

# TOWN HALL MEETINGS

*I hope to see you at one of these upcoming town hall meetings to discuss important issues that are on your mind.*

**Thursday, August 16th**

**7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

**VFW Post 2179**

**1 Veterans Lane (At Route 36)  
Port Monmouth, NJ 07758**

**Tuesday, August 21st**

**7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

**Piscataway Municipal Complex**

**455 Hoes Lane  
Piscataway, NJ 08854**

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515-3006

Official Business



*Frank Pallone, Jr.*  
M.C.  
ECRWSS  
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CONGRESSMAN

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CONGRESSMAN

**Frank Pallone, Jr.**

*Representing the People of the Sixth District of New Jersey*



## Pallone Named Chairman of Health Subcommittee

*Promises to Strengthen NJ FamilyCare*

When Democrats assumed majority control of Congress this year, I was honored to be named by my colleagues as the Chairman of the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health. This subcommittee, one of the most important in Congress, has jurisdiction over all health matters before our government including Medicare, prescription drugs, medical research, public health, food and drug safety, and all homeland security-related health concerns.

My top priority as Chairman this year is to strengthen the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), known in New Jersey as FamilyCare.

Since it was established by Congress ten years ago with my support, SCHIP has helped reduce the number of uninsured children in our nation. Thanks to SCHIP, the percentage of low-income children in the United States without health insurance has fallen by one-fourth since it was created in 1997.

Currently, New Jersey's FamilyCare program covers over 125,000 children and over 80,000 low-income parents.

While SCHIP has largely been a success, it is now being threatened. Last year, for the first time since 1998, the number of uninsured children in the country actually increased. The most immediate and glaring problem is the lack of funding for the program, and I want to change that.

Earlier this year Congress passed a budget that includes \$50 billion in funding for SCHIP. These critical funds, of which New Jersey will receive more than \$1 billion, would allow our state to cover more uninsured children. Today, of the 264,000 New Jersey children who are uninsured, 101,400 of them are eligible for FamilyCare but are not enrolled.

It would also allow us to increase public education efforts aimed at ensuring parents know if their child is eligible to receive health insurance through FamilyCare.

I look forward to passing a bill this year that strengthens the program so that more New Jersey children are receiving the essential health care assistance they need to live healthy and productive lives.



*Rep. Pallone addresses a crowd at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital outlining his plans for reauthorizing SCHIP, as hospital officials look on.*

## Protecting Your Environment



In May, I introduced legislation known as the **Beach Protection Act**, a bill that requires tough new beach water quality testing and public notification standards to give beachgoers the peace of mind that the beaches they visit are clean.

The bill requires states to use expedited tests so people are notified about potential water contamination problems in two hours or less. Current water quality monitoring only tests for bacteria levels and the tests take 24 to 48 hours to produce reliable results. During this time many beachgoers can be unknowingly exposed to harmful pollutants.

I am also proud to have introduced the **Toxic Right-to-Know Protection Act**, legislation that will reinstate toxic reporting requirements to let communities know what toxic chemicals are being dumped in their neighborhoods. In the past, the requirements have been a great tool in getting plants to voluntarily reduce their chemical releases, but in December 2006, the EPA announced rules that loosened reporting requirements.

The Toxic Right-to-Know Protection Act brings back the stronger reporting requirements that were in place previously and ensures that changes to the guidelines cannot be made in the future without the approval of Congress.

## Easy Energy Saving Tips



 Inspect and maintain your cooling system. Simple measures such as cleaning and replacing clogged air filters can reduce cooling costs up to 10 percent.

 Invest in attic insulation for year-round comfort and efficiency. Also, use an attic fan to get rid of the heat build-up.

 Plant shade trees to block heat from the sun. As the trees grow, they can dramatically cut your cooling bills. Install patio covers, awnings, and solar window screens to shade your home from the sun.

 Raising the thermostat just 6 degrees Fahrenheit can save 10 percent on your cooling bill. Energy experts recommend setting your thermostat at 78 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

 Turn off appliances, lights and equipment when not in use.

## Making College More Affordable for NJ Students

Every year, it's becoming more and more difficult to afford a college education. Studies show that the number one reason students fail to attend college is the cost. Today, the typical student borrower in New Jersey graduates from college \$16,450 in debt.

We should do more to increase affordable college opportunities, not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it is critical to the economic prosperity of our nation to ensure our ability to compete globally.

One of the first actions of the new Democratic majority this year was cutting federal student loan interest rates in half, from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent over five years. The College Student Relief Act will save the average college student about \$5,000 over the life of a loan and offer work-

ing families much needed relief.

This month, the House of Representatives also passed the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007, which will pro-

vide the single largest increase in college aid since the GI bill — an increase of \$262 million to students and families in New Jersey alone. The award would reach \$4,900 by 2008 and \$5,200 by 2011. That is an \$850



*Rep. Pallone speaks to high school students visiting Washington, DC about the benefits of the College Cost Reduction Act, which passed the House that day.*

vide the single largest increase in college aid since the GI bill — an increase of \$262 million to students and families in New Jersey alone.

The bill also provides a significant boost in Pell Grant scholarships so that high school students know that if they work hard they can go to

increase for students to help pay for tuition, which would benefit more than 110,000 students in New Jersey.

## ★ Moving America in a New Direction ★

**Since January, the House of Representatives has passed legislation that:**

- ✓ increases the federal minimum wage for the first time in a decade;
- ✓ places 50,000 additional police officers on our streets;
- ✓ provides for the largest funding increase in veterans' health care in 77 years;
- ✓ fully implements the bipartisan 9/11 commission recommendations to better protect our nation;
- ✓ sets criminal penalties for price gouging of gasoline, and permits states to bring lawsuits against those who engage in such practices.