



Report To Central New Jersey

FALL 2005

Dear Friend,

Families and individuals in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties are meeting a range of daily challenges. Each of us is trying to strengthen our communities, provide for our families, and prepare for the future. I am happy to have this opportunity to update you on some of the issues in Congress that affect people here in New Jersey.

I continue my efforts on the House Education and Workforce Committee to make college more affordable for families of hard-working students. I am also working to make K-12 education more robust by promoting math, science, and foreign language education. For those who are already employed, I have given a great deal of effort to improve pension security, prevent job loss due to unfair trade, and provide life-long learning opportunities for employees looking to change careers or move up the ladder.

As New Jersey's only representative on the House Intelligence Committee, I continue my work to prevent terrorist attacks and to continue my work to support our servicemen and women around the world. In Iraq and Afghanistan, our troops are performing bravely and admirably. We owe it to them to provide the support and resources for them to do their job, as well as to begin bringing them home safely. Supporting our troops includes caring for all our veterans, new and old. That is the least we can do to repay their sacrifice.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter useful. I invite you to attend one of my upcoming community meetings, listed on the back page. In order to help me understand your concerns, I hope you will contact me by letter (address below), e-mail (through my website at www.holt.house.gov), or phone (toll free at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT).

Thank you, and I look forward to seeing and hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rush Holt".

Rush Holt
Member of Congress

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Please visit my Web site at www.holt.house.gov to learn more about what I am working on, and to sign-up for my occasional e-mail newsletter, the [eGenda](#).

Back to School: Higher Education for the 21st Century

www.holt.house.gov

Families in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, which are home to more than 72,000 pupils, know the value of education. As a member of the House Education Committee, I am working to ensure that the federal government is doing all it can to make college education more affordable.

Every five years, Congress has the opportunity to rewrite higher education laws to help students and families. Unfortunately, a budget resolution passed earlier this year to provide for domestic and international programs and for tax cuts has mandated cuts of \$12 billion to student aid programs over the next five years. This is a terrible mistake that I strongly oppose. In order to prevent these cuts from doing extensive harm to college affordability, I successfully added amendments to the bill that will:

- Expand Pell Grant eligibility for community college students;
- Establish a scholarship program for math, science, and engineering students; and



Rush discusses his efforts to make college more affordable at a recent town meeting.

- Forgive student loans for students studying critical-need foreign languages.

Expanding college opportunity is critical to improving economic competitiveness, strengthening national security, and achieving our national priorities. Educating our workforce – young and old – is money well spent for our future success. ▶

Preventing Flooding

In April, a modest rainfall caused the worst flooding in New Jersey in fifty years – and the third major flood in nine months. Hundreds of people suffered damages to their homes, property, and businesses. Though I was happy that my request for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance to individuals affected was accepted, it is clear that we need a better solution to regular flooding along the Delaware River Basin.

When disasters like this happen, an active community must respond. For my part, I have tried to assist affected residents by:

- Going door-to-door to discuss flooding with residents and providing emergency contact information;

- Convening town meetings with Governor Codey's Flood Mitigation Task Force;
- Holding public Q&A sessions on assistance available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and
- Conducting a review with the Army Corps of Engineers, township mayors, and other local experts of affected communities to identify the source of the problem.

Preventing flooding in the near term is nearly impossible. A large part of the problem is that uncontrolled growth has eliminated many of our area's natural defenses against floods, such as wetlands and open space. We need a broad review of our growth patterns and a combined response from federal, state, and local authorities that addresses Central New Jersey's unique needs. ▶

As crude oil hovers above \$60 per gallon, consumers are paying record high prices for gasoline and oil and gas for home heating. These prices affect our daily lives – families may skip a weekend trip, the daily commute takes a larger bite, and less disposable income is available for other necessities.

Last month, President Bush signed a \$12.3 billion energy bill that even its sponsors acknowledge will have little, if any, effect on today's energy prices or our current dependence on foreign oil. Instead of investing in research for sustainable energy, the bill deepens our dependence on oil and gas. Having spent a large part of my career working on alternative

energy, it is frustrating that promising technologies like solar power, electric vehicles, and fusion are given short-shrift. This makes it difficult to achieve the long-term strategy that our public and private sectors need to research and develop reliable and renewable energy sources.

We can do better. A sustained commitment to investment in energy research could minimize our dependence on foreign oil, make our air and water cleaner, and provide a new basis for U.S. industrial leadership. That is why I am a cosponsor of the New Apollo Energy Act, which would provide for a comprehensive alternative energy strategy. ▶

Safe Schools and Playgrounds

The July 27 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* contained an article regarding the dangers of pesticide exposure at schools. The study found that pesticide-related illnesses increased significantly among children from 1998 to 2002, and among the cases with detailed information on the source of pesticide exposure, 69% were associated with pesticides used at schools.

Since 1999, I have been working to pass the School Environmental Protection Act (H.R. 110), which would establish uniform standards on the use of potentially dangerous chemicals in and around schools. The bill would require schools to avoid unnecessarily toxic pesticides, and to provide parental notification of any use of powerful pesticides.



Rush speaks about the School Environment Protection Act, legislation to protect children from exposure to pesticides, at Lawrenceville Elementary School.

Given this new information about the dangers of pesticide exposure, I believe H.R. 110 is an important first step toward protecting the health of our children, teachers, and school employees. ▶

DID YOU KNOW?

Small businesses account for half of our domestic product and three-fourths of new jobs created every year. Rush has been working on ways to decrease the cost of health premiums and protect federal loans for entrepreneurs so that small businesses in New Jersey can prosper and expand.

**R E P.
RUSH
HOLT**

Town Hall Meetings /Office Hours

www.holt.house.gov

I hope to see you at these upcoming meetings to discuss issues such as Social Security, economic development, hometown security, health care, education, and anything else that may be on your mind.

Saturday, October 29

Old Bridge Township
10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Old Bridge Library
One Old Bridge Plaza

Saturday, October 29

Marlboro Township
1:30 – 3 p.m.
Marlboro Library
Library Court and
Wyncrest Drive

Sunday, November 13

Oceanport Borough
2 – 3:30 p.m.
Oceanport Borough Hall
222 Monmouth Blvd.

Monday, November 21

Delaware Township
7 – 8:30 p.m.
Delaware Elementary School
501 Rosemont-Ringoes Road

To receive more regular updates about my activities in New Jersey and in Washington, D.C., please visit my webpage at www.holt.house.gov and sign up for my e-mail newsletter.

REPRESENTATIVE RUSH HOLT

*As your Congressman,
I am here to help.
Contact me any time.*

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M.C.
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