



# Congressman Joe Sestak

YEAR IN REVIEW, 2007

Expanding access to **health care**

Strengthening our **economy**

Improving **education**

Protecting our **environment**

Ensuring our **nation's security** at home and abroad



## FROM THE DESK OF CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK

### DEAR NEIGHBOR,

As your Congressman, I am committed to delivering results on the issues you said matter most: improving education; expanding access to quality, affordable health care; strengthening our economy; protecting our environment; and ensuring our nation's security.

National security begins at home, in the health, education, and economic security of our people. Along with energy/environmental and defense security, these five pillars give us our national security.

I came to Congress to be an agent for change on your behalf. This year-in-review update includes a summary of how I am working in Congress to accomplish our goals. It is not all-inclusive, but rather reflects my approach as your Congressman — having listened to you as your Representative — and some of the results I have secured. I will continue fighting in 2008 to deliver for our district.

Government works best when their representatives and constituents work together to identify problems and create constructive solutions. As your Congressman, I am committed to making this process a reality for our district, which is why over the past months I have held a series of summits on issues facing us, listened to your suggestions and delivered results.

It is an honor to represent you in Washington. My Congressional Office belongs to you — ready to serve you in any way possible. Please do not hesitate to call or write with your questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Congressman Joe Sestak

## ADDRESSING CRITICAL, LOCAL ISSUES IN THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

### ■ Halting the FAA's Philadelphia Airspace Redesign Proposal

Ten years ago, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) began a plan to redesign Philadelphia Airport's airspace to reduce aircraft delay. Two years ago, the FAA announced its plan to redirect low flying aircraft over Delaware and Chester Counties. Taking office in January, I made stopping this proposal my number one priority:

- I first presented to Transportation Committee and Aviation Subcommittee Chairmen Oberstar and Costello, respectfully, the harmful results of the FAA plan.
- The Chairmen agreed to have the Government Accounting Office (GAO) begin investigating the flawed plan.
- Met with the Delaware County Council to coordinate litigation to delay/stop the FAA plan while the GAO conducts its investigation.
  - I recently requested the County Council file for an emergency injunction when the FAA moved to partially implement its proposal.
- With a completed GAO study, I will present Congress with evidence to convince them to stop the FAA plan, if the litigation has not succeeded.

### ■ Preventing violence in our communities

The growing violence that we witness in our region, our schools, and surrounding communities are grim reminders that we must act more urgently to stop the problem. I have met with local police, community leaders, school officials, and religious leaders and their congregations to discuss the issue. As the next step toward real progress in resolving this issue, I am hosting a forum on violence with local religious leaders who take an active role in community issues. Please join us at the following event:

**Religious Antiviolence Forum**  
**Thursday, February 21st**  
**6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**  
**Collenbrook Methodist Church**

### ■ Fixing local watershed management

Our communities face a serious threat of flooding and environmental degradation from improper watershed management, such as the disastrous 2004 flood. I am committed to bringing watershed management organizations and municipalities together to establish a comprehensive solution. I have already met with watershed management organizations and the Army Corps of Engineers to pursue a three-step plan:

- The Army Corps has been asked to conduct a Reconnaissance study to identify the problems regarding water resources in our region;
- A follow-on Feasibility Study would then be conducted to make recommendations to Congress;
- Congressional funding would be sought for the watershed management plan through the Water Resources Development Act.



## EDUCATION SECURITY:

### Greater accountability, early childhood education, and affordable access to college

#### ■ Joined the Committee on Education and Labor, and Subcommittee on Early Childhood and Secondary Education

■ Brought Washington to the district with 3 education summits with Education Full Committee Chairman George Miller and Subcommittee Chairmen Ruben Hinojosa and Dale Kildee to discuss early childhood through college education and workforce training.

#### ■ Improving early education and defraying the rising cost of college tuition:

- Expanded Head Start to tens of thousands more children
- Co-sponsored an amendment to award matching grants to states to improve pre-school programs
- Increased the maximum Pell Grant from \$4,050 to \$5,400
- Cut student loan interest rates from 6.8% to 3.4%
- Provided \$870 million in additional financial aid

#### ■ Addressing concerns of No Child Left Behind (NCLB):

- Allowing growth models that recognize progress over time, while permitting more than test scores to measure student learning and school performance
- Accurate assessment of the performance of students with disabilities with an additional \$555 million for their education
- \$1.6 billion in additional funding for NCLB



ABOVE: On Veteran's Appreciation Day, Congressman Sestak met with students at Scenic Hills Elementary School in Springfield, PA to discuss how important it is to honor our veterans for what they have done for our country.

