

## Defending Taxpayers & Public Health

A victory for taxpayers and the public health was achieved with House passage of an amendment I offered with Congressman Jeff Flake (R-AZ) to block a taxpayer-funded bailout of the tobacco industry. Not only did the bailout program seek to spend \$10 billion of taxpayer dollars to support an industry that produces a harmful product, but the buyout would allow tobacco companies to drop their prices and entice more of our youth to start smoking. This fight is not over, but passage of our amendment sends a strong signal that the House does not support a taxpayer-funded bailout of the tobacco industry.

*When students from Einstein High School visited the Capitol, Chris talked with them about a number of legislative issues before Congress, including various health proposals.*



## Working on Local Issues

Sometimes lost amid the clamor of debate on national and international issues is the progress being made on important local and regional issues. I am pleased to report that the Transportation Equity Act passed by the House contains funds and new spending authority for important transportation initiatives in Montgomery and Prince George's counties to help relieve traffic gridlock. I am also pleased that during the last eighteen months we have been successful in working with others to obtain important federal investments in our community, including Head Start

programs, COPs grants to improve public safety, homeland security initiatives, grants for firefighters and other emergency response efforts, and community economic development projects.

*Chris discusses several issues of importance to 8th District constituents after a recent town hall meeting in Silver Spring.*



## Reaching Out to Meet Your Needs

### Serving Constituents

Our office takes great satisfaction in trying to help constituents resolve problems they may be having with federal agencies, whether it be working to:

- ▲ reunite families struggling with the immigration bureaucracy,
- ▲ award long-overdue recognition to WWII veterans,
- ▲ resolve problems with Social Security, Medicare or veterans benefits,
- ▲ obtain a passport for unanticipated travel, or
- ▲ resolve other issues that arise.

Please contact us if we can be of assistance.



*Chris meets with constituents to talk about matters before federal agencies.*

CONGRESSMAN CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

## Report to the 8th District

### A Summer Congressional Update

Dear Friend:

As the 108th Congress begins to wind down, I want to let you know what a privilege it is to represent you and Maryland's 8th District in the United States Congress. The people of this congressional district closely follow issues at the national level and I very much appreciate the input and insights from our community.

Over the past year and a half our nation has faced many challenges at home and abroad. I believe we can do a better job of meeting those challenges and have expressed my views on the many issues confronting the Congress, including the war in Iraq, the reckless budget deficits, and misplaced domestic priorities. You can find some of the speeches delivered to the House of Representatives at [www.house.gov/vanhollen](http://www.house.gov/vanhollen). You may not always agree with my position on the issues, but you will know where I stand.

While I have not shied away from the contentious debates in the Congress, I have also worked to forge bipartisan coalitions on many issues that should unite all Americans. Wherever possible we should build consensus to achieve the common good. This newsletter addresses some of those efforts.

It is an honor to serve you in the United States Congress.

Sincerely,

Chris Van Hollen

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## Keeping Our Promises to School Children

I believe the federal government has an obligation to fully fund the No Child Left Behind law and the special education program known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA. To accomplish these objectives, I introduced H.R. 2107, the Keep Our Promises to America's Children and Teachers (PACT) Act, which requires full funding of both of these education initiatives.

*“One way or another, we have to get this job done; we must keep our promises to our children.”*

— Chris Van Hollen

Unfortunately, the current congressional leadership refuses to meet these basic commitments. For that reason, I recently joined with Congressman Charles Bass (R-NH) to launch a new bipartisan initiative (HR 3820, the Mandatory IDEA Full Funding Compromise Act) to break the impasse on IDEA full funding. One way or another, we have to get this job done; we must keep our promises to our children.



*As part of “Read Across America,” Chris talks to Gannon Elementary School students about the importance of reading.*

## Ensuring Child Nutrition

Federal food nutrition programs have served as a lifeline for low-income children for nearly 60 years. As a member of the Education and Workforce Committee with jurisdiction over federal food programs, I am pleased to report that the House of Representatives recently voted to reauthorize the Child Nutrition and National School Lunch Acts.

