

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Ramadan Mubarak! As our friends and neighbors who observe the holy month settle in for the first Iftar, I wish you all an easy fast, a blessed month, and offer prayers for better days ahead.

February has been a busy month, filled with critical fights for our communities. I visited a Head Start preschool in our district as vital early education programs face threats from Republican budget cuts, delivered a keynote at the Eagleton Institute on the role of Congress in turning bold ideas into action, and stood against a reckless GOP budget that endangers millions on Medicare and Medicaid. I also hosted a tele-town hall to hear directly from you, pressed the NIH on the suspension of crucial HIV research, prevention, and care programs, and introduced legislation to protect our rights and honor our history, including a resolution condemning the pardons of January 6 criminals, the CROWN Act, and the Black History Matters Act. And, the Semiquincentennial Time Capsule bill, which has officially passed the House!

Budget Resolution

The Republican Budget Resolution is a betrayal of the American people.



Under the plan, the **32,000 people** in New Jersey's 12th District who receive coverage under the Affordable Care Act would see their average **premium increase by \$1,440 per year** — a 57% increase.

A 60-year-old couple with a household income of \$85,000 in NJ-12 would see their health insurance costs increase by \$15,702 per year — a 217% increase in premiums.

Constituent Resource Fair

My office will be holding a Constituent Resource Fair on March 13th, from 2-5PM at the Franklin Township Community Senior Center. Stop by for help with Veterans Housing and Benefits, Tax Preparation Questions, Educational Resources, Health Resources, and more.

Passport Clinic

Need assistance applying for or renewing your passport? My office will be at the Princeton Municipal Building, Monument Hall on Wednesday, March 19th from 2-6 to assist you with applying for a new passport, renewing your passport, even getting your passport photo.

In the 12th District, the **103,196 people on Medicaid** are at risk of **losing their health care** under Republican budget plans - this includes 49,722 children under the age of 19 and 10,164 seniors in NJ-12. Republican cuts to SNAP and WIC would also threaten the 22,942 people in NJ-12 who count on these programs to put food on the table.

I twice introduced amendments to the Republicans' budget proposal that would have guaranteed programs like Medicare and Medicaid would not be cut — **my Republican colleagues voted them down.**



I also introduced an amendment to ensure the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau would not be the target of cuts. The CFPB has brought back over \$21 billion to Americans who were scammed by big banks and fraudulent lenders. When given the choice to protect their constituents from fraud and abuse, **Republicans rejected the opportunity and voted down my amendment.**

The GOP budget is a rip-off of working Americans. My Democratic colleagues and I on the Budget Committee and in the House Caucus will continue to fight this every step of the way.



Town Hall

On Wednesday, the 12th, I held a Tele-Town Hall with constituents from across New Jersey's 12th District to address concerns over unelected billionaire Elon Musk's hostile government takeover. **More than 9,000 of you participated** over the phone, on our website, or on our [Facebook](#) page.

This was by far the most attended town hall in my time as your Congresswoman. Many of you are understandably outraged at the ongoing hostile government takeover by unelected billionaire Elon Musk, who receives billions of dollars in government contracts. It was great to hear from you, to speak to your concerns directly, and to have a dialogue about what we all can do to fight back against this illegal power grab.

If you missed the live event but would like to hear what your fellow New Jerseyans are feeling about what's going on in Washington and to hear how I think we can fight back - you can watch the entire town hall [here](#):



As always, I am grateful to be in this fight alongside you. **Make sure to RSVP** for my next tele-Town Hall to have your voice heard and your questions answered live. If you want to be alerted to future TeleTown Halls please [click here](#).

Protecting Head Start

This month, I [visited a Head Start facility](#) in North Brunswick to meet with local students

and educators directly impacted by President Trump's funding freezes and proposed budget cuts. What I'm hearing from organizations like Head Start is that if the lawsuits to unfreeze their accounts had not been successful, **they would have had to shut their doors on the 1000 children they serve at eight Middlesex and Monmouth County locations.**



Head Start helps youngsters from low-income families get a leg up or catch up to their fellow students. However, 80% of their funding comes from federal grants that Trump has tried to freeze and the GOP Congress is trying to cut. **Head Start helps over 800,000 students nationwide** and is just one organization that is helping our families and would be devastated by the terrible Republican budget and tax-scam.

That's why my Democratic colleagues and I fought to prevent cuts to programs like these in the Budget Committee and on the House Floor.

