

# Washington UPDATE

PROUDLY SERVING CALIFORNIA'S 9TH DISTRICT

SUMMER 2010



## COMMUNITY OFFICE HOURS

### OAKLAND

Mon - Fri: 9am – 5pm  
District Office  
1301 Clay St., Ste 1000-N  
Oakland

### FRUITVALE

1st and 3rd Thursday  
2:30pm – 5pm  
Spanish Speaking Citizens  
Foundation  
1475 Fruitvale Avenue  
Oakland

### CASTRO VALLEY

Tuesday: 2pm – 5pm  
Castro Valley Library  
600 Norbridge Avenue  
Castro Valley

We are here to help you with any federally related issue, such as: Social Security, immigration, veteran's benefits, IRS, Medicare, school loans, etc.



Dear Friend,

Over the past year, the 111th Congress has worked closely with President Barack Obama to address a number of vital issues facing our nation.

Congress began the year focused on passing health care reform. It took the commitment of our President Obama and Congressional leadership to fight the insurance industry and demand that all people have greater access to health care.

While I would have preferred Congress adopt a single payer system or at least a public option, this legislation was a historic step in the right direction.

I continue to work with my colleagues to turn our economy around, create good jobs and put people back to work. We are seeing the benefits of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which has given a much needed economic boost to our country.

But we must do more. I have been working with my colleagues to develop real policy solutions to directly create jobs and respond to the needs of the chronically unemployed and underemployed as well as populations living in poverty. These solutions include the Local Jobs for America Act which I helped to shape, and would create or save one million jobs, provide targeted support for communities most in need and critical on the job training.

Working together, I am confident that we can provide greater opportunities for all people and put our country back to work.

*Barbara Lee*

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress (CA-09)

## ENDING THE WARS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

This year marks the seventh year of the war in Iraq and the ninth year of the war in Afghanistan. As we continue pushing toward withdrawal from Iraq, I am also working to end the war in Afghanistan.

These wars have directly cost us more than \$1 trillion\*. As we watch an increasing number of lives lost abroad and jobs lost at home, it is clear that we cannot accept a policy of open-ended war without accepting a less prosperous and secure country for ourselves and future generations.

Recently, I offered an amendment to the FY10 Supplemental Appropriations package to prevent an escalation and begin to responsibly end the war by limiting funding to the safe and orderly withdrawal of our troops and military contractors from Afghanistan. Additionally, I plan to introduce legislation for Congress to repeal the "Authorization for the Use of Military Force" over a six month period and restore its Constitutional prerogative in determining and defining the commitments of our country while at war. Enough is enough. We must begin to correct the mistake that was made nearly a decade ago and end the war in Afghanistan.

\* Source: www.CRS.gov



*Congresswoman Barbara Lee traveled with a Congressional delegation to Haiti to examine recovery efforts following the devastating earthquake on January 12. Here she discusses relief efforts with USAID workers.*

# HEALTH CARE REFORM

This spring, Congress and the President made history by enacting comprehensive health care reform that guarantees affordable, quality coverage for all.

The Affordable Care Act is estimated to extend health insurance coverage to 32 million additional Americans. More than 94 percent of Americans will be insured. It provides security to those who already have coverage, and helps lower costs for individuals and families. The law reduces the deficit by \$143 billion over the next 10 years, and reduces the deficit by \$1.2 trillion over the following 10 years.

## WHAT DOES HEALTH CARE REFORM DO FOR ME?

### ...if I have coverage through my job?

You will see some immediate benefits such as being able to add an adult child up to the age of 26 onto your policy. In addition, when the Health Insurance Exchanges are put in place in 2014, new employer-sponsored plans need to meet certain standards, which will include limits on how much an employee can pay in out-of-pocket costs. With a reformed health insurance marketplace, if you lose your job or you decide to leave it, you will be able to obtain affordable coverage in the Exchanges with financial help if you need it.

### ...if I buy insurance on my own?

Starting in 2014, you will have access to the Health Insurance Exchanges, competitive marketplaces where you can comparison shop for affordable coverage. Individuals and small businesses will be able to pool their buying power and get more competitive rates. Depending on your income, you will have access to tax credits to help you afford coverage in the Exchanges.

### ...if I've been denied insurance for a pre-existing condition?

By September of this year, you'll be able to access high-risk pools that will give many people with a pre-existing condition access to purchase coverage. Insurance companies will be prohibited from discriminating against children with pre-existing conditions. Once the Exchanges are set up in 2014,

insurance companies will be prohibited from refusing to insure people who have had cancer, heart disease, diabetes, or another pre-existing condition.

### ...if I'm on Medicare?

Seniors and people with disabilities will continue to receive high-quality, affordable care through the Medicare program. Health care reform will include improvements to the program, such as closing the "donut hole" coverage gap for prescription drugs and eliminating cost-sharing for preventive benefits.

### ...if I'm on Medicaid?

Medicaid helps more than 60 million low-income Americans have access to health care. Medicaid will continue to provide that coverage, and in 2014 will be extended to anyone with an income below 133 percent of the poverty level, or about \$29,000 for a family of four. To address concerns about the availability of doctors to treat Medicaid beneficiaries, the law will also improve Medicaid payments to primary care physicians for primary care services.

### ...if I'm a small business owner?

Starting immediately, health care reform provides \$40 billion in tax credits for small businesses to help them offer employee health insurance coverage. More than 60 percent of small employers, or more than 4 million firms, will be eligible for these credits. Once the Exchanges open up, small businesses and their employees can pool their buying power and have access to the same quality plans only available to large firms today.

