



# Report to New York from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney

JUNE 2006

www.maloney.house.gov

Dear New Yorker,

Our country currently faces enormous challenges. Sadly, too many are self-inflicted—the result of misguided policies in Washington.

We all continue to monitor the terrible situation in Iraq. Sold to Congress and the American people with false information and planned without an exit strategy, the war has become an occupation—with our forces facing daily attacks.

I've pushed for more oversight of our operations in Iraq, but sadly the tone-deaf civilian leaders who prosecuted this war continue to resist any attempt by Congress for real oversight. I have also signed on to Rep. John Murtha's sensible plan to withdraw our troops as soon as workable.

The challenges are growing here at home as well. The current power structure in Congress has begun to reveal a pattern of corruption—a natural outgrowth of the lack of oversight and discipline among Congressional leadership.

Gas prices are soaring, a predictable outcome to ongoing instability in the Middle East and lack of discipline in implementing vehicle mileage standards here at home.

Still, I am proud to report inside some important victories for New York City that I've helped achieve, including:

—The first federal funding of health care for 9/11 responders.

—Ongoing federal support for the last planning phases of the Second Avenue Subway.

—Retirement credit for National Guardsmen who responded to the 9/11 attacks.

And as always, if you have a concern or question that I might be able to help with, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely

Carolyn B. Maloney

JULY 1st DEADLINE

## ■ Student loan rate hikes looming

Earlier this year, the Republican-led Congress cut \$12 billion out of federal student aid programs in order to help finance a new round of tax cuts. As a result of this new law, which I strongly opposed, college is even further out of reach for millions of American students and their families.

When this law is fully implemented on July 1st, the interest rates on outstanding federal student loans are expected to rise to just over 7%—and the rate on outstanding federal parent loans is expected to rise to about 7.8%.

Borrowers who consolidate before July 1st may be eligible to lock in a rate as low as 4.75% over the life of their loan(s)—which could save the typical undergraduate borrower almost \$3,500 over the life of his or her loan. But students and parents must act quickly to lock in these lower rates!

If you have a Direct Loan through the U.S. Dept. of Education you can call 1-800-557-7392 or apply on-line at <http://www.loanconsolidation.ed.gov>. If you have a loan through the FFEL program (a bank-based loan) you can contact one of the companies that own or service your student or parent loan(s). If you have loans with more than one lender you can choose to consolidate through the Dept. of Education or with any lender that owns or services at least one of your loans.

To fight this change in the law and to make college more affordable, I'm proud to support H.R. 5150, the "Reverse the Raid on Student Aid Act," which would cut interest rates in half for students with subsidized loans. For more information visit my website or <http://studentaid.ed.gov/>. Just remember that time is of the essence and the new rates take effect on July 1st!

### College debt soars for New York grads

WASHINGTON — College grads in New York are saddled with a growing amount of student loan debt, averaging more than \$20,000 for students who borrow, according to federal figures. "That's a big, big load to have on your shoulders," said Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), who obtained the numbers from the National Center for Education Statistics, part of the Department of Education. Jacqueline King, an analyst at the American Council on Education, said the problem may become more serious as interest rates rise, particularly for graduates who have other large bills to pay. Two out of every three students who graduated in 2004 from an undergraduate college or university in New York had to borrow money to pay for college, according to the federal statistics, owing an average of \$11,688 — more than \$1,000 higher than the national average of \$9,200. Schumer blamed part of the problem on private lenders, including major banks, which offer loans at worse rates and with hidden fees to students unaware that the federal government offers lower-cost lending. AP

N.Y. Post, May 18, 2006

#### How best to reach me:

Regular postal mail to my Washington office is subject to screening delays. If you'd like to reach me quickly about legislation, the best methods now are via the internet at [www.maloney.house.gov](http://www.maloney.house.gov) or by fax at 202/225-4709.

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New York  
from  
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Maloney*

## ■ Budget cuts show misplaced priorities

Over the past few months, Congress has considered and passed a damaging package of adjustments to an already-misguided budget.

The latest actions could starve needed programs while worsening the reckless fiscal situation that has been a hallmark of this Congress and administration over the past few years.

