Tsongas fought repeated attempts by House Republicans to gut the SNAP (food stamp) program by \$33 billion. The SNAP program feeds more than 15 million children nationwide, and reduces by half the number of children each year that would otherwise face extreme poverty and hunger. Hunger has a residual, negative impact on a child's education. Tsongas has heard from school officials who voiced concerns about students who arrive at school hungry and as a result, have a harder time concentrating.

“While some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle still doubt that hunger is a problem in the 21st century in America, I know that in the cities and communities I represent, too many families, and especially too many children, have trouble getting enough food. School officials in my district have shared with me that free breakfasts on Monday mornings see the highest attendance because some kids have gone hungry all weekend.” *Niki Tsongas, September 2013*

- **Brings Rep. Kennedy on tour of local Community College, pens Op-Ed:** Tsongas invited Rep. Joe Kennedy III (MA-4) to visit Lowell in January,

2015 to see several local programs. Both are strong advocates workforce development, job training, and STEM education, and got a firsthand look at some of the innovation taking place around these issues in the Lowell region, including at Middlesex Community College where the Representatives met with students in a bio-tech classroom. Kennedy is the honorary Chair of the Governor's STEM Council. In the days following their tour, Tsongas and Kennedy co-authored an Op-Ed about the importance of community colleges, which ran in numerous local publications.

“As a former dean at a community college (Tsongas) and Honorary Chair of the Governor's STEM Council (Kennedy), we have seen firsthand how these institutions provide a highly individualized ladder to success. You don't need a microscope to see how a responsible investment in our community colleges and their students will have far-reaching and long-lasting benefits.” - *from Community colleges open doors, Tsongas & Kennedy Op-Ed, February 2015*

ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES



- **Critical conservation tool reauthorization after sustained pressure:** The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is an instrumental conservation program instituted more than 50 years ago that uses revenues from the depletion of one federal resource, offshore oil and gas, to conserve another, our land and water, and provide recreation opportunities for all Americans at no cost to the taxpayer. GOP leaders allowed the LWCF to expire in the fall of 2015. Congresswoman Tsongas, the top Democrat on the Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee, championed LWCF reauthorization throughout 2014 and 2015. As a result of her and her colleagues' efforts, the LWCF was reauthorized for three years in December, 2015.
- **Secretary of the Interior visits Lowell & Concord at Tsongas invitation:** In September 2015 U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell joined Congresswoman Tsongas for Tsongas' Ninth Annual River Day celebration. They visited Minute Man National Historical Park in Concord and Lowell National Historical Park in Lowell, where the Secretary and Congresswoman went out on the rivers and spoke with 4th grade schoolchildren about the environment and conservation efforts. Secretary Jewell and Rep. Tsongas then presented the students with year-long passes granting them and their families free access to all public lands and waters across the country (including National Parks), as part of the Obama Administration's "Every Kid in a Park" initiative. The visit gave Secretary Jewell a firsthand look at the important role these national parks play in the communities of the Third District.

Environment Massachusetts said it commends champions like Congresswoman Niki Tsongas who have committed to preserving the nation's special places and being leaders in the fight to keep parks protected against drilling, mining and development. *Wicked Local Littleton, July 26, 2016*

- **Tsongas legislation to help designate the Nashua River as Wild & Scenic signed into law:** In December 2014 President Obama signed into law a bill authored by Congresswoman Tsongas that takes steps toward protecting the Nashua River. The bill passed Congress with unanimous bipartisan support. Tsongas' Nashua River Wild and Scenic River Study Act authorized the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a study on the Nashua River and two of its tributaries, the Squannacook and Nissitissit Rivers, to determine their eligibility for designation as Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell, Executive Director of the Nashua River Watershed Association, said "This legislation will help advance the protection of the entire river system and we are thrilled to see it move forward."

In his closing statement during a subcommittee hearing, current *Republican Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee Rob Bishop* (R-Utah) thanked Congresswoman Tsongas for her work on this bill and said he is, "supportive of what you're trying to do here and of the study."

- **Introduces new legislation supporting historic preservation and economic development efforts in Lowell:** This legislation preserves and rehabilitates nationally significant historic buildings by reauthorizing a proven effective public-private partnership.
- **Tsongas named to leadership position on Natural Resources Committee:** As a longtime and well-respected member of the Natural Resources Committee, Tsongas was named the highest ranking Democratic member on the Subcommittee on Federal Lands in the 114th Congress. Tsongas was elected to the position by her colleagues. The Subcommittee on Federal Lands is responsible for all matters related to the National Park System, U.S. Forest System, public lands and national monuments. This leadership position will allow Tsongas a platform to continue and expand her work in multiple areas important to the district she represents and to the country as a whole. The Third District of Massachusetts is home to several national historic and wildlife areas, such as Minuteman National Park and Lowell National Historic Park.

Congressman Raúl Grijalva (AZ-3), the highest ranking Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee said: "I'm proud and excited to work with Rep. Tsongas, and I

appreciate her commitment to protecting the millions of acres of land owned by the public all across this great country... Her perspective on conservation will play a key role in improving public lands policy in the new Congress, and I join the members of the Committee in looking forward to working closely with her as often as possible.ö

- **National Park Director takes action on harassment after request from Tsongas:** After urging from a bipartisan group of U.S. Representatives, led by Rep. Tsongas, National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis expanded his examination into sexual harassment and hostile work environments at National Parks. Tsongas and 17 of her colleagues made several recommendations to Director Jarvis in 2016, which he subsequently put into motion. Director Jarvis said that the NPS is communicating with the Department of Defense regarding their efforts to survey active duty servicemembers, a step Rep. Tsongas suggested to Director Jarvis during a recent conversation. The Department of Defense has been using anonymous surveys for years to get a better understanding of assault and harassment in its ranks.
- **Strongly urges transparency in local natural gas pipeline project:** When a natural gas pipeline project was proposed to cut through portions of Massachusetts, Rep. Tsongas was active in ensuring the process was transparent and included as much public input as possible. She also pushed back on the proposed route that threatened to impact private farmland and protected environments, even penning an OpEd with Dracut farmer Jim Ogonowski citing environmental concerns and urging residents to get involved in the pipeline process. In 2016, the proposed pipeline project was shelved.
- **Leads letter to Interior Secretary proposing alternative to drilling:** In 2015, Rep. Tsongas and 52 colleagues wrote to Secretary Sally Jewell to express concern over Atlantic Ocean drilling plans, especially due to the lack of safety improvements undertaken since the Deep Water Horizon spill. They also cited alternative uses for the ocean area, such as wind power and other clean energy sources, that could generate large amounts of energy and create twice as many jobs as oil and gas development in the region. The proposed lease sales in the Atlantic were dropped from the plan.
- **Founding Member of Sustainable Energy & Environmental Coalition:** Tsongas is a founding member of the Sustainable Energy & Environmental Coalition (SEEC), where she works to help identify opportunities to support and improve energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts. The caucus is focused on ensuring that no opportunity is missed to adopt tangible climate

change policy and help American firms participate in the next wave of technological expansion.

