

Cutting Taxes and Creating Jobs

When I came to Congress this session, we were in the depths of a great recession and our economy was on the brink of collapse. That is why I voted for the historic *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA), which has played a major role in stabilizing our economy, stemming job losses, and laying the foundation for future economic growth. The Recovery Act provided robust funding in areas such as transportation, health, education, and provided useful tax breaks for first time home buyers, higher education, and for working families. Since President Obama signed the Recovery Act into law, over \$11.4 billion has been obligated to Michigan communities, businesses and citizens through direct assistance, tax breaks and funding for local projects.

Thanks to our decisive action, job losses are tapering off and Americans are seeing their taxes cut. Since the enactment of the ARRA, nearly 54,000 jobs were saved or created in our state. The Making Work Pay Tax Credit, First Time Homebuyer Tax Credit, deductions for car purchases and other tax cuts passed by Congress allowed 98% of families and individuals to save more of their hard-earned money during these difficult economic times.

While jobs are being created, we must continue to support those out of work. Many of our neighbors are suffering as a result of this level of unprecedented job losses. I have voted to extend unemployment benefits to have who lost their job through no fault of their own. The ARRA alone provided benefits to nearly one million Michigan residents and included subsidies for COBRA health insurance.

However, I believe we can do more to increase hiring. I recently introduced a bill called the *SHARE Credit Act* that would provide a tax credit to employers that reduce their workers' hours while keeping their pay unchanged. The credit would cover up to 10 percent of annual compensation or \$3,000. This tax credit has the potential to be targeted to disproportionately benefit hard-hit areas like Michigan's 14th Congressional District. It is time to create an America where there is full employment at a livable wage.

I have also recently introduced the *21st Century Full Employment and Training Act*. The Act aims to create a full employment society over the next decade by establishing a "Full Employment and Training Trust Fund" with two separate accounts. These two accounts will direct funding to job creation and training programs until unemployment levels fall. Revenue for the trust fund will be raised through a tax on Wall Street financial speculation.

Please join me at my next town hall meeting on jobs on June 5th at 11 a.m. at the University of Detroit-Mercy.

A Snapshot of Recovery Act Funding In Our District

Through the end of last year, Michigan received \$6.3 billion in ARRA funds for grants, loans and contracts, which ranked it as the 9th highest in the country, Southeast Michigan has received \$2.73 billion. Below are a few ARRA-funded projects in the 14th Congressional District:

- **Hamtramck Housing Commission** - over \$2,400,000 for the improvement of public housing
- **Highland Park Fire Department** - over \$2,600,000 for fire station construction
- **City of Detroit Department of Human Services** - over \$260,000 for the Emergency Food Assistance Program
- **Downriver Community Conference** - over \$4,700,000 to make homes of low-income families more energy efficient
- **United Way of Southeastern Michigan** - over \$1,000,000 for the provision of emergency food and shelter
- **Southeast Michigan Community Alliance's Michigan Works!** - over \$10,000,000 for education, job training and placement services
- **Wayne County Community College** - over \$130,000 for work study grants



JOHN CONYERS, JR.
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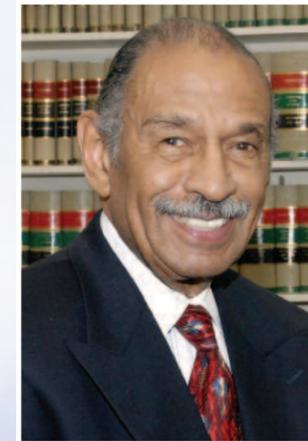
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Official Business

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Report from CONGRESSMAN JOHN CONYERS, JR.

To Michigan's Fourteenth CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



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Report to Michigan's Fourteenth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Foreclosure Relief and Prevention

The Detroit Metro Area is experiencing a home ownership crisis with one of the worst rates of home foreclosures in the nation. While some steps have been taken, much more needs to be done to help families keep their homes.

I have introduced the *Helping Families Save Their Homes Act*, which has passed the House of Representatives, but still awaits Senate action. This bill would allow judges to force lenders to accept mortgage modifications since banks don't seem to have sufficient motivation to do this voluntarily. This month, I will also conduct a hearing on predatory lending practices to help determine whether the Federal government is doing enough to prosecute those who engage in these activities.