The budget changes sharply reduce some of the programs most beneficial to Americans who badly need assistance. Medicaid, which provides health care for low-income Americans, was cut by \$28.3 billion over 10 years. Student loans were cut by \$12.6 billion, including higher fees for students and higher interest rates for parent loans. Meanwhile, an \$8.4 billion cut in programs to enforce child support collections could force many single-parent families into poverty.

Other changes will dramatically increase the deficit. In 2001, the budget office estimated a 10-year surplus of \$5.6 trillion—that's "trillion" with a "t". Now, five years later, the 10-year estimate is for a deficit of \$3.3 trillion (a \$9.1-trillion flip!)

This threatens the stability of our economy and heaps even more of the fiscal burden on the backs of our children and grandchildren.

## ■ Ending genocide in Darfur

Hundreds of thousands have been killed and more than a million have been forced from their homes in the ongoing crisis in Sudan. We must do everything possible to end this horrific genocide.

I have joined my colleagues in several initiatives including urging President Bush to engage China in efforts to end the genocide; urging Secretary Rice to appoint a special envoy for Sudan; expressing concerns to Secretary Rice about Sudanese refugees in Egypt; and cosponsoring a resolution urging the President to take immediate steps to help improve the security situation in Darfur with a specific emphasis on civilian protections. I also am a cosponsor of H.R. 3127, the "Darfur Peace and Accountability Act," which passed the House on April 5 by a vote of 416-3. This legislation, which would promote peace in Darfur and punish those perpetrating the genocide, now awaits action by the Senate.

## ■ Humane immigration reform

As Congress tries to update national immigration policy, it is important to remember that America is a nation of immigrants. Most of us have ancestors not born of this land—and those ancestors faced public skepticism upon their arrivals. But those brave enough to leave home for America also usually end up being hard-working, talented people who make a contribution to our society.

It's obvious that our borders can be and must be better protected. The 9/11 Commission bill that I worked hard to pass included the addition of 10,000 border patrol agents over five years. Unbelievably, the Republican-majority Congress has failed to provide full funding for these new personnel.

Though it is not mentioned in the current debate over illegal immigrants, I believe that our porous, neglected border with Canada badly needs vastly-improved protections. After all, it has been documented that actual terrorists have already tried to enter via U.S.-Canada border, as was the case with the millennium bomber. For all we know, terrorists are still focusing on that under-guarded border.

I do not agree with the unrealistic approach to immigration reform taken by Republicans in the House. They focus on making 12 million undocumented workers felons. That's why I voted "No" on the House bill.

Instead, I support the bipartisan, level-headed

immigration reform package proposed by Senators John McCain and Ted Kennedy, which would achieve vital improvements to the current system. It would firm up our border protections and crack down on those crossing the border illegally. It would give undocumented immigrants who are law-abiding, tax-paying residents in our country a path to legal status, thus breaking the culture of illegality that is such a problem.

## ■ 2nd Ave. Subway closer than ever

On April 18, 2006, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) notified Congress that the first phase of the Second Avenue Subway is approved for Final Design. Scheduled for completion in 2012, the first phase will provide stops at 96th, 86th and 72nd streets before linking to existing "Q" tracks, giving passengers a one-seat ride to Times Square, Wall Street and Brooklyn.

Next step is a full funding grant agreement between the MTA and the FTA. With strong financial support from the state—\$1.05 billion previously authorized plus \$450 million from last year's Transportation Bond Act—the MTA is in a strong position to request significant federal support.

The subway has now passed its last major hurdle. This is good news for commuters crammed on the overcrowded Lex line, good news for our economy and good news for all New Yorkers.

## ■ Protecting civil liberties

It's become alarmingly clear that the leadership of the House is not interested in protecting America's civil liberties. In April, they rejected a bipartisan request—for the fifth time—to debate an amendment to create the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board as envisioned by the 9/11 Commission.

