



# 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*



# November 25, 2009

## Happy Thanksgiving!

I want to wish everyone in the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of New York a very Happy Thanksgiving.

I know that many families across this nation are struggling and are feeling the effects of this recession. I want to remind the citizens of Brooklyn, New York that every time we have faced hardship or adversity as a nation, we have always been resilient. Whether through the Great Depression, the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, or through our current economic crisis, we can always count on our resiliency and ingenuity to overcome difficult circumstances.

While we spend time with our families during this holiday season, we must take time to recognize and appreciate the sacrifices being made by thousands of troops serving overseas and their families. These heroes are ensuring the safety that we enjoy each day. We also need to thank the thousands of workers that support our way of life. Bus drivers, government workers, train engineers, police officers and firefighters are not given the appreciation they deserve for providing the services we often take for granted as we live in this great city. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for members of the clergy and other leaders of the religious community. You not only provide spiritual and emotional guidance, but often serve as a safety net for a wide variety of services.

## Rep. Clarke Joins the “Jobs Now! Caucus”

On November 19, I joined the bi-partisan “Jobs Now! Caucus,” which is a group of over 125 Members coming together to push initiatives and legislation to stimulate job growth. It is my pleasure to join this group of Members who are working together to reduce our nation’s unemployment rates. I wanted to commend the leadership of Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D- Ohio), Bobby Rush (D-Illinois), and Candice Miller (R- Michigan) for organizing this caucus. The first order of business for the Caucus is to introduce a resolution, recognizing that our nation is facing a nationwide job crisis.

On November 10, 2009, I hosted a job fair in Brooklyn, NY, where almost 1,000 people marketed their skills to over thirty potential employers. I joined the caucus to ensure that New Yorkers have a strong voice in any legislation proposed. As of October, the national the unemployment rate sits at 10.2 percent and New York City’s unemployment rate is slightly higher.

This week, President Barack Obama met with members of his cabinet to discuss strategies to combat the jobless numbers that are rising in our nation. I commend the Obama administration for making this a top priority for the American people. I look forward to working with the White House along with my colleagues to ensure that we implement initiatives and legislative strategies to help lower the jobless rate in our nation.

Dear Neighbor:

I invite you to attend an informational forum on the 2010 United States Census. I will be hosting the forum on Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at Mount Zion Church (203 East 37<sup>th</sup> street, Brooklyn NY 11203) from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

As the Representative of the 11th Congressional District, where less than 35% of our citizens participated in the 2000 Census, it is important that our community improves its Census questionnaire response rate. This forum will focus on the importance of the Census, including an explanation of how the Census affects Federal funding of essential programs in our community.

The informational forum will comprise of key officials in the community, including:

- Representatives from the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President
- Representatives from the Office of the Governor
- Representatives from many different posts at the Census, including key note speaker, Allison Cenac, Assistant Census Manager

If you have any questions, please contact my office at 718.287.1142.

Sincerely,  
*Yvette D. Clarke*

## Honoring the Legendary Shirley Chisholm



Rep. Clarke Joins The Shirley Chisholm Center for Research on Women, the White House Project, and Brooklyn College to celebrate the Legacy of the Honorable Shirley Chisholm

On Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, I had the pleasure of speaking at the Shirley Chisholm Day celebration at Brooklyn College. I am very grateful to The Shirley Chisholm Center for Research on Women, the White House Project, and Brooklyn College for hosting the event. It is through the legacy and accomplishments of the Honorable Shirley Chisholm that we see the unlimited potential for all women legislators. Women leaders share in a unique struggle that continues to mold and shape our leadership skills and prepares us to serve our families,

neighborhoods, communities, and nation. We need to educate our young women about the work of Shirley Chisholm, especially her role in laying the foundation for women leaders in government. Just as she paved the way for leaders like, Michelle Obama, Supreme Court Justice Sonya Sotomayor, and myself, we need to lead the way for future women leaders to come. The best way to preserve her legacy is to follow in her footsteps and take up the call to public service. Her life was a clear example that there is no glass ceiling that cannot be shattered.

## Rep. Clarke Joins the American Jewish Committee and Immigration Reform Groups Pushing for Comprehensive Immigration Reform

On November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009, I joined Members of the New York Congressional delegation calling for comprehensive immigration reform. The event was co-hosted by the American Jewish Committee, the New York Immigration Coalition, and the New York Interfaith Network for Immigration Reform.

As a proud daughter of Jamaican immigrant parents and an ardent advocate of comprehensive immigration reform, I believe that our immigration laws are inconsistent and inefficient. They place an undue burden on native-born Americans, documented immigrants, and undocumented immigrants alike. This system is unsustainable. When we turn our back on those who come to these shores to become Americans, to be a part of building our great nation, and to embrace the American Dream, we are turning our back on ourselves. 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.

I applaud the Obama Administration for recognizing the importance of addressing our broken immigration system. Last week, I had the opportunity to sit down and meet with Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. We discussed the importance of addressing comprehensive immigration reform in 2010, as well as ensuring that we broaden the face of immigration to reflect the diversity of the United States.

I look forward to working with the Obama Administration, the American Jewish Committee, the New York Immigration Coalition, the New York Interfaith Network for Immigration Reform, and others to push for comprehensive immigration reform.

## Legislative Spotlight

During the holiday season we look forward to being with family and friends and often times we give thanks to their health and well being.

We are also in the flu season and with the H1N1 pandemic rapidly spreading across the United States, I thought it was important to co-sponsor H.R. 3991 “the Emergency Influenza Containment Act.” This bill gives workers the right to 5 days of paid sick leave if they have a contagious illness.

Cutting down on the spread of the H1N1 virus in the work place gives families a peace of mind knowing that their loved ones can fully recuperate from the virus.

This bill would:

- Guarantee a sick worker up to five paid sick leave days a year if an employer ‘directs’ or ‘advises’ a sick employee to stay or go home.
- Cover both full-time and part-time workers (on a pro-rated basis) in businesses with 15 and more workers.
- Ensure that employees who follow their employer’s direction to stay home because of contagious illness cannot be fired, disciplined, or made subject to retaliation for following directions.

By removing employees’ fear of reporting symptoms of illness, employers who maintain a policy of sending home those suspected of H1N1 can have confidence that their policy will work. Employers will be able to better limit the spread and cost of contagious illness within their workforce. By limiting the potential for infecting co-workers and the public, this Act will go a long way toward securing our nation’s health during a time of emergency.