- **Promotes and protects area rivers with annual River Day:** Each year Tsongas hosts River Day, when she and a group of volunteers visit various rivers and sites around the District to promote the conservation and importance of the region's beautiful natural resources. Over the past seven years, River Day has made stops in a dozen towns around the District, from Hudson and Fitchburg, to Lowell and Lawrence, to Maynard and Concord, traversing each of the main rivers that form the region's important network of waterways. Congresswoman Tsongas has met with hundreds of environmentalists, business owners, students, volunteer organizations, local officials and constituents since she began hosting the event in 2007, to discuss how we can collaboratively protect and enhance these waterways for future generations.
- **EPA announces plan to cut carbon emissions, mirroring local initiative:** In June 2014 the EPA unveiled a plan to promote public health by improving air quality across the nation. The proposal plans to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants by 30 percent by 2030. The plan embraces state-run programs such as the Northeast's Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) to meet lower emissions standards. Rep. Tsongas and Rep. Annie Kuster (NH-02) had written a letter to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, urging them to look at RGGI as a model to be used in other regions. The letter cited RGGI as a proven example for cutting carbon pollution and driving economic development, while protecting the public's health and the environment. The lawmakers' letter encouraged the EPA to look toward the program as the agency worked to set federal standards to cut carbon pollution from the nation's existing power plants. The letter was co-signed by 39 other lawmakers from the Northeast United States.
- **Tsongas supports Wind Production Tax Credit:** Tsongas has been a strong supporter of renewable energy, especially wind energy. She has advocated for extending the wind production tax credit, speaking several times on the House Floor in favor of this important clean energy initiative. The wind industry has proven to be beneficial for the environment, American manufacturing, and high-skilled job creation in Massachusetts.

Members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation are hopeful two federal tax credits designed to boost wind energy production will be extended. U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas, D-Lowell, a member of the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition, noted the increasing reliance on wind energy in her district and other areas of the state. She contended in a recent

statement on the House floor that the credits' extension would contribute to job creation in the state. *Mass. Legislators push for renewal of expiring wind energy credits, Worcester T&G, 10/7/2012, by Lisa Hagen and Joel Senick*

- **Tsongas, Rivera Announce EPA action on Merrimac Paper Co. Site:** In June, 2014 Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera, Tsongas and others announced the results of the Environmental Protection Agency's removal site evaluation concerning asbestos contamination identified at portions of the Merrimac Paper Company Site. With a long, troubled history and then a major fire this January, the Merrimac Paper Site has been a key concern for the city. Over the course of the removal process Tsongas's office will play a key role in maintaining a continuous chain of communication across all levels of government at the Merrimac Paper Company Site. The project took another major step forward in the fall of 2014 when the EPA announced a plan has been approved and will move forward with a \$2 million commitment from the federal government.
- **Supporting reduced energy costs at Mann Orchards, Carlson Orchards, Shaw Farm:** Both Mann Orchards in Methuen and Carlson Orchards in Harvard opened a solar array which will cut energy costs for each farm by tens of thousands of dollars annually and was funded by state and federal grants which were obtained with help from Tsongas's office. Lawrence-based Solectria Renewables built the converters for the solar array at Mann Orchards, making the project a prime example of the economic benefits of clean energy technology both in reducing costs and supporting emerging domestic industries. Likewise, Tsongas worked with the Shaw Family in Dracut to help them secure an \$18,000 tax credit to build their new bottling facility at the 104 year old farm. The grant allowed the Shaw family to install a geothermal heating and AC unit to dramatically reduce annual energy costs. Tsongas has been a strong supporter of federal tax credits like these which help businesses to reduce energy costs while simultaneously benefiting the environment.
- **Increasing accountability in response to the Gulf Oil Spill:** In 2010, the House of Representatives passed the Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources (CLEAR) Act, which constitutes Congress's response to the BP oil spill. The CLEAR Act includes a provision originally introduced by Congresswoman Niki Tsongas as part of her Oil Spill Preparation and Protection Act, which would require oil companies to submit detailed plans on how they would contain and cleanup a worst-case scenario oil spill. The required plans would force oil companies to address potential catastrophic

occurrences, and have in place contingency plans in the event that early attempts to contain a spill fail. Tsongas is a member of the Natural Resources Committee, which was responsible for drafting major portions of the CLEAR Act.

- **Growing the green technology industry:** Tsongas hosted an economic development summit in Haverhill which brought together major local employers, community leaders, and economic development experts to discuss ways to grow green collar jobs in the District.
- **At Tsongas invitation, Interior Secretary Salazar visits Lowell:** At the invitation of Congresswoman Tsongas, former U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar visited Lowell for a tour of the Lowell National Historical Park, the nation's first urban National Park of its kind. Tsongas urged Secretary Salazar to visit Lowell NHP to see a firsthand example of the important role that National Parks can play in both the economic development and cultural preservation of cities. Following the tour the Secretary commented that Lowell NHP could be "a model" for urban national parks throughout the nation, including in such cities as St. Louis and Los Angeles.
- **Tsongas creates win/win by linking local clean energy companies with the Department of Defense:** The Third District is home to one of the largest concentrations of clean energy employers in New England. At the same time, the Department of Defense, the largest institutional consumer of fossil fuels in the country using over 300,000 barrels of oil per day and 3.9 billion kilowatt hours of electricity per year, has set a target of obtaining 25% of its energy from renewable sources by 2025. Tsongas, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, recognized an opportunity to connect some of the District's innovative local clean energy companies with the Department of Defense to inform them of the DOD's new clean energy focus, as well as to discuss how these local companies could potentially form partnerships and compete for contracts related to the DOD's clean energy initiatives.

CONSUMER PROTECTION & CAMPAIGN FINANCE



- **Introduces bill to prevent federal funds from being used in political campaigns:** Tsongas introduced the No Taxpayer Money for Corporate Campaigns Act, which would prevent any federal funds received by corporations, private companies, or other entities from being used for lobbying or in political campaigns. The No Taxpayer Money for Corporate Campaigns Act of 2015 has received support from several leading campaign finance reform advocacy groups.

