



Our Congressman Reports

Danny K. Davis

Representative in Congress

July 2002 – 7th Congressional District - Illinois

Dear 7th Congressional District residents:



Congressman Davis with Ancona Montessori School students on a recent visit to the Capitol

We've reached the half-way mark for this legislative year. It's time once again to report, and share with you, some legislative initiatives, some votes taken and some program activities designed to represent your interests . . . and the interests of others who share our views and positions throughout the nation.

As has become custom and tradition I have held town hall meetings throughout the district on a regular basis. These meetings continue to provide a solid basis for the development of programs and initiatives. The discussions and findings from these meetings continue to help shape legislation, and provide context for the support (or opposition) of bills before the Congress. Thanks for all of your input: for your comments at town hall meetings, for your phone calls, your letters, and your e-mails.

Many of you, especially school groups, have been able to visit the office in Washington, D.C. I hope you continue to feel welcome in both our Chicago and Washington offices. I am opening an additional office to better serve the suburban portion of the district. It will be located at 1030 17th Avenue in Maywood, Illinois and will be opening in August.



Westchester Middle School



Congressman Davis with Henry Suder School students on a recent visit to the Capitol

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

When Medicare was enacted in 1964 prescription drugs were an insignificant part of the cost of medical care. Most of our modern wonder drugs had not yet been invented. Today Medicare beneficiaries use an average of \$2,440 in prescription drugs annually. Seniors account for 42 cents of every dollar spent in the US on prescription drugs and, from 1997 through 2001, national spending on prescription drugs rose close to 20 percent each year. I support the creation of a Part D for Medicare that would provide voluntary prescription drug coverage for all Medicare beneficiaries. Below is a comparison of the bill I supported and the one passed in the House which would privatize prescription drug coverage. At the time of this writing the Senate has not acted but is expected to support a bill similar to the one I supported in the House. I remain hopeful that the bill I supported will eventually be enacted into law.

Plan element	Congressman Davis' Bill	Bill passed in the House
Guaranteed minimum benefit	Yes!	No
Guaranteed lower drug prices	Yes! Medicare negotiates with drug companies	No
Guaranteed monthly premium	\$25	No (estimated average \$34)
Annual deductible	\$100	\$250
Co-payment	20% until out of pocket \$2,000	20% up to 100% until out of pocket \$3,700
Counts Medigap and other co-insurance toward out-of-pocket cap	Yes!	No
Choice of pharmacies	Yes!	Limited by insurance company
Access to medicines prescribed by your doctor	Yes!	Limited to drugs listed by insurance company
Amount saved by Senior with \$1,500 drug bill	\$820	\$442
Amount saved by Senior with \$3,000 drug bill	\$2020	\$692

Curfew Awareness/Juvenile Crime Reduction Initiative



Press conference announcing the Curfew Awareness Program and Initiative to Reduce Juvenile Crime

Building on discussions which took place in my Public Safety Advisory Task Force, and working with law enforcement officials, agencies serving youth, community organizations, and the media, a curfew awareness effort to help curb youth crime and reduce juvenile delinquency has been launched. This program is proving to have widespread appeal and should go a long way towards helping to keep our young people off the street and engaged in meaningful activities. I have consistently supported legislative initiatives and funding efforts to support programs with these objectives. I will continue to seek additional legislation and resources to combat juvenile crime and offer positive alternatives.

Housing - A Critical Need in the 7th District

Buying a House, Maintaining a Home, and Passing it on

There is a huge gap in home ownership between African American and other population groups. The gap is more than 10% in the 7th District. I have launched an aggressive program reaching out to banks, realtors, mortgage companies, housing organizations, community organizations, credit counseling agencies, government agencies and others, to create new, affordable, attractive and accessible home ownership opportunities for residents of our district. Using Town Hall meetings and other out-reach tools these opportunities are being communicated to potential home buyers along with information on building a solid credit history, and other basic information on home ownership.



Congressman Davis' June, 2002 Housing Town Hall meeting and exposition

Public Safety Ex-Offender Self-Sufficiency Act of 2002

As a result of increases in drug use and get-tough-on-crime policies of the '70s, '80s and '90s, such as mandatory minimum sentencing, zero tolerance, sentencing disparities, "three strikes and you're out" laws, and other initiatives, record numbers of people were arrested, convicted and given long sentences to serve in prison. Now these individuals are being released in large numbers back into society without preparation for normal life.



Congressman Davis announcing the introduction of the Ex-Offender Self-Sufficiency Act of 2002

Often they will have difficulty connecting with jobs, housing and their families. Many of them remain beset with substance abuse, mental illness and a variety of other social problems.

We know that the release of large numbers of ex-offenders will cause enormous public safety problems for many communities, especially when they return and live in the same neighborhoods and under the same conditions with brought them into the criminal justice system in the first place. Our community is expecting a disproportionate share of the returning ex-offenders.

