

## Congress Is Committed to Creating Jobs on Main Street

Across the nation, in our communities and neighborhoods, we are experiencing the effects of the economic downturn. Jobs have vanished at rates not seen since the Great Depression, and many know someone who lost their job as a result of the recession.

The Democratic Congress has been focused on turning around our economy, and acted on our commitment by enacting several measures that have already created or saved more than a million jobs this year. We moved quickly at the beginning of 2009 to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or “Recovery Act,” which has helped keep cops on the beat and teachers in classrooms, while making critical investments in green technology and our nation’s infrastructure.

The Recovery Act has also helped ease the recession’s burden by extending unemployment benefits and increasing COBRA assistance to millions of people without health insurance.

To help turn our economy around, I worked with the Obama administration to ensure that Recovery Act funds benefit economically distressed areas. I also helped bring Department of Transportation officials to my home district in Brooklyn, NY, to help small business owners and government contractors understand how to access Recovery Act funds and meet the reporting requirements.

Another important part of speeding up our recovery is the Jobs for Main Street Act, which redirects repaid funds from the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) that helped to stabilize our financial sector, and passed the House last week. During a [recent interview on CNBC](#), I made it clear that I believed Congress needed to use repaid bailout funds to create a jobs program that helps those Americans hardest hit by the recession.

The bill invests \$48 billion in infrastructure spending to rebuild roads and bridges, modernize public buildings and mass transit and clean our water and air. Moreover, the legislation includes \$27 billion to save or create 250,000 education jobs over the next two years, and helps retain law enforcement officers and firefighters. The bill also directs \$500 million to create 250,000 summer jobs for low-income kids and includes \$750 million for job training programs at community colleges, a third of which is targeted at low-income trainees.

H.R. 2847 also includes several key initiatives to help America's small businesses. The bill expands the federal guarantee for banks that lend to small businesses, and eliminates fees on Small Business Administration (SBA) loans. We all know that small businesses are the engines of job growth in our economy, but a lack of available credit has prevented small businesses from creating jobs. By making small business loans more accessible and affordable, we can spur the creation of thousands of jobs on main street that will continue to fuel our economic recovery.

In addition to supporting job creation legislation, I have been working on other job creation-related initiatives. I worked with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) recently to ensure that the "Jobs for Main Street Act" does not raise taxes on hard working Americans or place a greater burden on our children. The CBC also urged President Obama to make decreasing unemployment and increasing job creation the nation's number one priority.

As the holiday season approaches, I am reminded of all the families struggling to put food on the table and to make ends meet. We still have a way to go until job opportunities are abundant, but my colleagues in Congress and I remain committed to boosting our economy and create jobs, especially in the communities hardest hit by the recession.