“At this critical moment when big-money special interests and corporate lobbyists always seem to get their way, Common Cause commends Congresswoman Tsongas for introducing the No Taxpayer Money for Corporate Campaigns Act of 2015,” *said Aaron Scherb, Director of Legislative Affairs at Common Cause.* “This bill will help strengthen our democracy so that everyday Americans will always have a strong voice in our government.”

- **The STOCK Act:** In 2012, the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act (STOCK Act), of which Tsongas was one of the first sponsors, was signed into law. The legislation would prevent lawmakers from using knowledge they obtain in their professional capacity for personal financial gain.
- **Tsongas bill increasing consumer access to credit scores signed into law:** After hearing from constituents who couldn’t access their own credit scores—scores used to decide the amount of credit they would be given or the interest rates they would be offered on mortgages, car loans, or college

loansô Tsongas offered an amendment enacted into law as part of Wall Street Reform to increase consumer access. Tsongas believes that a credit bureau should have to provide the same type of credit score to both consumers and lenders, or to not sell that type of score to either, placing consumers and lenders on a more level playing field. If a bureau chooses to sell a type of score to a lender, it must also make that type of score available to the consumer.

- **Tsongas announces introduction of bill to ease tax burden for senior citizen volunteers:** Tsongas introduced the *Senior and Retired Volunteers Act (SERV Act)*, legislation that provides targeted federal tax relief to senior citizens participating in Massachusetts local volunteer programs, while also relieving local communities from bureaucratic burdens around that volunteer work.

"This bill is an obvious win-win for cities and seniors. Volunteering speaks to healthy living and healthy aging," *said Rosanne DiStefano, Executive Director of Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley.* "This effort will encourage more seniors to remain active and use what they can to help others, in addition to removing the red tape that will allow more cities to participate in the benefit program."

Protection for Veterans

- **Tsongas initiative to help servicemembers married to foreign spouses access their tax rebate becomes law:** After *Stars and Stripes* and other organizations began reporting that servicemembers married to foreign spouses were ineligible to receive 2008 stimulus checks because of a provision intended to prevent illegal immigrants from receiving checks, Tsongas spear-headed a joint letter from House members to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee requesting that the glitch be addressed. Her remedy was included in the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 which became law on June 17, 2008.
- **Tsongas protects troops from predatory lenders:** Tsongas joined in introducing the Military Savings Act, legislation to promote savings rates among military servicemembers and to decrease their vulnerability to predatory payday lenders in times of financial crisis. The legislation establishes a pilot program in which financial institutions operating on military bases will offer innovative financial products to help troops and their families improve their financial situations. Military servicemembers are

three times more likely than civilians to resort to predatory payday loans that charge exorbitant interest rates.

EQUALITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS



LGBT

- **Historic Supreme Court rulings:** In the summer of 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that every state must issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Congresswoman Tsongas has joined in numerous “friend of the court” briefs in support of marriage equality, most recently in March of that year. She was an original cosponsor of the Respect for Marriage Act of 2011 that sought to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which prevented federal recognition of same sex marriage. DOMA was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 2013. Congresswoman Tsongas is also a founding member of the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus.

“In 2004, I rallied on the steps of the Massachusetts State House in support of same-sex marriage and I was proud when Massachusetts became the first state to recognize marriage equality. Today’s ruling validates once again the Commonwealth’s long history of sparking change.” –
Niki Tsongas, June 26, 2015

- **Strong advocate for the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA):** In 2013, ENDA passed the Senate by a vote of 64-32 and Tsongas, a cosponsor of the bill, went to the House Floor to urge Speaker John Boehner to bring the bill to a vote, as she had done several times in the past. Her late husband Paul was the first U.S. Senator to introduce legislation to ban job discrimination based on sexual orientation. That was more than 30 years

ago, in 1979. She agreed with him then and feels just as strongly about championing similar measures today. Almost directly after she was elected in 2007, she strongly supported the Employment Non-Discrimination Act spearheaded by her former colleague Barney Frank. She also supported the Baldwin Amendment, which would have added protections for gender identity saying, "we need to have the most comprehensive protections possible, and the Baldwin Amendment would make a good bill better." Tsongas also signed a letter encouraging President Obama to issue an executive order banning discrimination based on sexual orientation.

- **Founding the Congressional Equality Caucus:** Tsongas is one of the original, founding members of the Congressional Equality Caucus for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Americans. As a member of this caucus, she has advocated for the extension of equal rights, the repeal of discriminatory laws, the elimination of hate-motivated violence, and the improved health and well-being for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.
- **Tsongas fights for the repeal of DOMA:** Tsongas joined her House colleagues in three briefs challenging the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). She is an original cosponsor of the Respect for Marriage Act of 2011, which sought to repeal DOMA outright. She hailed the Supreme Court decision striking key provisions of DOMA: "Consenting individuals throughout the country, regardless of where they live, should have the ability to live an authentic life and have their monogamous, long-term relationships recognized and celebrated."
- **Tsongas joins the President for Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal:** Tsongas joined President Obama on December 22, 2010 at the White House as he signed into law the legislation that officially ended the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. Tsongas had strongly advocated for the repeal since first being elected to Congress. She spoke on the House Floor in favor of repealing the policy, and as a member of the Armed Service Committee, helped ensure the provision doing so was included in the Fiscal Year 2011 annual defense bill.

Women's Rights:

- **Fighting for equal pay for equal work:** Tsongas is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation which would help establish equal rights in the work place, thus eliminating the need for women to go to court in order to receive equal pay.
- **Preventing violence against women:** Tsongas spoke in support of reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act and voted in favor of reauthorization, which ultimately passed in 2013. She is also a national leader on combating sexual assault in the military.
- **Equality in the military:** Tsongas has strongly supported the removal of the ban on women serving in combat and applauded the decision in 2015 to open all combat jobs to women. She has written opeds in support of the decision, urging the Department of Defense to institute thorough implementation and full support of servicewomen. She has also secured funding to develop gender-specific body armor for women in the military.

