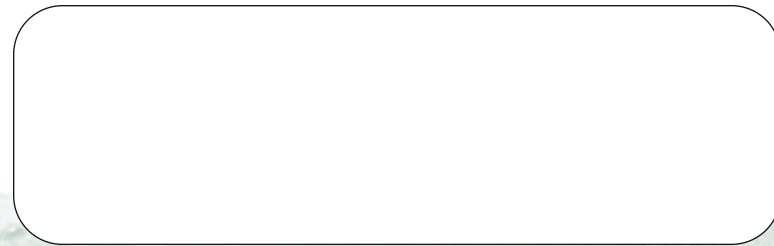


Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1302


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**VISIT CONGRESSMAN JESSE JACKSON JR.'s
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Record number of Americans apply for passports - leave extra time to get yours

A change in regulations by the U.S. Department of State resulted in unprecedented, record breaking demands for new and renewed passports this year – up 50% from the previous year. Presently, routine passport service takes about 6 to 8 weeks; expedited service approximately 3 weeks. For additional information, visit the Department of State's website at <http://travel.state.gov>

For more information visit www.house.gov/jackson

An update for the **South Side**

from **CONGRESSMAN JESSE JACKSON JR.**





This is an exciting time for the South Side – I want to update you on a few of the exciting changes taking place...

— CONGRESSMAN JESSE JACKSON JR.



Above: Congressman Jackson discusses community resources at a meeting hosted by 7th Ward Alderman Sandi Jackson.



Metra Station Upgrades Nearing Completion

Reconstruction of the final two new South Chicago Branch Metra stations, both along Exchange Avenue, will be completed by March 2008. Each new station has attracted new investment, new housing and new businesses to the neighborhood. We're not building train stations; we're building communities.

When done, all eight stations along the Metra South Chicago Branch will have been enlarged and improved, and the crossings upgraded. Congressman Jackson initiated the project in 2000. The new stations were financed by Metra and the Federal Transit Administration.

South Shore Drive Work Begins at USX

A new era is beginning at the old USX Southworks site. USX will be the next hot spot in the city for commercial and residential development. It has the potential to be another Navy Pier and South Loop combined.

Ground was broken in October for the new South Shore Drive, also known as U.S. 41. The road will pave the way for future homes and businesses along Lake Michigan's shoreline between 79th and 95th Streets. The road will take two years to complete.

In recent years, Jackson secured federal funds to build three other new roads into USX -- Harbor Drive, Avenue O, and 87th Street. The new South Shore Drive will link those arteries and provide four-lane access roads across the site in all directions.



Working families get a pay raise

Working families are getting a pay raise. The first federal minimum wage increase in a decade raises the federal minimum wage by 70 cents in July 2007, July 2008 and July 2009, for a total increase of \$2.10.

The minimum wage has remained the same for 10 years, the longest period of time that working men and women went without an hourly pay raise since the minimum wage first passed. Over that decade, inflation has all but erased the effect of the last raise – leaving millions of families behind – with the minimum wage reaching its lowest effective level in more than half a century.



Largest increase in financial aid for college students since 1944

College students will see the largest increase in financial aid since the GI bill in 1944. The bill helps to remove the cost as the biggest barrier to college for millions of qualified and deserving Americans.

College students will get \$18 billion worth of additional financial aid over the next five years. It pays for itself by reducing excessive federal subsidies paid to lenders in the college loan industry by \$19 billion.

The historic legislation, enacted by the new Congress, includes: Pell Grant scholarships and interest rate cuts of 50% on need-based student loans, tuition assistance for undergraduate students who teach in public schools; loan forgiveness for college graduates who go into public service; increased federal loan limits; new tuition cost containment strategies; and landmark investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions and minority serving institutions.