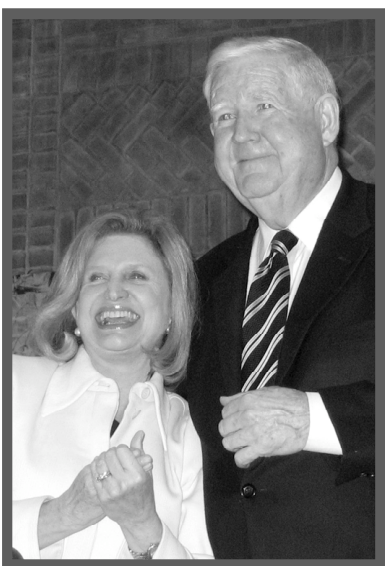
If the House leadership had allowed this amendment, it would have strengthened the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board by giving the board real subpoena power and requiring the board to be bipartisan and made-up of qualified individuals.

To make matters worse, this latest refusal by the House to even debate the protection of our civil liberties comes soon after President Bush failed to include any funding for the board in his 2007 Budget. In response to this, Rep. Christopher Shays and I have introduced H.R. 5000, to require the President to include funds for the board in his budget.

## ■ Restoring Roosevelt Island tram service

After the all-night ordeal on April 18 in which Roosevelt Island Tramway passengers were suspended in midair over the East River, it was obvious that some would use this as an excuse to close it down.

The next day, I contacted Councilwoman Jessica Lappin, Assemblyman Alexander B. "Pete" Grannis and State Senator José Serrano, and we agreed to work together to support restoration of full service as soon as passenger safety can be assured. That day, we issued a joint public letter to Governor Pataki urging him to make long overdue expenditures of State funding to ensure the Tram's prompt and safe reopening. I also wrote to the National Transportation Safety Board requesting a study to improve the Tram's operation and emergency response efforts. The State's record of neglect toward the Tramway—on which passengers have been suspended midair twice in the last eight months—cannot be allowed to serve as an excuse to prolong or make permanent the current temporary shutdown of the Tram.



During my Town Hall last month, special guest Rep. John Murtha and I responded to constituents' questions about the War in Iraq.

A standing-room only crowd of New Yorkers had the opportunity to express their opinions about the war with a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee. And express them they did.

Rep. Murtha also explained the resolution he's introduced (with my cosponsorship) that calls for bringing troops home from Iraq as soon as practicable.



## ■ 9/11 health update

Four and a half years is far too long to wait for an adequate federal response to 9/11 health effects, but the administration has finally taken a couple of important and long-overdue steps. After Rep. Vito Fossella and I urged the administration to appoint someone to be in charge of the federal response to the 9/11 health crisis, they heeded our call and named Dr. John Howard as the first 9/11 Health Coordinator.

Dr. Howard has served as the Director of National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. In April my office coordinated a meeting with Dr. Howard to discuss the status of existing federal programs and develop a plan on the unmet medical needs related to 9/11.

Since the appointment of Dr. Howard, the Centers for Disease Control announced its plan to distribute \$75 million for 9/11 health programs, which includes the very first federal dollars spent for medical treatment of 9/11 responders. This funding was saved by the New York delegation last year after the administration proposed taking the money back.

The CDC money is hopefully just the beginning of a robust federal aid program. After four and a half years of no money for treatment, it's a welcome start. Please be assured that we will not stop our work until everyone who was exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero is eligible for medical monitoring and everyone who is sick receives the treatment they deserve.

## ■ Ports fiasco spurs reform proposal

In March, following the Dubai ports fiasco that made many Americans aware of the secretive Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), I introduced H.R. 4915, which was the first bill to reform the CFIUS process. In May, building on this legislation, I co-wrote H.R. 5337, to fully reform the process, balancing the need to encourage and support foreign investment, while protecting our national security.

Even before the Dubai ports fiasco, Congress had asked the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office to analyze the efficiency of the CFIUS process. The GAO report, released last fall, identified several ways in which the CFIUS mechanism consistently failed to thoroughly examine national security issues. The Dubai ports deal exemplified several of those failings. For example, whether a foreign acquisition affects critical infrastructure is not a factor that Treasury, the Chair of CFIUS, considers in deciding whether the deal "could affect national security" such that an investigation is required. The recommendations of GAO and following the guidance of witnesses before the Financial Service's Subcommittee that I am the Ranking Member of, served as a basis of both pieces of legislation. I hope to have this legislation before the House for a vote sometime in June.

