

July, 2009

Welcome to our first e-newsletter! Since I was sworn in as your Representative in Congress this April, my staff and I have been working tirelessly to make sure your voice is heard and your priorities are protected in Washington.

I plan to send these e-newsletters frequently to stay in touch and keep you up to date, but I won't send it to you unless you ask me to. If you're interested in receiving these updates, please sign up so I can continue sending you information on what I'm doing for you everywhere from Capitol Hill to Lincoln Park to Franklin Park.

UNDER THE DOME

The halls of Congress have been very busy lately. Here are some highlights of what I've been doing as your U.S. Representative:

Protecting Our Environment

- I proudly supported and voted for the American Clean Energy and Security Act which will reduce harmful global warming pollutants and create green energy jobs
- Helped to secure \$475 million for Great Lakes restoration and protection

Letting the Sunshine In and Getting the Pork Out

- I recently introduced landmark earmark reform legislation, H.Res. 614, that would end the distribution of earmarks to for-profit entities.
- My 2010 appropriation requests are online, so you can see firsthand the specific requests I've made to invest taxpayer dollars – all not-for-profit and public projects.
- I co-sponsored legislation to restore the common-sense Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) rules which resulted in a balanced budget and economic prosperity in the 1990s.
- Simply put, government should operate like any household does every day – sensibly. You live within your means, you pay for what you buy, and you plan for the future. Like the hard-working families in the 5th District, government needs to tighten its belt, control spending, and stop putting Americans' futures on credit.

Extending Equal Rights and Fairness to All

- I am proud to be an original Co-Sponsor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would extend federal employment laws to the LGBT community. I've also called for the repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" and other unjust practices.

- I introduced legislation to extend the Visa Waiver Program, part of a broader effort to ultimately allow Polish residents to more easily visit their relatives in the United States.
- I have also spoken out in favor of comprehensive immigration reform.

Abraham Lincoln often talked about doing what is right, what is just, and what is fair for all. He recognized the beginning of an evolution toward real equality, and seven score and six years later, I will continue my commitment to his legacy.

CLOSER TO HOME

I'm in Washington most days right now, but whenever I'm home in Chicago, I spend as much time as possible visiting with families and organizations across the district. We're working hard to make sure your needs are served and your questions answered. Here's some of what we've been doing in the district:

Providing Outstanding Service

In the past months we've held a number of successful Constituent Fairs, geared toward assisting seniors, veterans, and other constituents with individual issues with federal agencies.

Bringing Congress to Your Corner

You don't have to come to Capitol Hill - we'll bring it right to you! I'm proud to be continuing the tradition of bringing Congress to your Corner at neighborhood grocery stores and libraries, in order to answer your questions, provide assistance, and hear your opinions firsthand.

COMING SOON

As your member of Congress, I'll never forget that I work for you, and that my job demands open lines of communication. In the coming weeks and months, we'll be unveiling a new Web site and several cutting-edge features (like our new You Tube channel!) that will enable us to stay in better and frequent touch. I hope you'll visit the site, read our latest news, and share your thoughts with me.

Don't forget to sign up for our e-newsletter, and please contact my office with any questions or assistance. We're here to serve and represent you, and I look forward to staying in touch.