“As the doors to opportunity swing open, the military must find ways to support all those who wear the uniform. A professional culture of mutual respect is critical to weeding out discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and the retaliation that too frequently haunts survivors of those crimes. Opening combat jobs to women officially legitimizes the contributions of past servicewomen and recognizes the significant role women are already playing on the battlefield. But the matter is not over. The branches of the armed forces must submit implementation plans by January 1, 2016 and must start putting them in motion by April. Congress must ensure thorough implementation so that military women have the support they deserve and have earned.” – *Leveling the playing field for U.S. Servicewomen, by Niki Tsongas, The Lowell Sun, December 27, 2015*

SUPPORTING OUR SERVICEMEMBERS



Tsongas is a senior-ranking and well-respected member of the House Armed Services Committee. She is the former Ranking Member (Top Democrat) of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. She is the Co-chair of the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus, the Air Force Caucus, the Afghan Women's Caucus, and is a Congressionally-appointed member of the U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors. Tsongas is inspired by the Third District's strong, proud tradition of military service and her experiences growing up in a military family as she serves on behalf of our men and women in uniform. Below are examples of the numerous legislative and policy successes she has accomplished since taking office.

“Since her victory in a special election in 2007, Tsongas has picked her battles wisely from her spot on the House Armed Services Committee—it's also provided her a platform for a much greater cause: shaping the national response to the epidemic of sexual assaults in the military.”
Boston Globe Editorial Board, October 23, 2014

Supporting Massachusetts' military installations and defense sector

- **Tsongas advocacy leads to upgrades at Hanscom AFB & Lincoln Labs:**
Thanks to a concerted effort by the Massachusetts delegation, led by Rep. Tsongas, the U.S. Department of Defense announced in 2016 that they will invest close to \$500 million to modernize and upgrade the research and laboratory facilities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Labs, which is located on Hanscom Air Force Base. MIT's Lincoln

Laboratory (MIT/LL) was established in 1951 to build the nation's first air defense system. Since that time, Lincoln Labs has pioneered revolutionary new technologies to better protect our nation and our servicemembers.

In a statement, MIT President L. Rafael Reif and MIT Lincoln Laboratory Director Dr. Eric D. Evans said: "The Massachusetts Congressional delegation provided strong support for the Project. Representative Niki Tsongas proactively engaged with senior administration leadership to understand the national security requirements and communicated how the West Laboratory project met those needs. The facilities will also have a significant impact on the regional economy by increasing construction jobs and small business contracts, and strengthening long-term opportunities for the science, technology and innovation sector of the region."

- **Hanscom mission upgraded by major, Highly Technical Program:** In 2016 the DOD announced the Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) Integration Directorate and Program Executive Officer (PEO) program at Hanscom AFB. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas (MA-3) strongly supported the addition of the NC3-PEO program, working in partnership with Governor Charlie Baker and her colleagues in Congress. She hosted Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James at Hanscom the previous year and led letters in support of the NC3 program to Secretary of Defense Ash Carter. The NC3 PEO will oversee the acquisition and integration of a complex system of land, air, and space technology programs that assures connectivity and communications between senior leaders and the U.S. nuclear forces; it will not house actual weapons. Up to 80 new jobs are expected as a result of the program.
- **Tsongas brings high ranking military officials and members of the House Armed Services Committee to see Massachusetts military facilities:** Tsongas has been working to showcase the significance of Massachusetts military installations by inviting high ranking members of Congress and military officials to come and see the innovative work being done here firsthand.

Tsongas has and will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that Washington recognizes the innovative work that Massachusetts military installations and research centers provide for the US military.

Below is a sample list of those Tsongas has invited and hosted at MA military facilities:

- **Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH):** At the Congresswoman's invitation, Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH), the Chairman of the House Armed Services Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee (the Committee's largest subcommittee), visited Hanscom Air Force Base in August of 2014.

Rep. Turner said about the visit, "Since 2007, Congresswoman Tsongas and I have worked closely together in a substantive and bipartisan way to protect our servicemen and women. I was very grateful to Congresswoman Tsongas and to her community for welcoming me to Massachusetts. It was a pleasure to meet the men and women at Hanscom Air force Base and to see the incredibly sophisticated and forward-thinking work taking place at their facility. Congresswoman Tsongas and I will continue to build on our strong, bipartisan relationship as we work to find new ways for our communities to collaborate."

- **Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James:** Secretary James visited Hanscom in 2015, per Rep. Tsongas's invitation, to see Hanscom's facilities firsthand and was able to hear directly from Governor Baker and other officials about Hanscom's benefits.
- **Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA):** The highest ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA), visited Hanscom Air Force Base at the Congresswoman's invitation in 2012.

"Tsongas was doing her job, getting an important member of a powerful committee to come and see a vital part of the Massachusetts economy and the U.S. military -- Hanscom -- and the high stakes involved if cuts aren't made on the basis of sound reasoning and strategic importance. And Smith was doing his job while a long way from home. We applaud their efforts, and hope Congressman Smith has a better understanding of Hanscom's leadership role in developing innovative defense technology and why it is so important to preserve and expand all base operations." **Congressman Smith comes to Hanscom, The Lowell Sun editorial, September 30, 2012**

- **Top Military Leaders:** In November 2013, Congresswoman Tsongas invited **General Mark A. Welsh III**, Chief of Staff for the United States Air Force, to visit Hanscom Air Force Base and MIT Lincoln Labs. That same month, Congresswoman Tsongas hosted a meeting with Army Chief of Staff **General Raymond Odierno** at Natick Soldier Systems Center. During his visit, General Odierno noted that he sees a "bright future" for Natick.

"Welsh said he was impressed by what he saw during his visit to the Bay State. "It's clear to me that Massachusetts is committed to an enduring partnership with its military bases and, specifically, its airmen," **said Welsh.** "I'm impressed by the collaboration demonstrated by leaders of government, industry, academia and other organizations, all of whom are focused on

helping the Air Force and DOD more effectively meet our national security objectives.ø' *Mass. shows its best defense, Lowell Sun by Lyle Moran, November 12, 2013*

- **Tsongas provision defending Hanscom AFB wins support of Republican House:** Hanscom Air Force Base has met critical communications, technology, and other security needs for our military for decades. The Air Force's mission at Hanscom is supported by the universities and innovative high-tech institutions that are unique to Massachusetts and the base is a substantial economic driver in our region. Tsongas authored legislation which states that the Air Force cannot diminish Hanscom's capabilities or its important work without Congressional approval; the first step in protecting Hanscom's mission going forward.