## ■ Screen 100% of airline cargo

With unscreened freight cargo being loaded aboard passenger planes on a regular basis, I joined my colleagues and the Association of Flight Attendants at LaGuardia Airport in April to demand congressional action on legislation that would require the screening of all cargo loaded aboard passenger planes.

This legislation, H.R. 4373, the Safe Skies Cargo Inspection Act, was introduced by Congressman Ed Markey from Massachusetts, but passage has for now been blocked by the leadership in Congress. The legislation will direct the Dept. of Homeland Security to establish a system to inspect all cargo shipped on passenger aircraft and require that 100% of cargo be screened by 2008.

Currently, airlines check packages through their "Known Shipper" program, which simply means that if a business has shipped over 24 times since 9/11/99 on the same carrier, their cargo can be included in passenger planes without screening. The TSA has conceded that it hasn't audited most of the known



shippers in its database. Packages weighing under a pound are not subject to the Known Shipper program. These standards simply don't prevent enough of potential threats.

## ■ Medicare Part D deadline passes

Medicare Part D continues to be a complex and confusing plan for many seniors. Before the May 15th enrollment deadline, I had been working to extend the enrollment period in order to give people more time to figure out which plan can best work for them.

Since it was not extended, I'm now working on getting the penalty removed for signing up late. Signing up now, after the deadline, triggers a 1% monthly premium increase for each month that passes, and the next time that coverage can take effect is January 2007. This means the minimum late enrollment penalty is a 7% increase in lifetime premiums. Rather than penalizing our seniors, we should be helping them find a plan without pressure and added costs. I'll keep you posted.

## ■ Development on former Con Ed site

The development of the former Con Edison Waterside Properties, on First Avenue between 35th and 41st Streets, is an incredible opportunity to create schools, parks, waterfront access and affordable housing. Currently zoned for industrial use, the site is the subject of a Department of City Planning (DCP) procedure to rezone the area and determine future development on the site.

At town hall meetings and public hearings, I've been working with local officials and Community Board 6 to urge DCP to ensure that this parcel will be developed responsibly. Unfortunately, the developer's current plan calls for buildings that would dwarf the U.N. Building while addressing few of the infrastructure challenges the development would create. A better plan would include affordable housing and public amenities such as parks, waterfront access and schools.

## ■ Lobby reform—finally?

The time is long past due for meaningful lobbying reform. In an effort to clean up the way some in Washington have been conducting business, I joined with 161 of my Democratic colleagues in introducing H.R. 4682, the "Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2006." This legislation would make several important reforms including greater public disclosure of lobbying activities, banning gifts from lobbyists, greater enforcement of lobbying restrictions, and ensuring that government contracts are awarded fairly and ethically.

## ▲ Fighting redlining in Queens

As a member of the House Financial Services Committee, I've opposed the practice of redlining, where banks refuse to service certain economically disadvantaged communities. Historically, one such community is near Queensbridge Houses in Long Island City. The largest public housing development in the nation, with more than 15,000 residents, Queensbridge's nearest bank branch is about a mile from the complex, which translates to a half-hour bus ride. I recently joined with other local officials and community leaders including Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan and Reverend Mitchell Taylor to express the urgent need for a bank in this community.



# Report to New York from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney

## ■ Plan to outsource flight attendants is grounded

Last November I led a group of 99 colleagues who urged Northwest Airlines to scuttle a plan to outsource as many as 2,600 flight attendant jobs on international flights. Aside from being bad for the American economy, there were important and unanswered security concerns. I'm happy to report that the outsourcing plan never took off: the Professional Flight Attendants Association struck a tentative collective bargaining agreement in March with Northwest in which the airline agreed to drop the outsourcing plan. For the economy and our security, this is a win-win outcome.

## ■ Implementing 9/11 Commission findings

Last December, the 9-11 Commission released a report card on the status of the implementation of its 41 recommendations. Sadly, their report card contained more F's than A's. Rep. Christopher Shays and I have introduced H.R. 5017, the "Ensuring Implementation of the 9/11 Commission Report Act," which would require the distribution of security funding based on risk, provide first responders the radio equipment they need, strengthen the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, force Congress to conduct more oversight of the intelligence community and ensure implementation of the Intelligence Reform bill that we worked so hard to pass in 2004.