## ECONOMIC SECURITY:

### Making small businesses a top priority in our region

#### ■ Sought and won the Vice Chairmanship on Congress' top committee overseeing small business policy

■ Brought Washington to the district with 4 economic development summits with Small Business Chairwoman Velasquez, Appropriations Chairman Murtha, and Armed Services Chairman Skelton to discuss economic revitalization, challenges facing female small business owners, and business procurement opportunities with the federal government.

#### ■ Supporting small businesses and creating new jobs:

- Drafted and passed an amendment that stops the U.S. Government from unfairly "bundling" small contracts, a practice which has kept them out of reach of small businesses
- Sponsored and passed an amendment that requires the Department of Defense to conduct a search for small businesses for contracts over \$1 million
- Enacted tax relief for small businesses and expanded access to start-up capital
- Drafted and passed the SBA Trade Programs Act to provide trade assistance to small businesses
- Drafted and passed the SBA Entrepreneurial Development Programs Act to provide grants and entrepreneurial tools to small business owners
- Co-sponsored the Veterans' Programs Act requiring the SBA to increase veteran outreach
- Co-sponsored the Women's Business Programs Act to provide financial assistance to women-owned businesses

## HEALTH SECURITY:

### Affordable, accessible and quality health care for every American

#### ■ Joined Workforce Subcommittee on Health, and Small Business Subcommittee on Health Care

■ Brought Washington to the district with 3 health care summits to discuss affordable quality health care, mental health care parity, and Veterans' health care.

#### ■ Fought for all uninsured children to have health insurance in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Act to ensure:

- 4 million more children have health insurance
- Mental health care is treated equally with physical health care
- Comprehensive coverage of dental care
- Congressman Sestak also co-sponsored the "Conquering Childhood Cancer" Act and the "Childhood Nutrition Promotion" Act

#### ■ Expanding access to affordable, quality health care for seniors, veterans, and working families:

- Supported the CHAMP Act which eliminates payments and co-payments for preventive services as well as the financial penalty for seniors who enroll late in Medicare D
- Sponsored a bill to cut costs to Medicare prescription drugs through direct negotiation by the U.S. government
- Co-sponsored a bill for parity in treatment of mental health
- Expanded federal funding for life-saving embryonic stem cell research
- Supported legislation to extend COBRA health coverage for displaced workers
- Supported increased funding of \$650 million for breast cancer treatment
- Worked to increase funding for disease research, including \$29.4 billion for the National Institutes of Health for research grants
- Supported a \$4.4 billion increase over last year in veterans' medical care
- Provided grants to improve veterans' access to trauma care systems
- Passed legislation to improve mental health care for our wounded soldiers

## DEFENSE SECURITY:

### Promoting a redeployment of troops from Iraq – while ensuring peace and prosperity at home and abroad

#### ■ Joined Armed Services Committee and Subcommittees on Seapower; Air and Land Forces; and Oversight

#### ■ Addressing the Iraq Crisis through legislation for redeployment:

- Voted for a date certain for redeploying out of Iraq
- Visited Iraq with Senator Chuck Hagel to assess a "way ahead"
- Submitted legislation for a bipartisan approach to ending the war in Iraq by a deliberate redeployment and a regional diplomatic approach that protects our troops and leaves a stable Iraq

#### ■ Protecting the troops bravely serving our nation, keeping America's promise to our Veterans:

- Provided \$1.2 billion for personal body armor and \$4.1 billion for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles, which will reduce the casualties in vehicles by as much as 80%
- Provided a 3.5% pay raise for all service members
- Increased funding for homeland security to \$33.7 billion, supporting first responders and other security forces on the front lines against terrorism
- Supported funding for an additional 50,000 police officers over the next six years
- Increased Veterans' program funding by \$12 billion



ABOVE: Congressman Sestak commends First Responders at the Tinicum Township Firehouse Ribbon Cutting, Essington, PA.