øTo her credit, Tsongas is getting the attention of top military brass and extolling Massachusetts exceptionalism. As the state's lone member of the powerful House Armed Services Committee, the Lowell Democrat is staying ahead of the curve on military restructuring that could impact her home state.ø ø *Tsongas fights to keep military bases in MA, The Lowell Sun editorial, December 2, 2013*

- **Helped secure funding for new middle school and new dormitory at Hanscom AFB:** In June 2014, construction crews broke ground on a brand new, state of the art, middle school at Hanscom Air Force base. The \$34 million, 85,000-square-foot facility will accommodate more than 300 fourth-through-eighth-graders. Congresswoman Tsongas, in her position on the House Armed Services Committee, was vital in securing funding for the project to replace the existing 1950's building which had recently failed inspection. Tsongas also supported funding for a \$13.5 million construction project at Hanscom AFB for a new dormitory for junior enlisted airmen, which will increase housing options and provide modern, on-base accommodations. These crucial investments signal the DOD's continued support for the families of servicemembers at the base and the vital role Hanscom AFB plays in our national defense.
- **Champion of JSTARS funding which maintains Hanscom's core mission:** Congresswoman Tsongas has championed the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) recapitalization program. JSTARS has become one of the most reliable surveillance systems in the world, providing unparalleled reconnaissance resources and efficient communications capabilities. It was one of Hanscom's largest development programs in the 1990s, and the new recap program, which will be headquartered at Hanscom, will continue to be one of the base's largest programs. At Tsongas's request, the House-passed versions of the FY2015

National Defense Authorization Act and Defense Appropriations bill include the full \$73 million in funding needed to move forward with the JSTARS recap program.

- **After seeing it firsthand in Afghanistan, Tsongas is one of BACN's strongest advocates:** The Battlefield Airborne Communications Node (BACN), which is managed at Hanscom, has been heralded as an outstanding industry breakthrough. It is a critical communications tool that helps servicemembers communicate in remote locations around the world. At the Congresswoman's request, the FY15 NDAA secures BACN's place in our military future, recognizing its role as an important and necessary resource for soldier communication and safety by making BACN a permanent Air Force program, with a guaranteed funding stream.
- **Laboratory Authority for Breakthrough Scientific (LABS) Research Act:** The FY15 NDAA includes the Laboratory Authority for Breakthrough Scientific (LABS) Research Act, introduced by Rep. Tsongas, which encourages the elimination of bureaucratic restrictions that currently prevent DOD engineers, scientists, and other technical personnel from being able to share research, learn about cutting edge innovations, and interact with their peers from across the country and the world at technical conferences and symposia.
- **Tsongas working to maintain critical DOD wide food research program, saving jobs:** The Combat Feeding Directorate at Natick Soldier Systems Center is the primary organization conducting research, development, integration, testing, and engineering for combat rations, field food service equipment and complete combat feeding systems for the Department of Defense and interagency partners like NASA. As a result of Tsongas's persistent advocacy, severe cuts to this program were reversed in the FY15 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), taking a major step forward in preserving this critical mission, which supports over 100 jobs in Massachusetts.

Improving body armor

- **Tsongas efforts triple funding for new, safer body armor:** Since coming to Congress, Niki Tsongas has pushed for the development of safer, lighter-weight, gender specific and better fitting body armor for our troops in the field. In the FY17 NDAA Tsongas supported a provision that set an

ambitious goal of doubling the current requirement for weight reduction in the Army's Soldier Protection System program from ten percent to twenty percent while maintaining or improving current ballistic capabilities. This goal would ensure that soldiers have the most advanced hard armor possible to better address emerging and future threats.

- Tsongas also championed a law in 2009 to ensure a more dedicated stream of funding for body armor research. Heavy, cumbersome body armor is the cause of many injuries for our servicemen and women and at times causes servicemembers to remove their armor while on the battlefield, putting our military members at further risk while deployed. Her efforts helped lead to the tripling of the financial commitment to body armor research and development signed into law in 2012. Additionally, at Tsongas's request, the FY 2014 NDAA requires the Secretary of Defense to submit a comprehensive research and development strategy for achieving significant weight reductions (20% or more) for both hard and soft body armor to the congressional defense committees. Much of this research and development, funded by the legislation she championed, is happening right here in Massachusetts through collaboration between Natick Soldier Systems Center and UMass Lowell's Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center.

“As modern warfare evolves, the need to reconcile strength, safety and mobility becomes more important. Sergeant, major or colonel would agree a key step is to continue improving body armor and by doing so, optimize his or her ability to shoot, move and communicate.”

Time: Making All Our Troops Bulletproof, October 22, 2012 by Niki Tsongas

- **Tsongas legislation secures first-ever funding for development of female body armor:** During an Armed Services Committee hearing, Congresswoman Tsongas pushed the Services to develop body armor specifically for female soldiers which previously did not exist. Fourteen percent of the U.S. military is now female, and women are already seeing their roles in combat expanding further. Tsongas supported a provision in the FY17 NDAA that sought to meet the unique personal protective equipment (PPE) needs of female combat troops. This year's bill encouraged the Department of Defense to focus on the “warfighter as a system” and properly address the unique needs of female servicemembers through a holistic acquisition strategy.

“An anti-war representative from Massachusetts has become a champion of lightweight body armor for soldiers, which particularly helps women.” Tsongas persuaded her House colleagues this month to include a provision in the annual defense authorization bill directing the secretary of the Army to assess the need for new body armor designed specifically for female soldiers and

also to endorse President Obama's budget request to triple funding for improved body armor. The fiscal 2011 defense bill, at Tsongas's urging, required a study of the feasibility of lightweight body armor and also ordered the Defense Department to centralize all its research and procurement efforts to avoid duplication by each of the services. In 2009, a provision authored by Tsongas established individual budget line items for research and procurement of body armor to allow for better congressional oversight. *ó CQ: Heavy Price for Heavy Armor, May 29, 2012 by Shawn Zeller*

Combating military sexual assault

Tsongas is a recognized national leader for her efforts to prevent sexual assault in the military and to provide victims of this crime with new rights and greater legal protections. Studies have revealed that as many as 1 in 4 women leaving military service report that they have experienced some form of Military Sexual Trauma (MST). By the Pentagon's own estimates many as 20,300 servicemembers experienced sexual assault in 2014. Tsongas has authored historic legislation that has been passed into law in recent years as part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which sets policy for the Department of Defense.

óMuch of the public credit for the historic changes to how the Pentagon deals with sexual assault has recently gone to more high-profile senators...But nearly all of the new laws enacted in recent years... are the result of the quiet diligence of [Mike] Turner and [Niki] Tsongas.ó - For Tsongas and GOP colleague, a long fight on military sexual assault, by Bryan Bender, The Boston Globe, December 27, 2013

- **Tsongas' historic changes combat military sexual assault:** The significant and historic changes authored by Tsongas prevent and combat military sexual assault, support survivors and work to eradicate the cultural flaws in the military that have allowed these crimes to occur for too long. She has worked successfully across-the-aisle for years to make bipartisan reform a reality.

