



CONGRESSMAN CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

Dear Friend,

As I write, the nation continues to wrestle with the crisis in the Gulf of Mexico that has resulted from the explosion at BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig. The Congress will do everything necessary to support the Administration's efforts to stop the leak, address the environmental consequences, and hold those responsible accountable.

The Gulf oil spill is the most recent in a series of major challenges our nation has faced since President Obama took office. Seventeen months ago, the President and the new Congress confronted a Great Recession at home and two wars abroad. The first order of business was the enactment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other measures to stop the economic freefall, restore consumer confidence, and strengthen incentives for businesses to put people back to work. Those efforts are bearing fruit. Today, the economy is growing, trillions of dollars in lost retirement savings and other wealth have been restored, and we are experiencing improved job growth.

We still have significant work ahead of us. First and foremost, we cannot rest until more Americans are back to work. That is why we are focused on additional steps to spur investment in small businesses and expand access to credit. A strategy for long-term sustainable growth must include implementation of a bold national clean energy agenda, greater emphasis on quality education, and a credible plan to reduce our deficits and debt in a steady, predictable manner. The establishment of the Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform and the recent reenactment of the "pay-as-you-go" law—which helped generate budget surpluses until it was allowed to lapse in 2001—were two important steps.

As we build a new economic foundation at home, we must also meet a host of national security challenges—including increased tensions on the Korean peninsula, the challenge posed by Iran's nuclear program, and the continuing threat of terrorist attacks against the United States and our allies—especially from al-Qaeda's operational nerve center along the Afghan-Pakistan border. Even as America's combat mission in Iraq ends this August, we will continue to face difficult issues in Iraq and across the globe. We must remain committed to working with our friends and allies to address these challenges and advance solutions that undermine extremists and lay the foundation for peace and prosperity.

Throughout our history, the United States has rallied to overcome obstacles and meet the test of the times. I am confident that, with the help of an engaged citizenry, we will do so in the months ahead.

It is a great privilege to represent our community in Congress.

Sincerely,

Congressman Chris Van Hollen  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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Congressman Van Hollen presents James "Pat" Daugherty, a constituent, with a *Congressional Record* statement honoring his lifetime of accomplishments. Mr. Daugherty served as a member of the Buffalo Soldiers in World War II, the last racially segregated unit in the U.S. Armed Forces.

## Contact Congressman Chris Van Hollen

With Your Questions or Concerns at One of These Three Offices

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# A Community Update from

## Congressman Chris Van Hollen



Congressman Van Hollen delivers remarks at an Earth Day event on the National Mall on April 25, 2010.

# CONGRESSMAN CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

## QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE\*

Congressman Van Hollen helped enact historic health care reform to ensure that all Americans have access to quality, affordable care.

By the end of this year, this legislation will:

- Allow young people to stay on their parents' health insurance until age 26 if no other coverage is available
- Prevent insurance companies from denying coverage to children with pre-existing conditions, and by 2014 will end this unfair practice for all Americans
- Prevent insurance companies from denying care when the patient needs it most
- Ban lifetime coverage limits and regulate annual coverage limits
- Give a \$250 rebate to Medicare beneficiaries who hit the prescription drug "donut hole" in 2010, ultimately eliminating the hole by 2020
- Provide significant tax credits to qualified small businesses to make employee coverage more affordable

In the long-term, this legislation:

- Puts individuals and doctors, not health insurance companies, in charge of health care decisions
- Reduces premiums and out-of-pocket costs to make insurance affordable for middle-class families and small business owners
- Creates a new competitive health insurance market that lowers costs and increases choice
- Improves Medicare for seniors by providing free preventive care
- According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, reduces the deficit by \$1.3 trillion over the next 20 years
- Provides coverage to an additional 32 million citizens who otherwise would show up in emergency rooms and continue to drive up premiums and burden taxpayers
- Establishes incentives for healthier lifestyles, preventive care, and improved coordination of care

## WALL STREET ACCOUNTABILITY

Congressman Van Hollen supports a comprehensive approach to rein in systemic risk and establish greater transparency, accountability, and oversight in our financial system. He is fighting for legislation that:

- Prevents taxpayer-funded bailouts and ensures that Wall Street will pay the price when large financial firms fail
- Creates an early warning system to prevent excessive financial risk-taking that threatens the stability of our entire economy
- Provides consumers with easy-to-understand information and protects them from hidden fees, abusive terms, and deceptive practices
- Gives shareholders a say in executive compensation, including bonuses and golden parachutes
- Protects investors by creating new rules for transparency and accountability
- Enforces regulations on the books by empowering regulators to punish fraud, abuse, and manipulation that hurt American families and businesses

Congressman Van Hollen visits the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department to announce federal funding for equipment and recruitment efforts.