The Justice Department has reported that the cost of crime to victims is some \$450 billion annually. The communities with the largest number of returning ex-offenders may also face a disproportionate share of these costs and thus the community and its residents will be further victimized.

In an effort to address these problems, I introduced the Public Safety Ex-Offender Act of 2002 (H.R. 3701). It is a pilot program which amends the tax laws to create an ex-offender low-income housing tax credit to encourage the provision of housing, job creation and other essential services to individuals convicted of crimes who have served their sentences and are now ready for re-entry into normal life. This legislation is designed to stimulate the building of 100,000 units of SRO type (single room occupancy type) housing over a five years period and should significantly reduce recidivism.

Postal Service Faces Continued Crisis

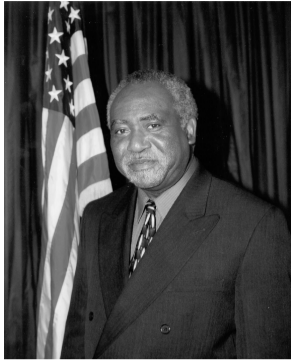
The Postal Service has, like every other American institution, been impacted by 9/11 and subsequent events. Mail volume is down by six billion pieces, an unprecedented decline. Last year the Postal Service reported losses of \$1.68 billion and this fiscal year they are predicting losses of more than \$1.5 billion. The anthrax attacks on the Postal Service coupled with pipe bomb scares have seriously challenged the resources of the Postal Service. Remember, the Postal Service receives no tax dollar subsidies!



The June 30th three cent increase in the cost of a first class stamp will provide some relief. The Postal Service has pledged that they will not rely solely on postage increases and that the next increase will not occur for several years.

I, along with Representatives John McHugh (R-NY), Dan Burton (R-IN), and Henry Waxman (D-CA) have worked on the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, a bill which will go a long way toward achieving accountability, reliability and viability for the Postal Service. The bill was supported by the Postal Service and represented a delicate compromise between a number of interested stakeholders. The concerns of all stakeholders have not yet been satisfied, but negotiations continue and I still believe that postal reform is greatly needed. Any disruption of the Postal Service would have a profound negative impact on our economy and we simply cannot let this happen.

Some Legislation Sponsored/Co-Sponsored by Congressman Davis



Congressman Davis

Below is a listing, a sampling, of some legislation I am currently sponsoring or co-sponsoring in the Congress. A complete listing of legislation before the Congress is maintained by the Library of Congress and may be accessed on the Internet at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. The website is very user friendly. You may select legislation by sponsor/co-sponsor, subject, bill number and numerous other criteria and you will find the text and status of legislation, as well as roll call votes and other useful information.

- H.R. 1228 Guarantees the right to vote of a citizen convicted of a criminal offense unless such a citizen is, at voting time, serving a felony sentence in a correctional institution or facility or is otherwise under the supervision of, or in the custody of, a governmental authority pursuant to that conviction.
- H.R. 3612 Amends title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act to provide for: (1) mandatory coverage of community-based attendant services and supports; and (2) increased Federal participation for early coverage States for certain expenditures with respect to community-based attendant services and supports.
- H.AMMDT 256 Amendment sought increase funding for the HOPE VI public housing revitalization program by \$100 million.
- H.R. 436 To authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants to States to supplement State assistance for the preservation of affordable housing for low-income families.
- H.R. 917 To provide for livable wages for Federal Government workers and workers hired under Federal contracts.
- H.R. 526 To amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage.
- H.R. 537 To establish the National Commission on Youth Crime and School Violence.
- H.AMMDT 343 To reduce the sugar loan rates (subsidies) by 1 cent; increase the forfeiture penalty by 1 cent; and authorize the use of program savings for conservation and environmental stewardship programs to enhance the Florida Everglades ecosystem.
- H.R. 687 To expand the teacher loan forgiveness programs under the Federal Family Education Loan and Federal Direct Loan programs.
- H.R. 696 To permit the expungement of records of certain nonviolent criminal offenses.
- H.Res 154 Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.
- H.R. 781 To amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.
- H.R. 737 To amend the Individuals with Disabilities Act to provide full funding for assistance for education of all children with disabilities.
- H.R. 3670 To amend the Trade Adjustment Act of 1974 to consolidate and improve the trade adjustment assistance program, to provide community-based economic development assistance for trade-affected communities, and for other purposes.
- H.Con.Res 169 Directing the Architect of the Capitol to enter into a contract for the design and construction of a monument to commemorate the contributions of women in public life and for other purposes.
- H.Con.Res. 304 Expressing sympathy to the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo who were tragically affected by the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano on January 17, 2002.
- H.R. 1252 To amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reduce the drinking water standard for arsenic and to authorize an \$800 million to provide grants to small public drinking water systems to assist them in meeting these standards.