óU.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas is once again shining the spotlight on a problem that for decades was the military's dirty little secret: Sexual assault of service members. This time, she is shedding light on the sexual assault and rape of male service members, which experts and surveys suggest is vastly underreported. í The act deserves to be included in the final Defense Department budget approved by both the House and Senate and signed by the president.ó Lowell Sun Editorial, Tsongas SUPPORT should be accepted, May 5, 2015

- **2016: PROTECT Act included in FY2017 defense bill**
 - Create a specific article in the Uniform Code of Military Justice criminalizing professional retaliation against victims and witnesses of

crimes.

- Require specific retaliation investigation training for Department of Defense (DOD) investigators.
- Require DOD to report data on sexual assaults against spouses, intimate partners, and children to Congress.
- Require the DOD to create a website where victims, witnesses, and members of the public can access key court-martial information, including docketed court dates, key court documents, and records of trial.
- Encourage the DOD to provide treatment options, including intensive therapy, to male victims of sexual assault.

“Tsongas, by taking what’s possible in a conservative, military-friendly Congress, can point to results. Every year since 2011, in fact, Tsongas has convinced colleagues to include new provisions in the defense authorization bill aimed at curtailing sexual assault in the military. She’s succeeded during a period when Republicans have ruled the House. “Their leadership brought this issue to the fore on the Armed Services Committee and in the entire Congress,” says Greg Jacob, a former Marine officer who worked as policy director with the Service Women’s Action Network from 2010-2015. Still, by building a case and working slowly and methodically, they’ve won over colleagues and the generals.” – *by Shawn Zeller, Commonwealth Magazine, July 12, 2016*

- **2015: Tsongas co-authored the SUPPORT Act, which was signed into law as part of the NDAA**
 - Requires sexual assault prevention and response training for all Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) personnel
 - Requires the DOD to create a comprehensive strategy to prevent retaliation and protect those who experience it, as well as improved training for commanders
 - Provides a way for the DOD’s civilian employees to gain access to the successful Special Victims Counsel program
 - Enhances Special Victims Counsel (SVC) Program, ensuring advocates receive systematic training and an evaluation process is put in place

- Requires the DOD to better train and educate servicemembers about the sexual assault of men; provide the medical and mental health needs specific to male survivors; and develop Department-wide metrics in order to better understand the issue and address it.
- Prevents a sexual assault survivor's mental health records from being released without an order from a military judge
- Requires the Department of Defense to implement changes to the military justice system in a way to ensure fair and equal treatment across the services
- **2009 to 2014: Below is a list of some of the historic changes Tsongas-authored legislation made in previous years** *(for a full list visit <http://tsongas.house.gov/military-sexual-trauma>)*
 - For the first time in decades, the role of a commander was significantly changed ó removing a commander's ability to change or dismiss a conviction by a jury, and limits the commander's ability to change a sentencing decision.
 - Survivors were granted the right to a base transfer, and commanders directed to consider transferring the perpetrator if the victim prefers to remain with his / her unit.
 - Survivors were granted the right to legal counsel, the right to confidentiality when seeking assistance from an advocate.
 - Mandated those who are convicted of sexual assault will absolutely be discharged or dismissed.
 - Eliminated a bias in the military justice system by limiting the use of the "good soldier" defense, which allows a defendant to cite unrelated, subjective factors during trial.
 - Increased accountability by requiring that commanders be assessed on their ability to create a climate where a victim can report a crime without fear of retaliation, and requiring that commanders and servicemembers be assessed on their support of sexual assault prevention and response policies.

- Created an independent review panel, the Systems Response Panel, comprised of civilian and military members that closely examined the way that the DOD investigates, prosecutes, and adjudicates sexual assault and related offenses (the panel concluded its investigation in the summer of 2014). At that point a new panel, called the Judicial Proceedings Panel, was put in place to continue the work of the Systems Response Panel.
- Greater training for sexual assault prevention at every level of the Armed Services was mandated.
- More leadership and accountability as a two star general is put in charge of the DOD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office.
- Strengthened the investigative and oversight tools for preventing sexual assault in the military.
- Put in place processes that protect servicemembers against retaliatory gestures and intimidation techniques, such as the ability to correct their military records if they have experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Ń she has emerged as one of a handful of legislators who have successfully pushed the military to end years of denial about sexual assault in the military. To be sure, progress has come in fits and starts. But for perhaps the first time, empty excuses and promises to do better are not enough. As someone who grew up as an Air Force brat, Tsongas comes by her interest in the military honestly. She has served on the Armed Services Committee since she was elected to replace Marty Meehan in 2007.Ń Ń *Taking arms against sexual assault, by Adrian Walker, The Boston Globe, June 26, 2013*

- **Gives voice to male victims of military sexual assault:** Tsongas and Rep. Turner hosted a briefing in order to better inform Congress about male sexual assaults in the military, and to give male victims a chance to be heard. Turner and Tsongas also coauthored legislation to address male sexual assaults in the military and require the DOD to collect data and train employees on this issue. A report from the Department of Defense's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) showed that more men are victims of sexual assault in the military than women, but that men are less likely to come forward and report.
- **Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus:** Tsongas co-chairs the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus in the House of Representatives,

along with Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH). Soon after its formation, in April 2012, then Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey made an unprecedented visit to Capitol Hill to meet with the Caucus to validate the Caucus's efforts and announce a series of new initiatives designed to combat sexual assault in the military. In a rare example of bipartisan partnership, Tsongas and Turner have successfully championed many new policies which are now law and are seen as essential in changing the culture of the services and will better protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

“In 2012, Tsongas established the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus with Representative Mike Turner, an Ohio Republican. The two put provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act to create an independent panel to examine the Pentagon's response to sexual assaults, require better reporting, and create a special victims unit within the military justice system. Affleck may have been robbed, but the “The Invisible War” and Tsongas's work on the issue are both worthy of a gold statue.” *Niki Tsongas ready for her close-up, The Boston Globe editorial, January 21, 2013*

- **A national voice – Tsongas Op-Eds on MST run in major publications:** As author and co-author of numerous pieces of legislation signed into law combating sexual assault in the military, Tsongas has become a leading national voice on this topic. She has penned several opinion pieces picked up and published by leading national publications, including the Boston Globe, US News & World Report, the Huffington Post and the Christian Science Monitor.