The state of Michigan was one of five states chosen to receive federal dollars from the recently established "Hardest Hit Fund," and is eligible to receive approximately \$154.5 million in mortgage foreclosure protection funds. This innovative Federal Housing Administration program will be available to Michigan homeowners by July 2010, and will provide assistance to approximately 16,000 households, including 10,300 households that are currently drawing unemployment benefits and struggling to make monthly mortgage payments.

In addition to the actions I am taking in Washington, my offices here in the Detroit Metro Area can also assist you. If you would like to learn more about free, HUD-approved homeowner counseling services, contact my Detroit or Downriver offices. They can also assist you with the following programs:

- Wayne County's Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Program
- State of Michigan's Save the Dream Campaign
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's approved Foreclosure Counseling Agency
- Making Home Affordable Program

For more information about these programs, please contact the Detroit office at (313) 961-5670 or the Downriver office at (734) 675-4084.



Conyers holds a town hall meeting on foreclosure prevention and job creation entitled, *Standing Up for Main Street*.

Enacting Historic Healthcare Reform

After a year of rigorous and often passionate debate, Congress made a national commitment to provide access to healthcare for all Americans. I voted in favor of this historic bill because it is a critical step toward guaranteeing that access to healthcare is a right, and not a luxury.



President Obama greets Congressman Conyers at the signing ceremony of the historic healthcare and student loan reform law.

In its first year, the new health care law will:

- Prevent health insurance companies from discriminating against children with pre-existing conditions.
- Create a temporary high-risk pool for adults who have been locked out of the insurance market because they have a pre-existing condition.
- Allow children to stay on their parents' insurance plans until age 26.
- Provide a rebate of \$250 to Medicare beneficiaries whose prescription drug bills have exceeded their coverage.
- Eliminate the lifetime caps on insurance plans.
- End the practice of terminating policies after insurance holders get sick.
- Begin a study of how much insurance companies are paying on administrative costs versus the costs of actual medical services to make sure they are not putting profit over the health of their customers.

After it is fully implemented, the law will have the following positive impacts for the 14th District of Michigan:

- Improve the coverage of 286,000 residents who already have health insurance and extend coverage to 59,000 of our neighbors who don't have insurance, including 11,900 uninsured individuals with preexisting conditions.
- Provide tax credits and other assistance to 157,000 families and 9,600 small businesses to help them afford coverage.
- Cap annual out-of-pocket costs for those who purchase insurance through the Exchange or who are insured by small businesses, and eliminate annual and lifetime limits on all insurance coverage.
- Improve Medicare benefits for the 92,000 beneficiaries in the district and strengthen the Medicare Trust Funds, extending its solvency from 2017 to 2026.
- Support care to the medically underserved by providing a estimated \$3.9 million in new assistance to the three community health centers in the district.

By improving access and affordability, this legislation will improve the health of the residents and communities in Southeast Michigan.

Cracking Down on Wall Street

In the fall of 2008, we witnessed the greatest collapse of the American financial system since the Great Depression. Now, as Main Street recovers from Wall Street's excesses, we must re-examine the laws that regulate banks and other financial institutions. This year, I supported the *Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2009*, a bill that aims to rein in the titans of the financial industry and protect consumers from unfair and abusive practices. The legislation would create a Consumer Financial Protection Agency with the sole mission of protecting consumers from predatory financial products and services. While this bill is a good start, I am also a strong advocate of legislation that would mandate that America's banking sectors and investment houses remain separate in order to prevent banks from gambling on the stock market with our savings.



Conyers chairs meeting on predatory lending.

I agree with President Obama that we must protect consumers and their investments from unfair and unethical practices and in the President's words, "Wall Street forgot that behind every dollar traded or leveraged, there is a family looking to buy a house, pay for an education, open a business, save for retirement. What happens on Wall Street has real consequences across our country, across our economy."

Ending the War in Afghanistan

Solving the world's problems should be through robust diplomacy, not war. Every dollar spent abroad is a dollar not invested at home. Since 2001, the American people have spent \$987 billion on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I oppose these wars and founded the "Out of Afghanistan Caucus" because I believe that the costs associated with this war – in terms of both taxpayer dollars and the lives of our brave servicemen and women – is too great. It's time to bring our troops home.