## ENERGY/ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:

### PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS

#### ■ Forging a new direction for energy independence and efficient use

Passed HR 3221, which breaks new ground for energy efficiency while creating economic growth:

- Utility companies must produce 15% of their electricity through renewable energy resources by 2020; new efficiency standards set for appliances, lighting, and buildings; and greenhouse gas emissions will be (net) eliminated by all federal agencies by 2050.
- Small businesses in the renewable fuel investment sector will be given SBA loan guarantees. Congressman Sestak also included a provision in the bill to authorize grants for small business centers to provide assistance for investing in energy-efficient technologies.
- Appropriated increased funds for research into climate change, sustainable energy sources and alternative fuels, including: affordable solar energy; biofuels; net-zero energy use in homes; and geothermal energy.

#### ■ Promoting tax incentives for clean energy and conservation

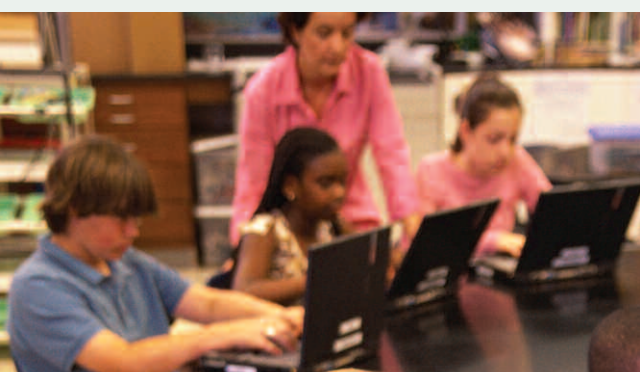
- Authorized \$8 billion in new tax-credit bonds to encourage energy efficiency in residential property, conservation efforts and production of "clean" energy
- Provided \$16.1 billion in tax incentives for energy conservation, which is paid for by reducing current tax benefits for oil and gas companies, leading to increased revenue of \$7 billion. The incentives are given for such conservation mechanisms as solar energy and fuel cells, plug-in hybrid vehicles, energy efficient properties and appliances, and electricity from renewable sources

#### ■ Making energy conservation a top Congressional priority

- Co-sponsored an act that creates fuel economy standard of 35 mpg by 2018


Congressman Sestak co-sponsored the following key bills now before Congress:

- [HR 1590 Safe Climate Act](#) – which reduces greenhouse gases by 2% each year from 2010-2050
- [HR 1576 Open Space/Conservation Tax Deduction](#) – which makes tax incentives permanent for open space/conservation contributions

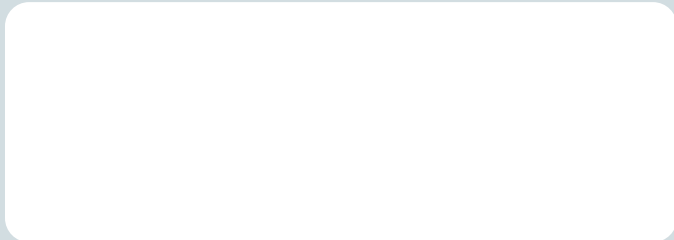


CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK:  
DELIVERING RESULTS FOR THE 7TH DISTRICT

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## CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK: HERE FOR YOU!

If you have a question or issue, or would like to share your opinion, please feel free to contact or visit the Washington, D.C. Office or District Office in Media.

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## First Responders Grants and Appropriations Information Session

Hosted by Congressman Joe Sestak

Tuesday, February 5th

6:00 – 9:00 pm

Brookhaven Borough Hall

*Officials from the Emergency Management Agency and the Departments of Homeland Security, Health, and Justice will join Congressman Sestak to explain the grants and appropriations processes and answer questions about how local first responders can improve their chances of receiving federal and state funding support. Representatives from fire, police, EMS, and other first responder organizations are encouraged to attend.*

### Interested in a 7th Congressional District Internship?

*Congressman Joe Sestak's District Office is accepting applicants for Intern positions. Responsibilities include constituent services, community outreach, research, office reception, and writing projects. In addition, interns will attend various meetings and events. Candidates should possess a passion for good government, oral and written communication skills, and the desire to effect change at the individual, local and national level. The environment is fast-paced, but hours are flexible and will be shaped to complement your study, work, and social requirements. Please visit my website for an application.*

VISIT MY WEBSITE: [WWW.SESESTAK.HOUSE.GOV](http://WWW.SESESTAK.HOUSE.GOV)