



CONGRESSMAN
**FRANK
PALLONE**



WORKING FOR NEW JERSEY

Working Families Face Obstacles in Today's Economy

Working Americans notice their paycheck doesn't stretch as far as it used to. While the White House insists the economy is improving, many Americans are wondering why they're not benefiting.

Increasing the Minimum Wage

Full-time working Americans should not have to worry about living in poverty, but since the minimum wage has not changed in over a decade, that's exactly what more than 3 million Americans face today.

In order to raise incomes of more than 8.4 million workers, I continue to advocate for increasing

the minimum wage by \$1.50, from \$5.15 to \$6.65 an hour.

Workers Lose Overtime Pay

At a time many Americans are working for less, President Bush has now proposed new overtime rules that will cause at least 6 million Americans to lose their overtime pay. Under the new rules, workers earning as little as \$23,660 per year could see their jobs reclassified as ineligible for overtime pay.

Over the past year, my Democratic colleagues and I have unsuccessfully fought against these rule changes that are set to take effect on August 23, but we will not give up.

Pallone Fights to Help Workers

Besides the minimum wage, I'm also fighting for four economic provisions that would help workers by: eliminating tax incentives that ship jobs overseas, enacting a highway bill that creates 1.8 million high-paying jobs, providing a health care tax credit to small businesses so they can provide health insurance to their employees, and reducing health care costs.

It's time for Washington to stop ignoring the needs of working families so they can take more money home at the end of a hard day's work.

Pallone Works to Address Healthcare Disparities

Despite a substantial need for healthcare, minority groups in New Jersey often encounter obstacles in obtaining healthcare. A U.S. Census Bureau report found that minority populations in New Jersey have substantially higher uninsured rates than white New Jerseyans. Minorities are also less likely to visit a dentist or receive prenatal care or a mammogram.

Earlier this year, I held a roundtable discussion on health disparities at the Community Health Center in Asbury Park. The roundtable participants addressed ways they are working to bridge the healthcare divide and discussed how to improve health services in minority communities.

As the Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus Health

& Medicare Task Force, I helped author legislation that would provide increased funding for health centers that serve minority populations, expand health coverage and remove language or cultural barriers that may prevent families from seeking medical assistance.

Rate of Uninsured in New Jersey

- ▲ ***Non-Hispanic Whites: 11.3%***
- ▲ ***Asian/Pacific Islanders: 14.5%***
- ▲ ***African Americans: 20.7%***
- ▲ ***Hispanics: 32.2%***



Pallone, second from left, hosts a roundtable on healthcare disparities at the Community Health Center of Asbury Park with local public health officials, healthcare professionals and patients.

Pallone Fights Cuts to Affordable Housing



As the nation's most densely populated state, New Jersey struggles to provide safe, decent, and affordable housing to those who need assistance. Many families in our area rely on public assistance housing programs, like Section 8, to help make housing more affordable. Section 8 provides rental assistance to families in the form of vouchers or subsidies. These vital programs

help free up family income for other vital necessities like food, medicine and transportation.

Unfortunately, these programs face repeated funding cuts from the Bush Administration. Last year, President Bush issued new rules that led to the denial of assistance to some New Jersey families. And now, this year, the president proposed cutting Section 8 funding by \$1.6 billion. New Jersey stands to lose more than 7,000 Section 8 vouchers. These cuts will cause local housing assistance programs to either cut families from their program, shrink the amount of assistance families receive, or deny new applicants to the program.

Earlier this year, I joined together with local New Jersey community and religious leaders to call on the President to fully restore funding to this critical program. I also helped spearhead a letter with my New Jersey Democratic colleagues calling on the President to increase the Section 8 housing budget by \$2.1 billion.

Health Coverage for Low-Income Families

New Jersey has one of the most successful comprehensive health insurance programs for low-income children and families, called NJ FamilyCare.

However, with so many low-income families in need of health coverage, New Jersey has been forced to cut back on accepting applications from parents. New Jersey has seen enrollment for parents drop 11 percent since December. Other states with high enrollment have cut both children and parents.

Now, the House Republican leadership has proposed cutting \$2.2 billion from Medicaid and state health insurance programs over the next five years. If New Jersey and other states see a cut in program funding from the federal government, they may be forced to once again limit coverage.

I am working to gain bipartisan support for a proposal that would redistribute unused funds from states with less successful programs to states like New Jersey where demand is greater. I am also working to ensure that the federal budget for FamilyCare and other state programs remain fully funded.

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.

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WORKING FOR
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