



Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano's

Spring 2010

Community Newsletter

Representing California's 38th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives

Napolitano Partners Community Job Fair with Food Bank

(Pico Rivera, CA) – On Oct. 24, residents gathered at El Rancho high school to participate in a job fair and food distribution hosted by Rep. Napolitano's office in conjunction with the City of Pico Rivera. California EDD (Norwalk), U.S. Census, CA Highway Patrol, L.A. County, the IRS, the American GI Forum and the Veteran's Administration helped to round up various private employers and government resources for the unemployed, especially for veterans and their families. Services such as free haircuts and advice on resumes were also available. The job fair took place alongside a food distribution from non-profit Hearts of Compassion to provide jobs and groceries for families in need.

"This is what an event should look like, when all the partners come together," Napolitano said. "Your taxes pay for agency resources, so use them, hold us accountable."

"It's interesting to see how everyone here is helped," said Antonio Cardenas, a resident of Santa Fe Springs.

"We were grateful to have so many employers on hand willing to interview people for jobs," said Ben Cardenas, Napolitano's District Director.



Rep. Napolitano thanks representatives from organizations that participated in the community job fair she hosted

"The number of people that are here, what they have said to me, tells me that there is much more that remains to be done," Napolitano said. "We must do everything we can to create new jobs in our community."

Napolitano, Congressional Staff Meet with Constituents

In February, Rep. Napolitano and all her staff met with constituents. "By understanding our constituents and their culture, we are more able to understand their needs," Napolitano said. Some of the stops included meetings with:

- Hsi Lai Temple with Hacienda Heights community leaders
- Pomona City Council at renovated Fox Theater
- Norwalk regarding Census 2010, stimulus funding, and new water development
- State Juvenile Correction in Norwalk to learn about youth correctional programs
- Lake Center Middle School in Santa Fe Springs with students, parent, and school counselors
- Metro Headquarters in L.A. about Gold Line extension
- Veterans Clinics in East L.A. & Santa Fe Springs



Rep. Napolitano and her staff discuss education issues at the Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda Heights

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

On June 2, 2009, the House of Representatives passed Congresswoman Napolitano's resolution to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month. Many government agencies and nonprofits will work in May to draw attention to mental health issues, eliminate stigma surrounding mental health, and promote ways to help the 57 million Americans that suffer from mental health issues, including youth, wounded warriors, and other members of the community who need assistance to lead productive lives. Napolitano's proposed **Mental Health in Schools Act**, H.R. 2531, which seeks to expand a successful mental health program currently operating in 8 schools in the 38th district on a competitive basis to 200 schools across the nation, would catch mental health problems early and keep children healthy and in school. For more information, visit www.napolitano.gov/mhcaucus.

House Legislation to Create Jobs

In December, the House passed the Jobs for Main Street Act (H.R. 2847), which uses returned-loan-dollars from large banks to reinvest in creating jobs. The bill includes:

- \$48 billion to create jobs building highways, schools, water treatment facilities and affordable housing
- \$27 billion to create/save jobs for teachers, police, and firefighters
- Increased SBA loans to small businesses
- Unemployment benefits extended for an additional seven months, COBRA health insurance extended for the unemployed, low-income families would be eligible for Child Tax Credit worth \$1,000 per child

The bill must now be combined with the Senate version before being signed into law. To learn more, visit www.speaker.gov and click on "Current Legislation."

Stimulus Money Saves Jobs in Local Schools



Napolitano meets with teachers at Bassett Unified to discuss education issues

38th Congressional District schools have received stimulus money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), signed into law February 17, 2009. The one-time stimulus funds were distributed throughout the year and prevented the loss of hundreds of jobs in education.

“The money [\$21 million] from the federal government was wonderful, and it allowed us to save more than 180 jobs,” said Cheryl Plotkin from Montebello United School District.

“Because of the state’s fiscal woes, it’s been very gratifying to see the federal government step in and help,” said Gary Matsumoto at Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District. “We used \$5.7 million of \$15 million to save 77 jobs that otherwise would have been cut by the state.”

“Before, we were on the verge of losing 200 teachers,” said

Tim McGillivray from Pomona Unified. “With the stimulus funding [\$20 million], we were able to keep all of our teachers for another year.”

“Without this funding [\$16 million], many teaching positions would have been gone, class sizes would have gone up and programs would have been cut across LA county,” said Superintendent Dr. Darline Robles from Los Angeles County.

In total, \$132,948,221 was used to keep staff on payroll and maintain educational programs for local students in districts including Norwalk-La Mirada, Rowland Heights, El Rancho and others.