## ■ National Guard members granted fair retirement credit

Last year, along with Rep. Peter King from Long Island, I reintroduced important legislation that would ensure that the members of the National Guard who served under state duty in the counties declared federal disaster areas in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks would have that service counted as federal duty for their military retirement credit.

With the help of Representative John McHugh and Senator Hillary Clinton, this legislation was included in both the House-passed version and the final conference report to the FY06 National Defense Authorization Act, which was signed into law by the President in January.

## ■ Preventing skin cancer caused by tanning beds

People who go to indoor tanning salons face a 55% increase in risk for melanoma. Yet 30 million people visit tanning salons each year and warning labels on tanning beds haven't been updated since 1985. After a constituent brought these risks to my attention, I introduced H.R.4767, the Tanning Accountability and Notification (TAN) Act along with Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite. My bill would require the FDA to re-examine labeling on tanning beds to ensure they are adequately communicating the dangers associated with indoor tanning. 50 years ago, warnings on cigarette packages said smoking may be dangerous to your health. Now they say smoking causes cancer. We don't want to wait another 50 years

to have labels that adequately warn people that tanning beds cause cancer.

## ■ Saving America's forests

There's overwhelming evidence that aggressive logging practices on federal forest land is destroying America's natural legacy. With less than 5% of our nation's virgin forests still standing, too many species of plants and animals are being pushed toward extinction.

That's why I've joined Rep. Anna Eshoo (CA) in introducing "The Act to Save America's Forests," which bans clear-cutting in all federal forests. It also ends logging in the last virgin forests and roadless areas. The bill allows limited and ecologically sustainable logging outside core forest areas—lands that have already been logged. It's my hope that this sensible legislation will ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy our nation's irreplaceable natural forest treasures.

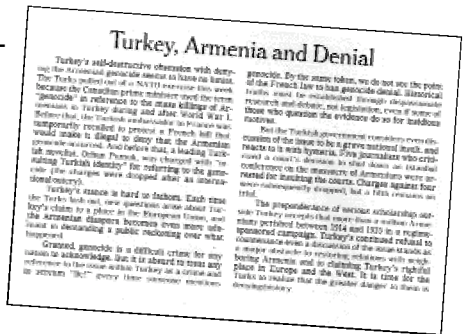
## ■ Ending sex trafficking

The exploitation of the world's young women, men, and children in sex trafficking is a human rights tragedy. To help combat it, I joined my colleague Rep. Deborah Pryce (OH) in introducing H.R. 2012, the "End Demand for Sex Trafficking Act." Among other important provisions, this legislation establishes a new federal grant program to encourage the development and implementation of demand-side strategies for the enforcement of laws against sex trafficking and requires the Attorney General to undertake a statistical review and analysis of the incidence of unlawful commercial sex nationwide every 2 years. I am pleased to report that this legislation was included in H.R. 972, the "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act" which was signed into law by the president on January 10, 2006.

While this law is another important advance in the rights of women throughout the world, we must continue to work to free those individuals whose freedoms, livelihoods, bodies, and souls are held captive because of trafficking.

## ■ Recognizing Armenian genocide

Last month, I joined the Armenian-American community at rallies in New York and Washington to observe the 91st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, in which more than 1.5 million Armenians were systematically murdered by the Young Turks, and more than 500,000 more were exiled. Sadly, many people continue to argue that the genocide was either exaggerated or never happened at all. The genocide is a matter of history, not debate. That's why I am a co-sponsor of two House resolutions (H.Con.Res.195 and H. Res. 316) to set the record straight and urge Turkey to acknowledge its responsibility for the genocide.



N.Y. Times, May 16, 2006

## Sign up for Email updates

To facilitate communication, I send periodic email updates to constituents who are interested in receiving them. If you'd like to subscribe to the email updates, please complete this form and return it to my Washington office, or visit [www.maloney.house.gov](http://www.maloney.house.gov) to sign up. By signing up you are authorizing me to send regular email updates to the email account you provide.

*Carolyn*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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What issues are most important to you?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9/11 Recovery   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education       | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Deficit | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Rights  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Policy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____     |

Due to space considerations, not all interest areas can be listed. Return to:  
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