



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, Prospect Heights, Prospect Gardens, Grand Army Plaza, Windsor Terrace, Flatbush and Midwood

June 11, 2010

Rep. Clarke Co-Hosts Academy Night



Dear Neighbor,

It is not too late to participate in the 2010 Census. If the Census Bureau did not receive your completed census form, as a courtesy, a census taker may briefly visit your home to assist with the completion of the form. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share your information with anyone, including other federal agencies, immigration authorities or law enforcement agencies.

The census taker will never ask to enter your home. If a census taker visits you, here's what you should do:

- Ask to see his/her ID. All census workers carry official government badges marked with just their name; they may also have a "U.S. Census Bureau" bag.
- If you're still not certain about their identity, please call the Census Bureau at (347) 328-2540 or (866) 861-2010 to confirm they are employed by the Census Bureau.
- Answer the census form questions for your entire household (you must be at least 15 years old to answer questions) so that the census taker can record the results for submission to the Census Bureau.

Let's do our part so that our voices are heard.

Sincerely,
Yvette D. Clarke

On Monday, June 7, 2010, I co-hosted "Academy Night" with Congressman Edolphus "Ed" Towns at St. Francis College in Brooklyn, NY. Congressman Towns and I were joined by Representatives from the United States Naval, Air Force, Merchant Marine, and Coast Guard academies, in addition to the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, along with dedicated students and parents. The information presented highlighted the opportunities available to students interested in public service and leadership in all branches of the military. I have always pushed for our youth to excel academically by increasing access to the tools and opportunities that exist within and beyond our community.

As a Member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I take my responsibility for nominating qualified candidates for appointment to these academies, with the exception of the United States Coast Guard Academy, very seriously. Each academy offers admitted students a fully funded 4-year college education and additional scholarships. We owe it to our children to provide more opportunities for their academic success. "Academy Night" was a great opportunity to explore the educational options that exist within our nation's Service Academies.



Rep. Clarke Welcomes Brooklyn Residents for Academy Night

Working to Improve Medicare Benefits

I am happy to announce that more Medicare beneficiaries will qualify for "Extra Help" with their prescription drug costs, and be eligible to pay no more than \$2.50 for generic drugs and \$6.30 for each brand name drug. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services estimates that "Extra Help" can save eligible Medicare beneficiaries as much as \$3,900 per year. To qualify, Medicare beneficiaries' incomes must be less than \$16,245 a year (or \$21,855 for married couples) and have resources limited to \$12,510 (or \$25,010 for married couples). Resources include bank accounts, stocks, and bonds, but do not include houses, cars, or life insurance policies.

There is no cost to apply for "Extra Help." Medicare beneficiaries, family members, trusted counselors or caregivers can apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp or call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778) and ask for the *Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs*. Medicare beneficiaries can also receive assistance in their local communities from their State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Local SHIP contact information can be found on the back of the Medicare & You 2010 handbook or online at www.medicare.gov/contacts/staticpages/ships.aspx. Your information will be kept confidential.

Rep. Clarke Attends Free Immigration Forum

On June 5, 2010, I attended the FREE Immigration Forum at the Caribbean American Center of New York (CACNY). I would like to personally thank CACNY, for allowing me to speak about the immigration issues that are currently surfacing across the nation.

As you are well aware, the debate on immigration reform has been heating up. With the passage of the notorious Arizona immigration bill, S.B. 1070 and the discourse that has come from its controversy, it brings me hope that the federal government will take action on addressing Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) on the national stage expeditiously! In the meantime, I continue to work diligently in Congress to make CIR a reality for all Americans. I have been especially committed to expanding the face of immigration, alleviating the unfair burden placed on our Latino sisters and brothers. Immigration is not just a Latino issue, it's an American issue.

As you know, this Congressional district is one of the most diverse districts in the country, full of first and second generation immigrants from all over the world. In order to fix our immigration system and establish true comprehensive reform, we must recognize that the experiences, obstacles, and goals are shared by all immigrants and stakeholders alike. We must never forget that our collective heritage has transformed our land into what former New York City Mayor David Dinkins called a "gorgeous mosaic." The diversity in our shared history has allowed us to embrace those coming to our shores, in order to strengthen, build, and contribute to a better and stronger nation. We have an obligation to ensure that the immigration reform debate mirrors the diverse faces of America.

WMD Prevention and Preparedness Act of 2010 Introduced in Congress



Rep. Yvette D. Clarke joins Chairman Bennie Thompson, Rep. Bill Pascrell, Ranking Member Peter King and Rep. Dan Lungren at a press roundtable discussing H.R. 5498, *The WMD Prevention and Preparedness Act of 2010*

On Thursday, June 10, 2010 I joined Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) and other leaders of the House Homeland Security Committee in introducing H.R. 5498, The WMD Prevention and Preparedness Act of 2010. This legislation will make progress toward implementing the recommendations of the WMD Commission and will improve U.S. efforts to prevent, deter, detect, and respond to an attack by a weapon of mass destruction. In January 2010, the Commission issued a 'report card' that gave mixed grades for U.S. efforts, including three "Fs" for U.S. failure to effectively prepare for a biological attack, failure to implement retention and recruiting programs for the next generation of national

security experts, and failure on the part of Congress to reform Congressional oversight to better address intelligence, homeland security and other national security missions.

The bill's introduction was a monumental event for the people of New York and Americans all across this country, who have waited far too long for a comprehensive approach to protecting our nation against weapons of mass destruction. The bill addresses every stage of the threat – from pre-event prevention and deterrence to post-event recovery, and will strengthen our capabilities to address biological attacks. I am grateful to former Senators Bob Graham and Jim Talent for their work as Chair and Vice Chair of the WMD Commission. Their service and dedication to protecting each and every American from the threat of terrorism is truly commendable.

On Tuesday, June 15, I will chair a hearing on the Homeland Security Subcommittee of Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology to discuss this legislation.

Legislative Spotlight

On Thursday, I joined the House of Representatives in passing H.R. 5072, the Federal Housing Administration Reform Act of 2010 (FHA Reform Act). I voted in favor of this bill to help families realize the dream of homeownership, save taxpayers money, and protect Americans from mortgage fraud by instituting reforms to the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).

The Federal Housing Administration Reform Act will make crucial reforms to strengthen the operation of the FHA, which has helped 37 million Americans buy homes since 1934. The bill also makes the FHA more accountable by improving its internal reporting systems and providing greater transparency to the public and Congress. Moreover, the bill will save taxpayers \$2.5 billion over five years.

By a voice vote, Congress also approved my amendment to the bill, which directs the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to analyze the effectiveness of HUD's loss mitigation home retention efforts in helping distressed borrowers, especially low income borrowers, keep their homes.

Last year, New York City saw a record 20,000 foreclosure filings. According to data compiled by the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy at New York University, in the first quarter of 2010, "there were 4,226 foreclosures across New York City", up 16.3 percent from 2008. Brooklyn alone experienced 1,546 foreclosures in the first quarter of 2010.

My amendment would bolster the FHA's ability to help borrowers avoid foreclosure by understanding how a variety of loss mitigation programs and foreclosure counseling efforts directly affect our citizens. Rep. Henry Cuellar of Texas joined me as a cosponsor of this amendment, proving that foreclosure mitigation programs are important to rural suburban and urban homeowners alike.

Thanks to my amendment, Congress will have the information it needs to determine whether we must do more to help citizens from coast to coast hold on to their American dream.

The FHA Reform Act is supported by a wide coalition of organizations, including the National Urban League, the National Association of Realtors, the Mortgage Bankers Association, the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, and the National Association of Home Builders.