### ... if I have TRICARE, TRICARE for Life or Veterans' health Care?

Enrollees in these programs can rest assured that health care reform has no negative impacts for them. The health care programs for both the military and our veterans all meet the requirements of the health care reform law that calls for every American to be insured with at least a minimum quality of coverage.



»»»  
*Congresswoman Lee and Valerie Jarrett join Jane Garcia, CEO of the San Antonio Neighborhood Health Center during a tour highlighting the use of Recovery Act funds.*

## CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE AND VALERIE JARRETT TOUR SAN ANTONIO NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTER

Earlier this year Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Valerie Jarrett – Senior Advisor and Assistant to President Barack Obama for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement – toured the San Antonio Neighborhood Health Center in Oakland.

Congresswoman Lee fought to ensure \$11 billion\* in funding for community health centers in the ARRA legislation. ARRA funds received by the San Antonio Neighborhood Health Center are being used for staffing and training.

\* Source: [www.Recovery.gov](http://www.Recovery.gov)

\* Source: [www.HealthCare.gov](http://www.HealthCare.gov)



# REBUILDING OUR ECONOMY

**THE** 111th Congress took swift action to help boost our economy by passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The recovery package is not only improving our economy nationally, but is helping to save and create jobs locally throughout the East Bay area. To date, California's 9th Congressional District is the third highest District recipient in the state, having received a total of over \$1.9 billion in ARRA funding, with over 1,100 jobs saved or created.

This funding is helping lay a foundation for the East Bay community to actively participate in job creation, economic growth and the overall recovery of this nation.

## ► HOUSING

Alameda County received \$11 million in funding as part of \$2 billion in Recovery Act funding to states, local governments and non-profit housing developers, under HUD's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), to spur economic development in hard-hit communities and create jobs.

## ► TRANSPORTATION

The State of California received over \$2.3 billion for the California High-Speed Passenger Rail System, of which \$23 million will go to support the Oakland to Sacramento corridor of the project. These dollars represent an historic investment in the country's transportation infrastructure, which will help create jobs and transform travel in California and throughout the country.



***Congresswoman Lee joins Alameda County Librarian Jean Hofacket at the Castro Valley Library to view how recovery Act dollars are being spent in California's 9th Congressional District during her Economic Recovery Bus Tour.***

## ► PUBLIC SAFETY

The cities of Emeryville and Oakland received \$913,576 and \$19,747,117 respectively through the COPS program to help increase their number of officers.

## ► EDUCATION

The Oakland-based Spanish Speaking Unity Council received over \$1 million to expand their Early Head Start program.

## ► THE ARTS

The Berkeley Repertory Theater, Crucible and the National Federation of Community Broadcasters each received \$50,000 for arts programs.

\*Source: [www.Recovery.gov](http://www.Recovery.gov)



## FIGHTING FOR REAL COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

"One out of nine people in our nation is an immigrant. If we took into account second-generation immigrants that number would be even higher. Comprehensive immigration reform is not about some "other" group of people it is about all of us. It is about the millions of men, women and children living in the shadows who need to be fully incorporated into our system. Our country is founded upon the dream of liberty and opportunity. These are the dreams of our founders and it is the same dream that brings so many people today. We must work to ensure passage of comprehensive immigration reform legislation this Congress."

— BARBARA LEE



***In October of last year Congresswoman Barbara Lee convened a roundtable meeting with U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis and a small group of local civic, community, education, labor and business leaders to discuss green job creation, the emerging green economy, workforce, education and healthcare reform in the Ninth Congressional District.***



CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE  
1301 Clay Street, Suite 1000-N  
Oakland • California • 94612

www.lee.house.gov  
Oakland: (510) 763-0370  
Washington DC: (202) 225-2661

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*Barbara Lee*

M.C.  
PRESORTED STANDARD

### VISIT MY WEBSITE!

Please take a moment to visit [lee.house.gov](http://lee.house.gov). Don't forget to sign up for the E-Newsletter - LeeMail, to receive timely updates on upcoming events and more.



Connect with Congresswoman Barbara Lee on:  
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YouTube: [www.youtube.com/replee](http://www.youtube.com/replee)

# SEEKING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE HOLDING BIG OIL ACCOUNTABLE



The ongoing BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is a sad and painful reminder of the urgent need for our nation to develop and implement just climate change policies, alternative energy solutions and strengthen environmental justice efforts.

Our nation must reverse trends of environmental degradation by incentivizing truly clean and renewable energy options and securing America's world leadership in the new Green economy. It is time for the Congress to push forward on comprehensive energy legislation so that we can move aggressively toward a greener future and ensure an environmental tragedy such as the BP oil spill never occurs again.

An environmental issue of this magnitude has far reaching effects. Generations of the regions fishing tradition have been disrupted, economies have been turn upside down, eco-systems have been devastated beyond our current understanding and we have yet to see the health and physiological impacts on the people of a region still recovering five years after the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina

and Rita. We must ensure the complete restoration and recovery of sensitive ecosystems and wildlife populations in the Gulf and address the urgent need to develop truly clean, renewable energy solutions for our nation.

To that end, I have joined with Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) and a broad coalition of Congressional members and environmental leaders to introduce the West Coast Ocean Protection Act of 2010 that would stop all new offshore oil drilling on platforms in federal waters on the West Coast. Additionally, we are working to highlight other legislation that seeks to curtail new offshore oil drilling and to hold the oil industry accountable for cleanup and safety improvements.

I remain committed to urgently combating climate change and safeguarding our environment, developing long-term strategies that make America more energy independent, providing pathways out of poverty to new Green economic opportunities and seeking remedies to longstanding environmental inequalities.

***Congresswoman Barbara Lee is joined by the National Council of Black Mayors and others on Capitol Hill to push for federal action on clean energy and climate policies.***