



# BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

## NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

### 11<sup>th</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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



# March 26, 2010

### Rep. Clarke Joins Thousands for Immigration Rally

On Sunday, March 21, 2010, I joined thousands of U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and undocumented immigrants who rallied on the National Mall calling on Congress to address Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) legislation this year. This rally sent a clear message that people from around the nation want CIR.

I strongly believe that when we turn our backs on those who came to our shores as immigrants, we are turning our backs on ourselves. As a second generation Jamaican-American and the U.S. Representative of a district with one of the largest concentrations of first and second generation immigrants, I stand with my sisters and brothers as we fight for CIR. Our nation must understand that a broken immigration system impacts everyone. We must never forget that this debate is critical to improving the lives of all American citizens, American businesses, and the lives of those who seek to be Americans.



Rep. Clarke waits to address crowd at March for Immigration rally in Washington DC.

Dear Neighbor,

I would like to applaud Pastor Cecil Henry and the Calvary Community Church for hosting their Feed the Family Luncheon Census 2010 event on Saturday March 20, 2010.

I greatly appreciate their efforts to educate our residents about the importance of filling out their Census forms.

I also want to thank all the community leaders who were in attendance: U.S. Census Representative Irwin Clare, the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), Neighborhood Advisory Board Eight (NAB-8) Member Susan Patterson, James Caldwell of Project BUILD, and many others.

I continue to encourage my constituents to complete and return the 2010 Census form. The questionnaire contains ten questions and should take ten minutes to complete.

The data provided is integral to securing Federal funding for the district. As they say at the Census Bureau, "We can't move forward until you mail it in."

Sincerely,

Yvette D. Clarke

### Historic Healthcare Reform Legislation Signed Into Law

On Tuesday, March 23, 2010, I was overjoyed and honored to witness the President sign comprehensive healthcare reform legislation into law. For decades, Americans have been waiting for this day to come and we can finally celebrate our great success together. Here are some of the benefits New Yorkers in the 11th Congressional District will see from this reform:

- improves coverage for 367,000 residents with health insurance;
- gives tax credits and other assistance for up to 160,000 families and 11,400 small businesses to help them afford coverage;
- improves Medicare for 68,000 beneficiaries, including closing the "donut hole";
- extends coverage to 53,500 uninsured residents;
- guarantees that 11,900 residents with pre-existing health conditions can obtain coverage;
- protects 500 families from bankruptcy due to unaffordable health care costs; and
- allows 61,000 young adults to obtain coverage thru their parents' insurance plans up to age 26.

We've won the fight! We expanded coverage to over 32 million people and put the American people in charge of their health care. This reform will have a positive and long term impact on all Americans.

## Rep. Clarke Highlights Recovery Tax Cuts

I want to encourage the residents of my district to take advantage of the numerous tax cuts in the Recovery Act. With only half of taxpayers having filed thus far, tax refunds are up nearly 10% from last year – thanks to a broad array of tax cuts in this wonderful piece of legislation. Taxpayers in the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of New York and across the country can claim a variety of benefits on their 2009 tax returns, including:

- **Expanded family tax credits** – Moderate income families with children may be eligible for an increase in the Earned Income Tax Credit and the additional Child Tax Credit.
- **Tax-free unemployment benefits** – Thanks to the Recovery Act, individuals who received unemployment insurance in 2009 do not have to pay taxes on the first \$2,400 of such earnings.

To find out what tax cuts you may qualify for, check the White House's online tax calculator at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/recovery/tax-saving-tool>.

## Rep. Clarke Introduces Haitian Private Sector Encouragement Act of 2010

On Wednesday March 24, 2010, I introduced H.R. 4961, the Haitian Private Sector Encouragement Act of 2010. This legislation establishes the Haitian-American Enterprise Development Fund. This bill is an integral component of Haiti's post-earthquake rebuilding process. I am convinced that the use of Enterprise Development Funds, a proven innovative tool used by Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, will spur long-term, sustainable economic growth in Haiti. Enterprise Development Funds are modeled after private equity and venture capital funds, but they are funded by U.S. foreign aid dollars. The funds are overseen by an independent and unpaid board of talented individuals with investment and business expertise.

Through the immediate financing provided by the Enterprise Development Fund, Haitian businesses will be able to achieve sustainable growth while creating jobs. Prior to January's earthquake nearly two-thirds of Haitian citizens were unemployed and 80% lived below the poverty line. The Haitian-American Enterprise Development Fund will lay a foundation for a wide scale rebuilding campaign focused on infrastructure development. This will undoubtedly be a long and arduous process, but with the proper use of the Enterprise Development Fund, we can expect a new beginning for all Haitian citizens.

## New York City Passport Fair

Summer time is an extremely busy time for the Passport Agency as many people travel and take vacations during the summer months. Please make sure to submit your passport application with plenty of time for processing. Keep in mind that effective June 1, 2009, the Western Hemisphere Initiative dictates that all individuals travelling to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean region, including the Bahamas, require a passport or passport card.

On Saturday, March 27, 2010 the New York Passport Agency is hosting a U.S. Passport Fair in New York City from 10 am to 3 pm at the U.S. Passport Agency Headquarters located at 376 Hudson Street. In an effort to extend their community outreach, the Agency will provide passport information to U.S. citizens and to accept new applications. For one day only, **appointments are not required** for customers to apply directly at the Hudson Street location. Additionally, if you apply in person on March 27, 2010, the agency will only charge \$60, as opposed to \$75 for expedited service.

## Legislative Spotlight

As New York businesses lose approximately \$4.6 billion as a result of cyber attacks and with a growing threat of cybercrime internationally, I joined U.S. Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) to introduce the House companion of H.R. 4962, the *International Cybercrime Reporting and Cooperation Act* – new legislation that would enhance America's cooperation with other countries to combat cybercrime and keep America safe.

This bipartisan legislation received support from senior New York and Homeland Security Committee lawmakers.

Original cosponsors of the bill include: U.S. Representatives Peter King (R-NY), Anthony Wiener (D-NY), Bennie Thompson (D-MS), Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), and Laura Richardson (D-CA).

The new legislation will:

- require the President to provide a global assessment to Congress on the state of countries' use of information and communications technologies in critical infrastructure;
- identify cyber threats from abroad; and
- work with other countries to crack down on their cyber criminals.

Cybersecurity is a key tool in our national security infrastructure. Cyberspace has no borders or boundaries. The international community must go after cyber criminals wherever they may be, or our American businesses and consumers will continue to suffer.