



For Immediate Release
July 4, 2008

Contact: Dan Weber
202-225-8699

Congresswoman Donna Edwards' Independence Day Statement

For 232 years, our great nation has celebrated its independence each fourth day of July. And while this time offers us a wonderful opportunity to enjoy barbecues and fireworks in the company of friends and family, it is also a time to reflect, honor and cherish our rich history as a nation -- not always perfect but ever growing and learning from our experiment with governance. As I look back at the progress we have made and the obstacles we have overcome, I am filled with pride and longing for even greater achievements. It is this pride that motivates me to do all I can to help bring about a better future by addressing our country's next challenges.

Commemorating Independence Day in 1946, then Congressional candidate, John F. Kennedy remarked "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." His words ring true today, as our nation faces unique and daunting challenges such as skyrocketing energy costs, a faltering economy, and the continuing War in Iraq. We must be vigilant as we work together to find solutions to these and other challenges we face today.

That is why I am pleased that in the weeks leading up to this Independence Day, the Democratic Congress took critical steps towards alleviating some of the burdens placed on Americans. We extended unemployment benefits by 13 additional weeks for workers who cannot find a job, provided \$1.7 billion dollars for public transportation to alleviate escalating operating and commuting costs for workers, and secured a new GI Bill to restore the promise of a full, four-year college education for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. We have also continued to fight the crippling energy crisis by passing legislation to stop unchecked speculation in the markets that bumps up prices at the pump.

After only two weeks in Congress, I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish. But, I know there is a lot more we can do. We must be vigilant in the pursuit of an energy policy that is tied to economic development, so that we can create 21st Century jobs with industries that strengthen our economy, better our environment, and put an end to high

energy costs. We must be vigilant when it comes to providing affordable, quality healthcare to every American, and we must be vigilant in bringing our troops home from Iraq safely and re-engaging in diplomacy throughout the world.

I look forward to continuing in these efforts and I wish you and your family a safe and happy 4th of July.

And to all who serve throughout the world...thank you for keeping watch for us.

Donna