This bipartisan legislation will provide food security to more children than ever before, eliminate needless paperwork for program providers, and place a renewed emphasis on obesity prevention through improved nutrition and greater exercise. Although disappointed that an amendment to restrict the sale of junk foods in school was rejected, I was pleased that an initiative I promoted to expedite children's access to these critical nutrition programs was ultimately incorporated in the final bill.

*Chris listens to young constituents talk about education during a school visit.*



## Protecting the Environment

### Restoring the Bay

The Chesapeake Bay is North America's largest and most productive estuary, sustaining a population of 16 million people and over 3600 species of animals. In response to the myriad ecological challenges facing the Bay, I recently joined forces with Republican Congressmen Wayne Gilchrest (MD) and Tom Davis (VA), and Democratic Congressman Bobby Scott (VA) to revive the Congressional Chesapeake Bay Watershed Task Force (CBWTF). The goal of the CBWTF is to build broad-based support for a comprehensive federal strategy to restore the Bay. As part of that initiative, we organized a bipartisan group of watershed legislators in support of a unified list of Chesapeake Bay funding priorities totaling \$84 million across six separate Appropriations subcommittees. I am determined that the federal government do its part to protect and restore this national treasure.

### Preventing Global Warming

Much as we might wish otherwise, the day for denial on global climate change is over. Authorities ranging from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) now all agree that “most of the global warming observed over the past fifty years is attributable to human activities” – principally, the burning of fossil fuels and the corresponding buildup of carbon in our atmosphere. Left unchecked, the consequences of this climate change could be profound – affecting everything from ocean levels to agricultural practices to the distribution of human and animal disease. To address this challenge, I am proud to be an original House cosponsor of the Climate Stewardship Act (H.R. 4067), known as the McCain-Lieberman bill in the Senate, which pairs the stick of mandatory pollution reductions with the carrot of market incentives to reduce our nation's greenhouse gas emissions to 2000 levels by 2010. It's an innovative, affordable and effective first step to the challenge of global climate change, and I am honored to be a part of the bipartisan leadership team including Republican Congressmen Wayne Gilchrest (MD) and Chris Shays (CT), and Democratic Congressmen John Olver (MA) and Mark Udall (CO) pressing this legislation in the Congress.



*Chris joins Congressmen Gilchrest, Udall and Shays at a press conference to announce his global warming initiative.*

## Honoring Our Veterans

### Keeping Faith with America's Veterans

We have sent thousands of troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. Our government must be accountable for the promises it makes to the young men and women who are asked to serve our country in this way. Military retirees – who spent a career in uniform to defend our freedoms – are not asking for handouts; they are only asking for what was promised to them. On November 6, 2003, I introduced the Keep Our Promise to America's Military Retirees Act (H.R. 3474), a bill to restore earned and promised health care coverage to retired members of the uniformed services.



*As part of the National World War II Memorial dedication on the National Mall, Congressman Van Hollen met with World War II veterans from Maryland's 8th Congressional District. Here he speaks with Captain Ned Dolan about veterans' issues.*

This bill has strong bipartisan support and is co-sponsored by a majority of the House. It is now up to the House leadership to allow a vote on this legislation.



*During his visit to Iraq in February, Congressman Van Hollen met with soldiers, including several from Maryland's 8th Congressional District, who discussed with him their challenging mission and the difficult circumstances they face. Congressman Van Hollen thanked them for their service.*

### Taking Action on the Sudan Crisis

A devastating humanitarian crisis is raging in Sudan. In the Darfur region of western Sudan, more than 30,000 Africans have already been killed in a genocidal campaign by the Sudanese government's ruthless proxy forces. Over a million people have been driven from their homes, crops and villages have been burned, and gang rapes are widespread. The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) predicts that 350,000 people are likely to die from starvation and disease in the coming months and the death toll could exceed a million people unless the violence stops and the Sudanese government allows

international aid groups immediate access. Months ago, I joined with Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) and other members of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus to urge U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to take action. I commend Kofi Annan and Secretary of State Powell for finally traveling to Darfur. However, calling attention to this crisis is not enough. The U.S. must lead an effort in the United Nations to immediately adopt a resolution to impose multilateral sanctions against Sudan unless it immediately acts to end the crisis. Failure to act will be a terrible stain on the world's collective conscience.