\*Information compiled from the House Committees on Education and Labor, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means

# "We are working to address the serious challenges confronting our community and our country"



Congressman Van Hollen meets with constituents as part of their effort to raise awareness about improving road safety.

## CLEAN ENERGY

In the wake of the BP oil spill, Congressman Van Hollen has been a leading voice for accountability in the Gulf and for redoubling our national commitment to America's clean energy economy. Specifically, Congressman Van Hollen:

- Has called for an immediate moratorium on new deepwater drilling permits until a comprehensive overhaul of safety and environmental operating requirements has been accomplished
- Supports increasing the per barrel fee that funds the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund and has co-sponsored legislation to make sure the oil industry—not the taxpayer—is responsible for making injured parties whole

Congressman Van Hollen believes the Deepwater Horizon disaster further underscores the need to move America towards a sustainable clean energy economy.

- Congressman Van Hollen's innovative Green Bank proposal was included in the House-passed American Clean Energy and Security Act
- Congressman Van Hollen has championed robust incentives for energy efficiency and for the manufacture and deployment of clean energy technologies that will protect our environment, strengthen our national security, and create millions of good-paying green-collar jobs

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Congressman Van Hollen disagrees with the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which allows corporations to spend unlimited funds to influence elections. This decision threatens to drown out the voices of American citizens, allowing big-money special interests to deceive voters and dominate political discourse. Congressman Van Hollen believes the most important thing we can do in response to this ruling is ensure transparency and allow people to "follow the money" that is influencing elections and politicians in Washington. He has introduced the bipartisan DISCLOSE Act to achieve that goal.

The bipartisan legislation will:

- Increase transparency and disclosure in the election process, requiring heads of organizations to "stand by their ad" in the same way candidates do and ensuring that powerful special interests will not be able to hide behind sham organizations and dummy corporations
- Prevent foreign companies—including those owned by hostile foreign governments—from spending millions to influence America's elections
- Ensure that entities that receive large amounts of taxpayer money—including major federal contractors and TARP recipients—can't turn around and spend that money to influence elections

## COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Congressman Van Hollen helped pass historic student loan reform, which boosted funds for college loans and assistance by eliminating taxpayer subsidies to banks. As families are struggling to meet rising tuition costs, this legislation builds on previous efforts to expand educational opportunities so Americans can compete in the global economy. The new legislation:

- Expands the direct loan program to ensure reliable access to student loans
- Ties the maximum Pell grant to the Consumer Price Index so that federal aid stays in line with the real costs of attending college
- Invests \$750 million to bolster college access and completion support for students
- Funds a \$2 billion competitive grant program for community colleges to develop and improve educational and career training programs

## VETERANS ISSUES

Congressman Van Hollen recognizes the immense sacrifice made by the men and women serving in the Armed Forces, as well as their families. He believes we must make sure our troops and our veterans have the support they need both on the battlefield and back at home. He has supported landmark budget increases, providing an additional \$23 billion to help our veterans receive health care and other benefits that they deserve and have earned with their service to our country.

Congressman Van Hollen also pushed for the recent enactment of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, which:

- Strengthens the caregiver network for wounded soldiers returning home
- Expands services for the 1.8 million women currently in the Veterans Administration system
- Improves mental health care services, recognizing that issues of suicide and mental health continue to be among the most difficult challenges confronting our veterans' health system

Congressman Van Hollen discusses the needs of veterans and thanks them for their service during a visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center to meet with wounded warriors.



For more information, visit [vanhollen.house.gov](http://vanhollen.house.gov)