“In 2009, the Department of Defense released an alarming report on sexual assault in the military that was largely ignored by the media and military brass alike. Four years later, after a shocking documentary and a string of high-profile incidents where military commanders and supervisors abused their authority or allegedly committed the crimes they swore to protect against, everyone is paying attention.” - *Ending a Culture of Willful Denial, US News & World Report, July 18, 2013* by Niki Tsongas, Claire McCaskill, Susan Collins, Michael Turner. Read full OpEds at: www.tsongas.house.gov/op-eds

Military Personnel Health Care & Services

- **Army responds to Tsongas legislation, advocacy and changes breastfeeding policy:** Rep. Tsongas championed legislation that would require the U.S. Army to develop a comprehensive policy regarding breastfeeding. The Army was the only branch of the military that did not have a standard policy to which breastfeeding mothers and their commanders could refer. In late 2015, the Army released a new, updated set

of policies regarding breastfeeding, requiring, among other things, that commanders set aside specific nursing areas that are sanitary and provide the necessary time and resources for nursing mothers. Tsongas' legislation was included in the final version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which required the Army to put in place a comprehensive policy. Throughout the process, Tsongas remained in communication with Army leaders, receiving updates on progress from then-Army Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno and others. The NDAA was signed into law by President Obama.

- **Tsongas introduces bill aimed at tracking and preventing military suicides:** In 2014, Congresswoman Tsongas introduced the DOD Suicide Tracking Act. Passed by the House of Representatives, this bill will provide much-needed tools to better track and assess suicides by servicemembers and their family members. The DOD Suicide Tracking Act requires the DOD to establish a standardized suicide tracking policy for the Guard and Reserves, and requires each service to develop a process to track, retain and assess suicide data for military family members. The Suicide Tracking Act will provide crucial data for the DOD to more accurately assess the issues as well as help to establish effective prevention and support programs.

Tsongas continued working on this issue with her colleague from Massachusetts, Representative Seth Moulton (MA-06), in the FY17 NDAA with language that requires the Secretary of Defense to work with the VA to develop a methodology that measures rates of suicide and attempted suicide to identify areas for prevention and treatment and to report to Congress on efforts toward these goals.

- **Tsongas calls on President to improve treatment of PTSD:** Tsongas, along with Congresswomen Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Tsongas led a letter signed by 43 other members of Congress, calling on President Obama to ensure Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) claims caused by Military Sexual Trauma (MST) are treated equally to PTSD claims coming from other sources.
- **Improving National Guard and Reserve members access to health care:** The FY 2010 Defense Authorization Act enacted into law included a provision authored by Tsongas to increase earlier access to military health coverage (TRICARE) for National Guard and reservists who are called up to active duty from the current 90 days to 180 days. This change would provide additional time for servicemembers to seek needed medical care, schedule

minor surgeries, or resolve other conditions that could easily be addressed given enough lead time.

- **Supporting the National Guard and Reserves health care professionals:** Bipartisan legislation which Tsongas introduced to help aid the recruitment and retention of skilled health care professionals in the National Guard and Reserves became law as part of the FY 09 Defense Authorization Bill. The new law raises the loan repayment ceiling for benefits available to those doctors, dentists, and other health care professionals currently in the Guard and Reserves, and to those considering such a career, so that they are competitive with similar repayment programs in both the private sector and active duty military. This legislation has a direct impact on this region since a National Guard medical unit is stationed in Methuen.
- **Assessing the mental health of UAV operators:** Tsongas successfully included a provision in the House-passed FY 2013 National Defense Authorization Act encouraging all the services to perform mental health assessments of their drone operators. While drones have changed the nature of war and protect operators by keeping them off of the front lines, concerns have been raised about the mental health impact of sustained missions on operators.

Veterans

- **Creates Veterans Advisory Committee:** Soon after her election to Congress, Tsongas formed a Veterans Advisory Committee, which brings together local veterans, military families, elected leaders, veterans' agents, and other veterans care representatives to identify ways to better serve District veterans and their families. Tsongas consults with members of the Advisory Committee when crafting legislation to assist veterans, such as the PTSD bills that she introduced in 2008 and legislation to accelerate the development of lighter weight body armor.

Supports VA Accountability and Benefit Appeal Reform: Like many Third District residents, Tsongas was appalled at reports of misconduct and mismanagement at the Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities. Inquiries into these failures across the country have revealed systemic problems within the VA's healthcare system resulting in extensive wait times and inadequate care. Tsongas believes we must hold these employees accountable, that's why she broke from Democratic leadership and voted for

the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act that passed the House in September of 2016. This legislation would expand the ability of the VA to fire or demote VA employees based on performance or misconduct. The bill also protects whistleblowers making it more likely that VA employees will come forward with cases of mismanagement or wrongdoing.

Importantly, the bill also addressed a key area of reform: the VA disability appeals process. Currently, the Veterans Benefit Administration suffers from a severe backlog in claims for benefits which prevents veterans of all ages from receiving services and reimbursements for expenses they deserve. The VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act overhauls the VA's current appeals process for benefit decisions. If a veteran is dissatisfied with the VA Regional Office's initial decision for a claim, he or she could appeal by choosing one of three options: one that would trigger a higher level review; one that would allow the veteran to submit new evidence and have a hearing; and one that would immediately transfer jurisdiction for a claim to the Board of Veterans Appeals for an expedited review.

- **Launches Veterans e-Newsletter:** In 2016 Tsongas launched a new initiative to keep local veterans and organizations informed about veterans-related happenings in Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. She provides updates on legislation and initiatives, as well as resources for veterans seeking assistance.
- **iVets bill to optimize vet records system:** Tsongas introduced the Improving Veterans Electronic Transition Services Act (iVETS Act), which encouraged the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to create an internet based portal for veterans to access their records and benefits information electronically. Veterans and their families have repeatedly expressed frustration with the cumbersome process they have to go through in order to transfer their military records and benefit information from military to civilian life. In response to this legislation, the Department of Veterans Affairs enhanced their legacy eBenefits web portal to allow veterans to use it to access their Official Military Personnel File.
- **Tsongas initiative to help military service members married to foreign spouses access their tax rebate becomes law:** After *Stars and Stripes* and other organizations began reporting that servicemembers married to foreign spouses were ineligible to receive 2008 stimulus checks because of a provision intended to prevent illegal immigrants from receiving checks,

Tsongas spear-headed a joint letter from House members to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee requesting that the glitch be addressed. Her remedy was included in the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 which became law on June 17, 2008.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS



- **Meets with world leaders and conducts national security oversight in Israel, Austria and Jordan:** In 2016, Congresswoman Tsongas traveled to Austria, Jordan and Israel as part of a bicameral Congressional Delegation visit focused on national security and foreign relations issues, including the Iran nuclear agreement; the fight against ISIS; and the Syrian refugee crisis.
 - ***ISRAEL:*** In Israel, the delegation traveled to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, where they met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. They also met with the U.S. Ambassador, and senior Israeli military and diplomatic leaders to discuss, among other things, the Iran Agreement and regional / international security issues.
 - ***AUSTRIA:*** In Vienna, Austria the lawmakers met with officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the organization tasked with implementing and overseeing the Iran agreement. Officials from the IAEA discussed the state of the Agreement and its implementation and answered questions from the lawmakers about current and future resources needed to ensure thorough and robust oversight. While in Vienna, the delegation also met with the U.S. Mission to International Organizations, as well as U.S. personnel stationed in Austria to discuss counter-terrorism efforts.