TANF Re-Authorization Debate Heats Up

The 1996 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) bill has been highly successful in reducing public assistance rolls. It has been much less successful at moving families out of poverty and at ensuring the well being and development of children in very poor families. The re-authorization of TANF comes as the economy, and especially low income families, are being cruelly hit by hard times. The House, after a spirited debate has passed a bill – a bill in my opinion with some extremely serious shortcomings. My Child Welfare Task Force led by Arnetta Wilson has done an excellent job of exploring issues associated with reform TANF.

I supported an alternative bill which would have focused on moving families out of poverty by providing work at wages above the poverty level, and by providing

Get Ready for “State of the District” Town Hall Meeting – September 6th and 7th

The third annual 7th Congressional District “State of the District” Town Hall meeting and Resource Fair will be held at

Malcolm X College
1900 West Van Buren
Chicago, Illinois

Friday, September 6, 2002
6:00 p.m.

and
Saturday, September 7, 2002
9:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m.

As always, the “State of the District” Town Hall meeting is open to the entire public – everyone is invited to attend. There is no charge for any part of the meetings.

This is an opportunity to find out what is happening in our district, to discern the needs of the district, and to determine what you can do to help address those needs. Attendees will find valuable information and will find the opportunity to speak out on issues.

During the meeting, free health screenings will be offered. To pre-register, and for additional information, please call 773-533-7520. I look forward to seeing you at Malcolm X College on September 6th and 7th!



Congressman Davis meets with constituents in his D.C. office to discuss TANF Re-Authorization

family support, child care and health care. It would have adjusted funding for inflation, addressed the needs of legal immigrants, provided supplemental aid to underfunded states, provided states flexibility in determining eligibility, and significantly increased (\$11.25 billion) support for child care. Instead of measuring case load reduction, my plan would have measured the number of families who are employed after leaving assistance and would have provided for assessments for physical and mental disability and domestic violence.

My plan would have counted vocational education as a primary activity for up to two years to permit TANF leavers to upgrade their job skills. The plan I supported would have required a pre-sanction review process and offered an opportunity to bring families back into compliance. The plan I supported would have permanently re-authorized Transitional Medical Assistance. The plans in the Senate are similar to the plan I supported and I am guardedly optimistic that when the House and Senate get together to reconcile their bills the re-authorization will better address the needs of low income families.

Meet the Interns in the Washington Office



Congressman Davis and interns

(from left to right in photo)

Amanda Meulenberg, is currently doing a summer fellowship with the American Medical Student Association (AMSA). Amanda will be returning to Wayne State University in August as a second year medical student.

Jordan Williams, a Chicago native, is a junior boarding student at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. He was able to join our office through The Washington Workshop Foundation.

Lauren Gooding, served one week in the office with the Girl Scouts of America. Lauren is from Mitchellville, Maryland and will be a sophomore high school student this fall.

Sheila York, a resident of Chicago, has been chosen to be a Congressional Black Caucus intern. Sheila is a graduate of Lane Technical High School and a recent graduate of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

Bob Hartt, is currently doing a fellowship through the Brookings Institute. Bob works for the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

Katherine Chuu, is doing an internship through the Organization of Chinese Americans, Inc. (OCA). Katherine is from Northbrook, IL and is currently attending University of Illinois - Urbana/Champaign.

Henry Tibensky, an Oak Park resident, attended Oak Park and River Forest High School and will be entering his senior year at Yale University this fall.

Leslie Tourigny, is currently doing a fellowship through the American Political Science Association. Leslie has more than 30 years of government experience and currently is employed by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

(Not pictured are interns in the Chicago office: LaNese Chandler (Lincoln Park High School), Shenora Gee (Olive Harvey College), Darius Lyles (Hales Franciscan High School), LaKita Moore (Steinmetz High School), Becky Martin (Oak Park/River Forest High School), Evan Crese (Washington University, St. Louis, MO.)

Calendar of Congressman Davis' Up-Coming Events

August 7, 2002	4 to 6 p.m.	"Open House" at the new 7 th Congressional District Maywood District Office - 1030 South 17 th Avenue, Maywood, Illinois
August 7, 2002	7 p.m.	Maywood Town Hall meeting - City Council Chambers, 125 South 5 th Avenue, Maywood, Illinois
August 8, 2002	7 p.m.	South Loop Town Hall meeting - Old St. Patrick's Church, 700 West Adams, Chicago, Illinois
September 6, 2002	6:00 p.m.	3 rd Annual "State of the District" Town Hall meeting - Malcolm X College, 1900 West Van Buren, Chicago, Illinois
September 7, 2002	9:00 a.m.	"State of the District" Town Hall meeting continues all day until 5:00 p.m. - Malcolm X College, 1900 West Van Buren, Chicago, Illinois

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