Protecting HIV/AIDS Research

This week, Congresswoman Robin Kelly (IL-02) and [I sent a letter](#) to National Institutes of Health Acting Director Matthew J. Memoli expressing concern about the recent

suspensions of programs for adolescent HIV research, prevention, and care. Acting Director Memoli has interpreted Trump Administration executive orders as targeting a study to examine ways to prevent HIV infections.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20543
February 23, 2025

Matthew J. Memoli, M.D., M.S.
Acting Director
National Institutes of Health
101 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Dear Acting Director Memoli,

We write to express deep concern regarding the suspension of National Institutes of Health (NIH) programs for adolescent HIV research, prevention, and care. Specifically, your interpretations of the Trump Administration's Executive Order 14181, "Ending Radical and Ideological Government DEI Programs and Performance," and Executive Order 14186, "Shielding Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government," have triggered a study to examine ways to prevent HIV infections in transgender youth of color. Negating high incidence population subgroups in HIV prevention and care is the fundamental reality that HIV/AIDS is a public health crisis requiring a comprehensive approach.

A recent *Washington Post* article reported that the NIH halted a large-scale study examining ways to prevent HIV infections in transgender youth of color.¹ This study is under the NIH-funded Adolescent Medicine Trials Network for HIV Infections in ATNs, which is aligned with leading programs for adolescent HIV research and prevention.² Specifically targeted by these orders is ATN's Legal, Economic, and Supporting Peer Support (LEAPS) program which seeks to improve HIV prevention and care among youth who are transgender or gender nonconforming. Established in 2015, ATN has recruited support across multiple administrations, and has enrolled more than 30,000 young people to date.³ As of February 24, 2025, the ATN website is down, preventing public access to information about ATN's programs and activities.⁴

In 2019, under the Trump Administration's leadership, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services launched the cross-agency Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. (EHE) initiative with the goal of reducing new HIV infections in the United States by 75 percent by 2025 and at least 90 percent by 2030.⁵ In order to accomplish this goal, the approach is to diagnose, treat, prevent, and respond. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2024 AIV Surveillance Supplemental

Footnote 1: https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/nihs-halted-study-on-hiv-prevention-for-transgender-youth-of-color/2025/02/24/nihs-halted-study-on-hiv-prevention-for-transgender-youth-of-color/2025/02/24/nihs-halted-study-on-hiv-prevention-for-transgender-youth-of-color/

Footnote 2: https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/programs/atlantia/atlantia.html

Footnote 3: https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/programs/atlantia/atlantia.html

Footnote 4: https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/programs/atlantia/atlantia.html

Footnote 5: https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/programs/atlantia/atlantia.html

Report, HIV infections among youth under the age of 24 declined 30 percent between 2018 and 2022.⁶ Despite this positive trend, in 2022, gay and bisexual men made up 71 percent of estimated new HIV infections, while Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino individuals accounted for about 78 percent of estimated new infections, demonstrating a need for continued federal investment in HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and care.⁷ The NIH needs to continue work in high incidence populations to address these clear disparities in transmission rates based on gender, sexuality, and racial background. It would be shortsighted and ill-advised to end programming for work that demonstrates its positive impact.

Ensuring current research and programs in alignment to the health and well-being of the patients involved in ongoing studies and clinical trials. Efforts to better understand the impact of HIV and AIDS on vulnerable populations (such as the NIH's mission and work toward the goal of the first Trump Administration's EHE initiative. Ending these programs would have dangerous public health consequences if the necessary research is halted.

We respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. How many research projects on HIV/AIDS prevention and care have been frozen as a result of your interpretation of the Trump Administration's Executive Orders 14181 and 14186?
2. In addition to the LEAP program, what projects specifically addressing HIV/AIDS disparities in high incidence populations (such as Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino populations, and gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men) have been paused or cancelled?
3. How many people, specifically NIH employees, researchers, and program participants, involved with NIH's HIV/AIDS research projects are impacted by their cancellations?
4. How do you plan to address HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and research while complying with these executive orders?

Sincerely,


BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN
Member of Congress


ROBIN KELLY
Member of Congress

The Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. initiative (EHE) was begun in 2019 under the Trump Administration with the goal of reducing the number of new HIV infections by 75% by 2025 and 90% by 2030. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **infections among youth under 24 declined 30% between 2018 and 2022. The NIH needs to build on this success, not eliminate it.**

Eagleton Lecture

Last week, I had the honor of delivering the keynote address at the Eagleton Institute of Politics as part of their [Albert H. Lewitt Lecture Series](#). Eagleton is celebrating 70 years of dedication to civic education and democratic engagement next year. This milestone comes at a significant moment in our nation's history - America's 250th anniversary.