- **JORDAN:** While in the Kingdom of Jordan, the delegation met with Prince Faisal Bin Al Hussein to discuss security issues in the region and Jordan's efforts to manage the Syrian refugee crisis. The delegation also heard from senior U.S. military officials with U.S. Central Command who gave an update on the ongoing fight against ISIS. They spent time at a refugee screening facility, at which hundreds of refugees seeking resettlement were currently undergoing various levels of background checks. They were also able to witness a refugee being interviewed as part of the vetting process.
- **Japan trip promotes economic, military partnerships:** In 2016, Tsongas and a bipartisan delegation of Members of Congress visited Okinawa and Tokyo, Japan where they engaged with numerous Japanese officials, including the Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, members of the Diet (Japan's Legislative Body), U.S. and Japanese military and diplomatic officials, journalists, students and educators, economic and business leaders. The visit provided Tsongas with an opportunity to discuss, among other things, potential future economic opportunities for Massachusetts and the Third District, partnerships with Japan and Japanese companies, the U.S.-Japanese security alliance, regional and international security and military partnerships, and the prospective for American companies to grow overseas.
- **Tsongas advocacy prompts agencies to support U.S. Afghan allies:** After sustained efforts from Rep. Tsongas and many of her colleagues, the State Department and Department of Homeland Security in 2016 determined that Afghan translators who risked their lives to help U.S. forces in Afghanistan are eligible to continue to integrate into the United States based on one year of service. Among other actions, the Congresswoman led a letter to the State Department asking them to execute the policy so that our nation honors the sacrifices of Afghan translators, whose service to our country helped protect so many American servicemembers in Afghanistan.
- **Afghan President meets with Members at Tsongas request:** In March, 2015 a small, bipartisan group of House Members held a private meeting with Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, on Capitol Hill to discuss the preservation of the societal, economic and cultural gains made by Afghan women in recent years. The meeting was scheduled at the request of Tsongas and several of her colleagues. At the meeting they discussed the status, implementation and expectations of initiatives designed to prevent regression and promote

further progress for Afghan women and girls.

- **Trips to Iraq and Afghanistan to meet with U.S, Iraqi and Afghan officials:** Tsongas has made 2 trips to Iraq and 6 trips to Afghanistan since taking office. Tsongas has met with all of the top U.S. military officials in Afghanistan, top Afghan military and defense officials, elected officials and community leaders.
- **Protecting the gains of Afghan women:** Tsongas has served as the co-chair of the Afghan Women's Caucus. She believes one of the greatest success stories of America's presence in Afghanistan is the unprecedented gains that have been made by Afghan women. On her visits to Afghanistan, Tsongas has met with women leaders in Afghanistan, including women Parliamentarians, business owners and journalists. She has penned numerous OpEd pieces for national publications urging the U.S. military and diplomatic corps to maintain policies that protect the gains made. She has authored legislation that directs funding and supports U.S. efforts to protect the opportunities and human rights of Afghan women and girls.

“Afghan women know the fight is far from over. But every time a young girl reads a book in public, a woman walks out of a voting booth, or a female journalist pens a story critical of the government, the country continues to move forward and the rest of the world moves with them.” *Afghanistan's success will be measured by women's progress, TIME, June 24, 2014, by Niki Tsongas, Martha Roby, Renee Ellmers, Susan Davis, Cheri Bustos* - read the full OpEds from TIME & CNN at: www.tsongas.house.gov/op-eds

- **Experts discuss challenges, path forward for Afghan women at Tsongas event:** As Co-Chair of the House Afghan Women's Task Force, Tsongas held a briefing in July 2015 to discuss the status of women and girls in Afghanistan. This briefing was held in partnership with The U.S. Afghan Women's Council (USAWC) and the organization Women for Afghan Women.
- **Tsongas brings U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia on tour of Lowell's Cambodian Businesses:** U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia William Heidt joined Rep. Tsongas on a tour of several small businesses in the Cambodia Town neighborhood of Lowell in 2016. Asian-Americans make up 18% of the population of Lowell according to the most recent Census data. Many reside in the Lowell Highlands and Acre sections of the City, which converge in the Cambodia Town area of Pailin Plaza at Branch and Middlesex Streets. The Third District of Massachusetts has always been a culturally diverse community, including many who came to the United

States from Cambodia. The sustainability of businesses is a priority for Congresswoman Tsongas, and this tour was an opportunity to see how the Cambodian community impacts the economy and economic development in the region with a high-ranking federal official.

- **Tsongas makes local connection in Cambodia:** In 2012, Tsongas led a visit to Cambodia at no charge to taxpayers. Lowell has the second-highest Cambodian-American population in the country, with approximately one-fifth of the population tracing their heritage back to southeastern Asia. She visited to better understand the history that has shaped the culture for Cambodia-Americans and explore ways to further strengthen ties between the two countries. Tsongas met with political, business and nonprofit leaders and discussed how our nations can learn from and benefit each other.
- **Greece & Hellenic Caucus:** Tsongas is a proud member of the Congressional Hellenic Caucus, which has played a key role in bringing initiatives of significance to the Greek-American community to Congress attention. She meets on a regular basis with representatives from Greece and Cyprus, including the Ambassadors, along with Hellenic-American advocacy groups. Tsongas has cosponsored legislation and signed letters to the President and Secretary of State encouraging U.S. leadership in the negotiation for a just solution on Cyprus. She has supported legislation that would enable U.S. citizens who own property in the Turkish-occupied Cyprus territory to seek financial restitution with the current inhabitants of their land or the Turkish government. She was also an original cosponsor of a resolution that expresses Congress belief that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the UN and Greece should find a "compromise composite name with a clear geographic qualifier, e.g. Northern Macedonia," for all international uses. She visited with the Ecumenical Patriarchate during his visit to the United States in October of 2009 and is a cosponsor of legislation urging Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.