“This federal aid has kept good-paying jobs in our district at a time when we need them, but it is not enough,” Napolitano said. “We must all keep fighting for education dollars for our children.” For more details, visit www.recovery.gov

Gov. Agencies Now Hiring Vets

Federal agencies are again giving preference for government jobs to honorably discharged military veterans. Also, if a veteran is deceased or ineligible for federal employment, their spouse or mother may receive that veteran’s preference instead. To learn more, visit www.fedshirevets.gov

Health Care Reform: Where We Are Now

On November 7, 2009, the House passed the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962), which included a public option. The House and Senate must now work to agree on one final version before the president can sign it into law. Napolitano remains committed to the goals of health care reform:

- **Helping the uninsured.** 27% percent of people in the 38th Congressional District have no health insurance. The bill would cover approximately 121,000 people in the 38th District and help prevent over 1,100 bankruptcies yearly due to expensive medical costs.
- **Lower costs for small businesses.** Tax credits would be available for small businesses to make insurance more affordable and certain small business owners would be able to collectively bargain for lower rates much like large businesses.
- **Supporting Seniors.** 7,500 low-income seniors in the 38th District are caught in the Medicare Part D “**donut hole**,” a gap in coverage that forces them to pay out of pocket for expensive drugs. H.R. 3962 would close the “donut hole” and cover all drug costs under Medicare.

- **Mental Health Care.** Mental health care is included as an essential part of coverage and encourages health insurance companies to help those at risk for suicide or serious mental illness.

“This is the health care reform bill Americans elected us to pass,” Napolitano said. “It has taken years of research, deliberation, consideration, and the efforts of seven presidents, and we are finally addressing this country’s health care problem.”

For more information, visit www.speaker.gov and click on “Current Legislation.”

New Help with Prescription Drugs

Many seniors on Medicare can now qualify for an average of **\$3,900** in extra help with prescription drug costs. Seniors must be on Medicare and have limited income-and-resources (houses and cars no longer count as income-and-resources) in order to qualify for assistance. Learn more at www.socialsecurity.gov.

U.S. Census Offers Temporary Jobs

The U.S. Census Bureau is recruiting Census takers for good paying jobs this spring. Census takers would work close to home and help their communities receive additional federal money. Facts:

- Ten question mailer arrives in March - take 10 minutes to answer and send it back immediately (see [article across for questions](#))
 - Information given to Census takers is completely confidential for 72 years and it is against the law to share it with any agency
 - The more people are counted, the more money our cities receive from the federal government for schools, roads, hospitals, and other critical services for the next 10 years
 - Communities lose up to \$1,300 per year for each uncounted person
 - The count determines how much government representation the community will receive
 - Census takers go door-to-door to talk to those that did not reply
- To apply, call 1-866-861-2010 or visit www.2010censusjobs.gov**



Rep. Napolitano discusses the importance of the 2010 Census in East Los Angeles.

Stimulus Funds Norwalk Projects

\$400,000 of stimulus money was used to repave Front Street from San Antonio Drive to Rosecrans Avenue, creating 12 construction jobs from January to February 2010. Also, \$2,086,000 of stimulus money will be used to repair Studebaker Road from Imperial Highway to Alondra Boulevard, creating 20 construction jobs starting this month.

“Thanks to the stimulus funding received for street improvements, we were able to move forward on these needed street resurfacing projects,” said Ernie Garcia, City Manager for Norwalk. “This funding was critical to Norwalk. It not only made these projects possible, it created needed construction jobs.” Additionally, Norwalk has \$935,700 it will soon be using to improve the energy efficiency of city buildings, including new roofs and lighting.

In total, more than \$160 million in stimulus funds have gone out to projects in the 38th District, including school districts, city governments, businesses, and nonprofits. The federal government still has 41% of stimulus funds to distribute, so future funding for local projects is expected. For more information visit www.recovery.gov.



Norwalk used stimulus funding to repave Front Street

Acting for Veterans' Mental Health

Starting in March, 10,000 troops per month will be returning home, many suffering from mental health issues like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI).

Napolitano, Co-Chair of the Mental Health Caucus, has called a meeting in Washington with fellow Caucus Members and representatives from all branches of the US military to help ensure mental health resources will be available to our service members and their families. This meeting will promote effective communication between military agencies and the state and local mental health professionals that provide services to our troops.

Napolitano will continue to consult with her 38th District Mental Health Consortium on how local services can be readied to provide for wounded warriors. The Consortium includes local mental health professionals and veterans who have advised her on state and local mental health needs since 1999 and shaped legislation like H.R. 2531, the Mental Health in Schools Act. Members of the mental health community, service members and veterans who are interested in joining the Mental Health Consortium should call (562) 801-2134.



