



CONGRESSMAN
**FRANK
PALLONE**



CENTRAL NEW JERSEY REPORT

Pallone Fights Cuts in Superfund Program **Making Polluters Pay**

Our communities are healthier thanks to the federal Superfund program that manages the cleanup of some of the most hazardous toxic waste sites in New Jersey.

Cleanup is moving forward at the Chemical Insecticide Corporation (CIC) site in Edison after I secured more than \$19 million in federal funds last year. EPA has promised to provide the rest of the needed funds at the end of 2004. However, they are attempting to cut corners and refuse to cleanup arsenic-contaminated groundwater.

Polluter Pays No More

The "polluter pays" principle is a cornerstone of the Superfund program -- you make the mess, you clean it up. From the start, a tax on oil and chemical companies kept in a Superfund trust fund provided billions of dollars to cleanup hundreds of the worst

toxic waste sites. Unfortunately, beginning in 2004, the trust fund will have dried up and the program will no longer include money collected from polluter fees.

Since taking office, President Bush has refused to reauthorize the polluter pay fees and has decided to shift the cost to taxpayers. This decision threatens the future cleanup of these sites and forces taxpayers to foot the bill for corporate mistakes. With so little money in the fund, cleanup efforts at New Jersey's 113 Superfund sites, including CIC, are taking longer.

Pallone Bill Makes Polluters Pay

I introduced legislation that would reinstate the Superfund tax in order to ensure this critical cleanup program survives. The federal government has a responsibility to hold polluters account-

able for their actions and provide funding for the timely cleanup of contaminated sites. By reinstating the tax, EPA would once again have the financial ability to expedite cleanups and guarantee that sites are fully remediated. The residents of New Jersey deserve nothing less.

Pallone Brownfields Cleanup Program Yields Local Success

I authored legislation that created a new federal program to cleanup abandoned industrial sites known as brownfields. This law, enacted in 2002, provides funds to NJ and other states to redevelop contaminated sites, turning eyesores into prosperous business centers and thriving natural environments.

One of the program's first major successes can be seen at the Kin-Buc Landfill site along the waterfront in Edison. After years of working with the EPA and state officials to complete cleanup, plans are finalized to convert the former chemical waste dumpsite into a wildlife habitat and a series of nature trails. Our efforts to ensure the cleanup of the Kin-Buc site and its restoration to a natural ecosystem serve as an example to other communities of the benefits of this program.

POLLUTERS vs. **TAXPAYERS**



As of 2004, American taxpayers will be taken to the cleaners — forced to pay \$1.1 billion in Superfund cleanup costs — 79% of the total!



Pallone Opposes Any Attempts to Privatize Medicare



As Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus Health and Medicare Task Force, I have played a leading role in the fight to provide a guaranteed prescription drug benefit in Medicare for all seniors that is affordable and meaningful.

Unfortunately, President Bush and the House Republican Leadership missed a critical opportunity to improve the lives of America's seniors when Congress recently passed a Medicare reform bill disguised as prescription drug legislation. The bill, H.R. 1, attempts to weaken the Medicare program and falls short of meeting the needs of seniors.

H.R. 1 provides woefully inadequate coverage and has a giant gap in coverage where seniors with drug costs between \$2,250 and \$5,100 annually receive no assistance. H.R. 1 does nothing to reduce the cost of prescription drugs and prohibits Medicare from using the bargaining power of 40 million seniors to negotiate lower drug prices. Invariably, drug companies will continue to reap enormous profits and seniors will continue to experience 18 percent annual price increases on the drugs they need to remain healthy.

The Medicare bill pushes seniors into private plans through either HMOs or PPOs and gives the companies \$17 billion as a way to entice them into providing seniors coverage. Under this plan, seniors' assistance would be in the hands of HMOs and PPOs, the very companies that dropped more than 200,000 seniors in New Jersey from their roll last year after concluding they were not profitable.

Congress owed it to our seniors to protect the Medicare program, and to provide a prescription drug benefit that American seniors want and need. The Republican proposal fails seniors by weakening the Medicare program in favor of protecting the drug industry and the health insurance industry. Please know that I will continue to fight these privatization efforts and work for a fair and affordable prescription drug benefit under Medicare.

Chemical Insecurity

Chemical plants that produce, use or store hazardous chemicals provide terrorists with a perfect target that could potentially cause the release of highly dangerous toxic plumes in our air and our water system. In fact, the EPA has identified nine chemical plants in New Jersey where a terrorist attack could kill or injure more than one million people. To date, no federal agency has assessed the level of security preparedness at chemical facilities and the Bush Administration has refused to create federal regulations to require facilities to take steps to minimize their risk of attack.

I have introduced legislation that would require the EPA and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to create regulations requiring plants to minimize the risk they pose to the public and our environment. My bill requires plants to develop safer operating techniques and to create a plan to improve security. It is critical that we take this weapon away from terrorists and set strict federal guidelines and procedures to ensure the security of our nation's chemical facilities.

Rep. Pallone's District Offices – Reaching Out to You

If you have a problem of a federal nature or want to obtain information on legislative issues, contact these offices, open weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Middlesex/Somerset/Union

67/69 Church St., Kilmer Square
New Brunswick 08901
732-249-8892

Monmouth

504 Broadway
Long Branch 07740
732-571-1140

Bayshore/West Monmouth

I.E.I. Airport Plaza
1390 Rt. 36, #104, Hazlet 07730
732-264-9104

E-mail: Frank.Pallone@mail.house.gov Web site: www.house.gov/pallone

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**FRANK
PALLONE**

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
M.C.
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Postal Customer

6th Congressional District
New Jersey