



AN UPDATE FROM BONNIE

Serving New Jersey's 12th Congressional District

Dear Neighbors,

It was another busy week in DC as Democrats continue to fight to protect our communities and solve the nation's most pressing issues. I introduced 3 bills including a bill to protect immigrants attempting to follow immigration laws, one to prevent opioid overdoses, and another to spur job growth across the country. Democrats continued to hold DHS accountable this week with hearings and negotiations over ICE and CBP funding. The Congressional Black Caucus also marked Black History Month with a press conference highlighting how the Trump administration has hurt Black communities with their failed policies.



I'll be back in the 12th District this upcoming week, but the work will continue on.

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DHS Funding Bill Update

On Wednesday, House Democrats introduced a bill to [fund parts of DHS](#) - FEMA, TSA, the Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency, the Coast Guard and Secret Service - without providing additional funding for ICE or CBP. Republicans [are opposing it](#).

DHS needs significant reforms and ICE needs to be dismantled and replaced with a system that promotes the safety and respect of all individuals in the United States. To this point, Congress has failed to create such a system or hold DHS officers accountable. We should prioritize the prosecution and/or removal of violent criminals but sadly this has not been the priority of ICE under the direction of Secretary Noem and Deputy Chief of Staff Miller. The promotion of quotas for arrests has instead incentivized ICE agents, many of whom lack adequate vetting or training, to go after people whose only offense is unlawful entry or overstay of a visa.

Introduction of the FIFA Act

Over the last year, we've seen story after story of immigrants being arrested at their court hearings or when checking in with immigration case managers. On Monday, I [introduced](#) the Fundamental Immigration Fairness Act (FIFA), legislation that would prohibit the Department of Homeland Security from arresting or detaining any individual arriving or departing a DHS field office or the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Immigrants attempting to follow immigration laws should not be punished for their good faith efforts. The systematic arrest of immigrants attending court hearings and other appointments related to their status violates fundamental values of fairness. These arrests encourage those immigrants attempting to navigate our already broken immigration system to stay in the shadows.

Gateway Tunnel Funding Resumes

On Thursday, a [federal appeals court](#) required the Trump administration to resume funding for the Gateway tunnel project Trump had frozen during the government shutdown and not resumed.

The Gateway Tunnel is essential infrastructure for the millions who move along this major transportation hub, for the continued economic growth of the region and the country, and for the workers involved in its construction.

The President's funding freeze had no basis other than his own personal political spite and would have done great harm to New Jersey, the region, and the entire country. I'm glad the court saw through the President's tantrum and reversed his illegal actions.

A250 Bills Pass House

On Monday, the House of Representatives passed two Bipartisan bills [I introduced](#) with Congressman Rob Aderholt, intended to help America celebrate its 250th Birthday.

The first bill, the [Semiquincentennial Time Capsule Act](#), authorizes the Architect of the Capitol to create and bury a time capsule in the Capitol Visitors Center, where it will remain until America's 500th birthday on July 4, 2276. This bill is now headed to the President to be signed into law.

The second, the [Two Dollar and 50 Cent Coin for America's 250th Act](#), would authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to issue a collectible \$2.50 commemorative coin and conduct a viability study for a potential circulating \$2.50 coin for everyday use. It now heads to the Senate.



Introduction of the WORK To Save Lives Act

On Tuesday, Senator Jeff Merkley and I introduced bipartisan and bicameral legislation aimed at preventing opioid overdoses and increasing access to overdose reversal medications like naloxone, also known as Narcan.

The [Workplace Overdose Reversal Kits \(WORK\) to Save Lives Act](#) will require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue the tools and guidance to employers regarding opioid overdose reversal medication attainment, usage, and training.

Drug overdose deaths increased by over 30% within the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, approximately 83,000 opioid-involved drug overdose deaths were reported in the U.S. The [National Safety Council](#) found that while 75% of employers reported seeing opioid use impact their workplace, only 17% were able to report being well-prepared to address it.

COVID-19 shone a light on an opioid epidemic that has been impacting American lives for decades. Workplaces across the country are dealing with the fallout from our failure to address this crisis. The WORK To Save Lives Act will finally give workplaces the tools to save workers who are struggling with opioid addiction. Getting these overdose

reversal medications - and training in their use - to as many employers as possible has the potential to save countless lives.

Introduction of Jobs Guarantee Bill

Yesterday, Senator Cory Booker and I [reintroduced](#) the Federal Jobs Guarantee Development Act, ambitious legislation that would establish a model federal jobs guarantee program in up to 15 high-unemployment communities and regions across the United States.

Our country has tunnels and bridges in disrepair, families that can't find childcare, and aging and toxic water infrastructure, which means there are plenty of jobs available and unfilled. This is not the result of a lack of people willing to do the work; it's a gap created because localities cannot afford to pay them thanks to an ever-rising affordability crisis and lack of funding from the Trump Administration.

The Federal Jobs Guarantee Development Act creates a pilot program for the communities that need it most, giving good-paying jobs to people who have suffered while both wages and opportunities have shrunk. The work they'll do will make tangible improvements in those same communities and reverberate through the national economy.

Valentines for Vets

Each year, my office helps organize hundreds of school children in the 12th District to write Valentine's Day cards for local veterans. This year we delivered an astounding 1,246 cards.



Thank you to the many veterans in the 12th District who have served our nation to keep us safe and protect our democracy. It's always an honor to represent you in the United State Congress.



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