Rep. Napolitano examines a hyperbaric chamber used in her district to treat veterans with PTSD and TBI

Bringing Funding to the District

Appropriations brought to the 38th District for 2010:

- \$ 300,000 Training equipment for Rio Hondo College
- \$ 500,000 Mental health services & suicide prevention by Pacific Clinics (nonprofit)
- \$1,200,000 Upgrade Cal Poly's Aerospace Propulsion lab
- \$ 550,000 Upgrade South Montebello Irrigation District
- \$ 200,000 Legal services for 250 L.A. county foster children
- \$ 150,000 Education for La Puente preschoolers
- \$ 200,000 Support for young children with mental health needs by Foothill Family Services
- \$ 350,000 Pomona Fairplex Trade and Conf. Center
- \$4,000,000 Aeros Inc. in Montebello for defense research
- \$3,500,000 San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority to

- continue groundwater cleanup
 - \$ 500,000 Transit center & parking for Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs
 - \$ 300,000 Expand SR-71 to reduce traffic in Pomona
 - \$ 134,000 Whittier Narrows Dam safety study and increased water supply
 - \$ 72,000 New hybrid buses for Montebello
 - \$ 24,000 New hybrid buses for Norwalk
 - \$ 693,000 Agricultural programs at CSU incl. Pomona
- Requests from organizations with a commitment to providing services are reviewed and submitted to the Appropriations Committee for competitive evaluation. Approximately 10% are funded. Visit www.napolitano.house.gov and go to “Federal Funding Requests.”

Preview of 2010 Census Questions:

1. How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2010? [write number]
 2. Were there any additional people staying here on April 1, 2010 that you did not include in Question 1? [check children, relatives, nonrelatives, people staying temporarily, or no additional people]
 3. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home – [check one: Owned by someone in the house with a mortgage or loan, owned by someone in the household without a mortgage or loan, rented, or occupied without payment or rent]
 4. What is your telephone number? [write phone number]
 5. First and last name [next six questions filled out for each person in the house]
 6. What is this person's sex? [check male or female]
 7. What is this person's age on April 1, 2010 and date of birth? [write date]
 8. Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? [check Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, other Latino, or not Latino or Hispanic]
 9. What is this person's race? [check one or more boxes, white, black, American Indian]
 10. Does this person sometimes live or stay somewhere else? [check college housing, military, second home, child custody, jail or prison, in a nursing home, other, or person does not stay somewhere else]
- Caution: The Census only asks these ten questions. Do not answer anyone asking for citizenship status, social security numbers, or any other information.**

Updates from Congress

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Napolitano's Office Helps Woman Prove Citizenship

Pico Rivera resident Carmen De La Rosa attempted to obtain a passport, but was denied as the passport agency could not confirm her citizenship status. De La Rosa, born in New Mexico in 1942, has lived in the U.S. her entire life, has a drivers license, owns a home, pays her taxes, votes in elections and has a social security card. However, because she was born at home (with no hospital records) and her birth certificate was issued in 1957, it was not acceptable as proof of citizenship. Caseworker Espejel assisted with communication between De La Rosa and the passport agency. De La Rosa worked to secure additional personal documents to prove her citizenship, including a baptismal certificate, census records, school records and a deed showing her parents owned property in the U.S. With this new information and communication, the L.A. Passport Agency was finally able to issue her U.S. passport. For assistance with federal agencies, call **(562) 801-2134**. For passports, first visit www.state.gov or call 1-877-487-2778.



Rep. Napolitano meets with Carmen De La Rosa and caseworker Steven Espejel to discuss the passport process

Constituent Services Guide

Call our office at **(562) 801-2134** for info on:

- **Academy Nominations:** Students interested in an appointment to U.S. military academies should contact us their freshman year of high school or as soon as possible.
- **Flags:** Purchase an American Flag flown over the U.S. Capitol, on a specific day, if given two weeks notice.
- **Immigration/Naturalization:** Assistance with visas, work permits, legal residency and naturalization.
- **IRS:** Help with difficult tax problems and obtaining copies of old tax returns.
- **Military:** Assist active personnel with hardship discharge, extension of leave, compassionate reassignment, and medals.
- **Passports:** Expediting the passport process.
- **Presidential Greetings:** Presidential greetings for your event must be requested at least one month prior.
- **Seniors:** Assistance with Medicare, Social Security, disability, and Supplemental Security Income issues.
- **Small Business:** Guidance with SBA loans, government contract opportunities, seminars and information.
- **Veterans:** Information about VA hospitals, pensions, benefits, education, home loans and military records.
- **Tours:** Help plan your trip to the Capitol. **Call at least 6 weeks in advance, 6 months if you would like a tour of the White House.**
- **Workers' Comp:** Assist federal employees or individuals with their benefits claims from the Office of Workers' Compensation Program.

NEW CREDIT CARD RULES

H.R. 627, the Credit CARD Act is in effect for 2010 and outlaws unfair credit card company practices:

- Credit card companies must now use easy-to-understand language on contracts and statements.
- Companies must give you 21 days to pay your bill and cannot move deadlines to fine you with high late fees.
- 45 day warning required for interest rate hikes.
- When you pay back debt, credit card companies must pay back the debt with the highest interest rate first.
- You must be informed and consent to credit card over-limit fees before you sign up.
- Gift cards must be good for at least five years.

For more information, visit www.federalreserve.gov/consumerinfo/wyntk/creditcardrules.htm

Coming Events

- **April - High School Art Contest**
- **May - Job Fair with Norwalk and the CA Employment Development Department**
- **May - Women of the Year Award**
- **June - Housing Clinic**
- **September - Immigration Fair**
- **October - Military Academy Day**

Visit www.napolitano.house.gov/district/events for more info and updates