

Michael E. Capuano

CONGRESSMAN

8th Congressional District, Massachusetts



Serving Cambridge, Chelsea, Somerville and most of Boston.

The Economy

Every day there are sobering reminders that we live in harsh fiscal times. Many Americans are having difficulty making ends meet. Too many families face the prospects of long-term unemployment, skyrocketing health care costs and a shortage of affordable housing. State and local governments are struggling with budget shortfalls and the federal government's huge budget surplus has been wasted. This makes it harder to devote adequate resources to our nation's pressing needs.

The situation is complicated by the November elections. When Congress returns in January, Republicans will control the House and the Senate, joining our President in charting a course for the country. This concerns me.

I fear our leaders will turn to another tax cut benefiting only the wealthy in an effort to stimulate the economy. That approach failed in 2001. It will fail in 2003, especially since we face a substantial budget deficit and increasing homeland security costs. My concern is that corporate reform will stall and environmental issues will fade into the background. There may be no place in the 108th Congress for efforts to create a real prescription drug plan or to increase affordable housing opportunities.

I hope I am wrong. But it remains to be seen whether our President and Republican-controlled Congress can make good on their promises to fix the many serious problems that confront us.



Congressman Capuano talking with a constituent about Iraq.



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2108

MICHAEL E. CAPUANO
8TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Friends,

There is much to report to you. The horrific events of September 11th remain with us and always will. We continue to rebuild our infrastructure, our defenses and our spirit. The war on terrorism requires many resources – a commitment I strongly support. We are waging an important battle in Afghanistan and facing uncertainty in Iraq.

Many brave Americans are fighting this war, working on foreign soil, gathering intelligence, helping civilians and confronting the enemy. Our men and women in uniform face danger every day so we may continue living in freedom. Let us salute them and say thank you.

Our support for those who protect America is unwavering. While members of Congress may disagree about the details, we are united in our resolve to make our homeland a safer place.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, or if you would like to voice your opinion on an issue that matters to you.

It is my honor and privilege to represent you in Congress.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike".

Iraq

In October, Congress passed a resolution authorizing the President alone to determine whether and when to use military force to end the threat posed by Iraq. I voted against that resolution for a number of reasons. At the time, we had not given the United Nations Security Council an opportunity to demand, as it did unanimously, that Iraq cooperate with weapons inspectors. Furthermore, the United States had not spent enough time seeking the support of allied nations.

There are times and places when force is necessary. In 1999, I voted to commit American troops to Yugoslavia, and last fall, supported deployment to Afghanistan. There is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein is a dangerous man, or that a fully armed Iraq, led by Hussein, is a threat to peace. However, I felt strongly that the United States should not rush headlong into a military conflict.

At this writing, UN inspectors are in Iraq, searching for and cataloguing weapons. It is encouraging that they are being given a chance to do their jobs. Of course, it is unclear if Saddam Hussein will continue cooperating and we don't know what inspectors will find. However, it is critical that the United States not resort to force unless and until other means have clearly failed.

As the only global superpower, and the most consistent defender of human freedom and human rights, we have a moral obligation to use our power wisely and sparingly. A time may come when I am convinced that the United States must take action against Iraq, with or without UN support, but that time has not yet come.

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M.C.

Presorted Standard

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8th Congressional District
Massachusetts

Domestic Priorities

Affordable Housing The need for affordable housing is very real in the 8th Congressional District, and throughout most of our state. Improving existing housing programs and increasing the supply of affordable housing are priorities for me. I worked with my colleagues on the Financial Services Committee to craft housing legislation that begins to address some of our housing problems. The bill creates housing opportunities for grandparents raising their grandchildren, provides funding to revitalize public housing units, and includes additional resources to house the homeless. We will continue trying to advance this legislation in the coming year.

Health Care The cost of health care is rising, and millions of Americans do not have health insurance. Too many others are losing the health coverage they once took for granted. That is why support of our nation's community health centers is so vital. As the co-chair of Congress' bipartisan Community Health Center Caucus, I worked to pass the "Health Care Safety Net Improvement Act", so that these important facilities received funding to continue operating.

Education In 2001, I was one of only 41 House members to vote against the "No Child Left Behind Act". I feared that after passage, the President would declare public education fixed, then walk away. Unfortunately, this is exactly what is happening. For example, the President wants to cut the proposed increases in Title 1 spending by 82%. He also proposed cutting \$1.8 billion in other education programs. Public schools need additional funding if they are to fulfill the obligations mandated by this legislation. We must provide the resources that our students and teachers need to excel.

Transportation

In July of 2002, I was named to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. My hope is that this new assignment offers more chances to advance the transportation needs of the 8th Congressional District. My support of the Urban Ring remains strong – we must move beyond the planning stages and make a real commitment to building this public transit line. While it is encouraging that the Silver Line began operating this summer, I will continue fighting to extend and improve this network. I am also working with my colleagues on the local, state and federal level to make the Fairmount/Indigo Line a reality. We must



Congressman Capuano reviewing the route of the Silver Line with MBTA officials.

invest in our public transportation infrastructure, particularly in underserved areas of the District.

The Transportation Committee is also responsible for many security related issues. We worked closely with our Massachusetts colleagues to provide Massport with the resources needed to screen all checked baggage. We must ensure that air travel is safe and that the new Transportation Security Administration has the staffing and funding it needs to secure our airports.

Corporate Accountability

2002 is the year that Enron, Global Crossing and Worldcom became household names. Executives from these companies operated their businesses with a complete disregard for their stockholders and employees. Consequently, millions of Americans lost their savings and their jobs when company after company declared bankruptcy. The crisis of confidence caused a significant decline in our stock market. College funds, 401K's, pensions and other retirement accounts suffered steep losses. Almost all of us were impacted in some way by the greed of a handful of wealthy executives. Congress must make sure that this does not happen again. Over the summer, Congress passed legislation requiring CEOs to personally verify the financial statements of their companies. The bill also creates a new oversight board to review these financial statements and protect investors. It includes strong new penalties for CEOs who violate the public trust. This accounting legislation is a critical first step, but we still have a long way to go.