



BROOKLYN'S IN THE HOUSE

NEWS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN YVETTE D. CLARKE

11th 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

January 28, 2010

Haitian Family Resource Center Opens in Brooklyn

Today I joined Governor David A. Paterson, Mayor Bloomberg, and other members of the New York City Congressional Delegation in announcing the opening of the Haitian Family Resource Center at the Brooklyn Armory. The Center is a one stop resource for families impacted by the earthquake. It will offer Creole speaking translation services, immigration assistance and help with completing immigration applications, child guardianship and custody services, legal assistance, help in locating family members, mental health services, coordination of volunteer efforts and daily briefings on the status of the relief effort.

New York is home to the second largest population of first and second generation Haitian immigrants in the United States, most of who are represented in my district. I am confident that this resource center will greatly serve my constituents, whom have been directly affected by the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that rocked this Caribbean nation. I will continue to work with my colleagues to help our residents move forward as recovery continues in Haiti.

Congresswoman Clarke Attends Benefit Concert for Haiti



Rep. Clarke Addresses the Horeb Seventh-day Adventist church Haitian Fundraiser

On Saturday, January 23rd 2010, I joined hundreds of youth gathered at the Horeb Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Brooklyn in support of Haiti as they endeavored to raise funds for the relief efforts in Haiti.

I was encouraged by the youths' strength, their unity, and resilience. Many of them were fortunate enough to have been spared the grief of losing a loved one, while others mourn or await news of their relatives' whereabouts.

I am glad that our nation has quickly sprung into action to help the people of Haiti, saving lives, and providing the support that is so desperately needed. I commend Secretary Napolitano for extending Temporary Protected Status to Haitian nationals within the United States. I, along with my colleagues in Washington, will continue to work with President Obama to ensure that we aid this country in every way possible.



Dear Neighbor,

This week, my office hosted a special congressional briefing on how to file for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitian nationals.

Due to the high volume of inquiries on how to file for TPS; I am encouraging all of my residents to reach out to my office if you have any questions or concerns regarding the process of filing for TPS.

Unfortunately there are those who wish to take advantage of residents who seek to file TPS, by offering false services and charging exorbitant fees. While we are working to identify these entities, please be aware that they do exist.

For any questions or concerns regarding TPS, please visit my website at clarke.house.gov or please contact my office at 718.287.1142.

Sincerely,
Yvette D. Clarke

Rep. Clarke Hosts Appropriations Workshop

On Monday, January 25th I was pleased to host an appropriations workshop for local non-profits. The purpose of the workshop was to provide organizations unfamiliar with the appropriations process a tutorial on how it works and how they can make the most of this process. My Deputy Chief-of-Staff, Algene T. Sajery, and City Park Foundation's, Nicole Johnson, facilitated the workshop, and led the group through the appropriations application process.

The crowd of approximately one hundred people, included representatives from non-profit agencies from various fields within the 11th congressional district. I was pleased to see that the evening served as an opportunity for many of the attendees to network and lay the groundwork for future partnerships.

Rep. Clarke Hosts Special Briefing on Temporary Protected Status

On Thursday, January 28th 2010, I held a special congressional briefing in the SUNY-Downstate Alumni Auditorium, where nearly 200 residents showed up to receive information on how to file for temporary protective status.

Our special guest, Ms. Andrea Quarantillo, District Director of the United States Citizens Immigration Services (USCIS) New York Office was on hand to explain the filing process, fee waivers, and ways in which individuals can protect themselves against those fraudulently claiming to be able to assist them in filing. Sadly, some legal advisors may attempt to take advantage of those who seek to change their status. I was glad to have representatives from the USCIS on hand to assist attendees on the application process and answer questions in great detail. I remain committed to ensuring that in the wake of the earthquake that my constituents receive all of the services and resources they need.

Congresswoman Clarke Attends Historic State of the Union Address

On Wednesday, January 27th 2010, President Barack Obama delivered his first State of the Union Address to carefully detail his administration's policy goals and initiatives. I applaud the President for laying out a plan to create jobs, cut the deficit, hold big banks accountable, and make our economy work for the middle class again. House leadership and I have stood firm in our commitment to middle-class families by lowering taxes and jumpstarting our economy – and we will continue to work with President Obama to deliver results for struggling Americans.

While we will remain fiscally responsible, I am committed to working with the President and Congress to ensure that a discretionary spending freeze does not cut critical programs that serve our district. HIV/AIDS research, education, social services, community development block grants, mortgage mitigation, community health centers, breast and prostate cancer screening are programs that disproportionately impact people of color and the poor and many of them have been traditionally underfunded. I will work to maintain these programs while advocating a freeze on unnecessary spending, such as outdated defense weapons systems.

I will continue to work with the White House to ensure that Americans see the change that they desperately voted for in the 2008 presidential election. I applaud President Obama's commitment to putting middle class Americans first and for holding Wall Street accountable.

Legislative Spotlight

On January 26th, I voted in support of the Emergency Aid to American Survivors of the Haiti Earthquake Act, S. 2949, which will increase the temporary evacuation assistance currently, provided through the U.S. Repatriation Program to American citizens who find it necessary to leave Haiti in the aftermath of the massive earthquake that struck the nation on January 12th, 2010.

So far, approximately 14,000 American citizens have been evacuated from the island nation, with 40% of these citizens receiving some form of repatriation assistance. There are still thousands of citizens who are awaiting assistance.

The U.S. Repatriation Program was established in 1935 to provide temporary assistance to United States citizens who experience unexpected and unavoidable problems abroad, and to assist them upon their return to the U.S. to resume their lives as quickly as possible. American citizens evacuated from foreign countries because of destitution, illness, war or similar crises are provided with assistance in:

- returning home -- greeted at the U.S. airport of entry and provided with help in securing and paying for connecting flights
- temporary lodging and food
- medical assistance

Americans receiving this assistance must reimburse the government costs incurred on their behalf, unless repayment is deemed to be unfeasible due to the recipient's overall lack of financial resources.

The program is subject to a \$1 million dollar funding cap. This Act increases that spending cap to \$25 million as the \$1 million funding cap was approaching its limit due to the mass evacuation of Americans from Haiti following the earthquake.