



CONGRESSMAN
**FRANK
PALLONE**



MONMOUTH COUNTY REPORT

Protecting Our Ocean

Pallone Wins Victory on Ocean Dumping

Over the last year, we have made great progress toward protecting New Jersey's oceans, rivers, and fragile coastal environment.

Battling Toxic Dredge Materials

We scored a major victory for the Jersey Shore earlier this year when the EPA enacted a new rule that prohibits the dumping of cancer-causing PCB laden dredge materials six miles off the coast of Monmouth County. This rule establishes a very strict limit on the allowable level of PCB's in our ocean.

However, to ensure that companies don't attempt to challenge this new rule in court, I have introduced bipartisan legislation that would permanently block the dumping of PCB contaminated material off our shoreline.

"No" to Offshore Drilling

During the past year, I fought numerous attempts by the Bush Administration and the House Republican Leadership to weaken existing restrictions on offshore oil and gas exploration.

Recently, we prevented provisions from being included in the House energy bill that would have allowed an inventory of oil and gas

reserves off New Jersey's coastline, despite a federal moratorium on drilling that has been in place since 1988. I led the fight among New Jersey's Congressional delegation to see that the detrimental provision was removed from the final version of the bill. Removal of this section ensures that, for now, our shoreline will not be threatened by oil and gas exploration, drilling and production activities.

Preventing Future Sewage Spills

After a long winter and an extended shell fishing ban in the early spring, Bayshore shell fisherman were further devastated when shell fishing was halted for several weeks in August because of untreated sewage that spilled into the New York Harbor following the massive summer blackout.

I immediately called upon the EPA to investigate backup generation and containment facilities at the sewage treatment facilities that were responsible for the spills. In response to my request, the EPA

agreed to an investigation and announced that it will work with the responsible water treatment facilities and state officials to ensure that backup facilities are put in place to handle any future emergencies.

Pallone Secures Funds for Flood Control, Beach Replenishment

This year, I was successful in getting funds for several critical county beach replenishment and flood control projects, including:

Asbury Park to Manasquan Beach Replenishment: Three million dollars has been secured to provide periodic renourishment of heavily eroded sections of beach.

Bayshore Flood Control and Shore Protection: Projects along the Bayshore are in various stages of development from feasibility studies to design work and eventual construction. Funds to alleviate flooding are available in parts of Old Bridge, Keansburg and North Middletown. Ongoing feasibility studies will continue to be funded in Leonardo, Highlands and Keyport. Design work that moves projects closer to construction are receiving dollars in Union Beach and Port Monmouth.

Shrewsbury, Navesink Rivers Flood Control: Funds to continue the study of ways to combat frequent flooding along the rivers.



Rep. Pallone, right, joins environmentalists and state officials at a press conference in Belmar to protect New Jersey's coastline from offshore drilling. Also pictured is Cindy Zipf, left, executive director of Clean Ocean Action.

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 rolls 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

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504 Broadway
Long Branch 07740
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Official Business



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PRSRT STD