The importance of civic education and informed political engagement cannot be

overstated. As I shared with the audience of Rutgers students, faculty, and alumni, this anniversary is not just about looking back - it's about assessing where we are today and ensuring that our democracy continues to work for all Americans.

Legislation Introduced This Month

Condemning the January 6 Pardons

One of the first things Trump did when he took office was issue sweeping pardons and commutations for everyone involved in the January 6th insurrection. Violent offenders who had been tried and convicted of assaulting police officers are now back out on the street. These are not people who got caught up in the crowd and were shuffled through an open door. These are people who pepper sprayed the Capitol police, who beat them with American flagpoles, shattered windows and climbed over barricades in an attempt to keep Trump in power after he lost the election.

This month, I introduced [a resolution](#), co-signed by 118 of my House Democratic colleagues, condemning in no uncertain terms this incredibly dangerous abuse of the pardon power and the insult to the Capitol Police officers who put their lives on the line to defend us on January 6th.

One of those officers was Brian Sicknick of South River. After sustaining injuries in the line of duty, he collapsed. He passed away several hours later. Officer Sicknick made the ultimate sacrifice, and I was honored to be joined by his brother, Ken, and mother, Gladys, at [a press conference](#) introducing the resolution.

No matter how hard Trump and his criminal henchmen try, they cannot rewrite history. We will never forget what transpired on that tragic day.

The CROWN Act

On Wednesday, I reintroduced the Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act or the [CROWN Act](#). **The bill would prohibit discrimination on the basis of hair texture.**

Black students are disciplined at a rate four times higher than any other racial or ethnic group, and research has found that 70 percent of all suspension disciplines are discretionary, many stemming from dress code violations, including “unapproved” hairstyles. Meanwhile, in workplaces, bias against ethnic and natural hairstyles reduces opportunities for job advancement, especially among women. **More than 20% of young Black women report being sent home from work because of their hair. Fully one-third of Black women under 34 believe they have been denied a job interview because of their hair.**

People cannot control the way their hair grows out of their head any more than they can control the color of their skin. Discrimination against hair texture is racial discrimination, plain and simple. **Nobody deserves to be denied the opportunity to thrive in the workplace, excel in school, or contribute their talents to the world simply because of their hair.**

One-Seat-Ride Act

Last week, Congressman Tom Kean and I reintroduced [the One-Seat-Ride Act](#), a bipartisan bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of a one-seat-ride trip versus a transfer trip option during “peak hours” on NJ Transit’s Raritan Valley Line.

The Raritan Valley Line serves over 23,000 commuters each day – and many of those

commuters have to switch trains at Newark Penn Station during peak commuting hours, unnecessarily extending an already lengthy commute. **This report is a necessary step towards a more efficient system that better serves the hard-working people of New Jersey, allowing them to spend more of their valuable time with their families.**

Black History Matters Act

Earlier this month, I introduced the [Black History Matters Act](#); legislation directing the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) to conduct a study of the quality and efforts of Black history education in public elementary and secondary schools.

A 2015 study conducted by the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) and Oberg Research found that, **on average, 8-9% of history class time focuses on Black History, and some states ignore it altogether.** Proudly, New Jersey is one of the states that require Black history to be taught in elementary and secondary schools.

Black history is American history, and **our education system needs to accurately reflect this nation's history.** Our voices cannot and will not be erased because when the value of the contributions of Black Americans is dismissed, it's that much easier to dismiss the value of Black lives.

Semiquincentennial Time Capsule Bill Passes the House

Also this week, my bipartisan [Semiquincentennial Congressional Time Capsule Act](#) passed the House of Representatives.

The bipartisan legislation authorizes the Architect of the Capitol to create and bury a time capsule on the west lawn of the Capitol, where it will remain until America's 500th birthday on July 4, 2276.

This [time capsule](#) will memorialize our moment in American history, and give future generations a chance to glimpse our nation as it was. **Congress does its best work when we don't seek fame or renown, but rather work so that distant generations of Americans, for whom our names will be mere footnotes, will enjoy the fruits of our work here today.**

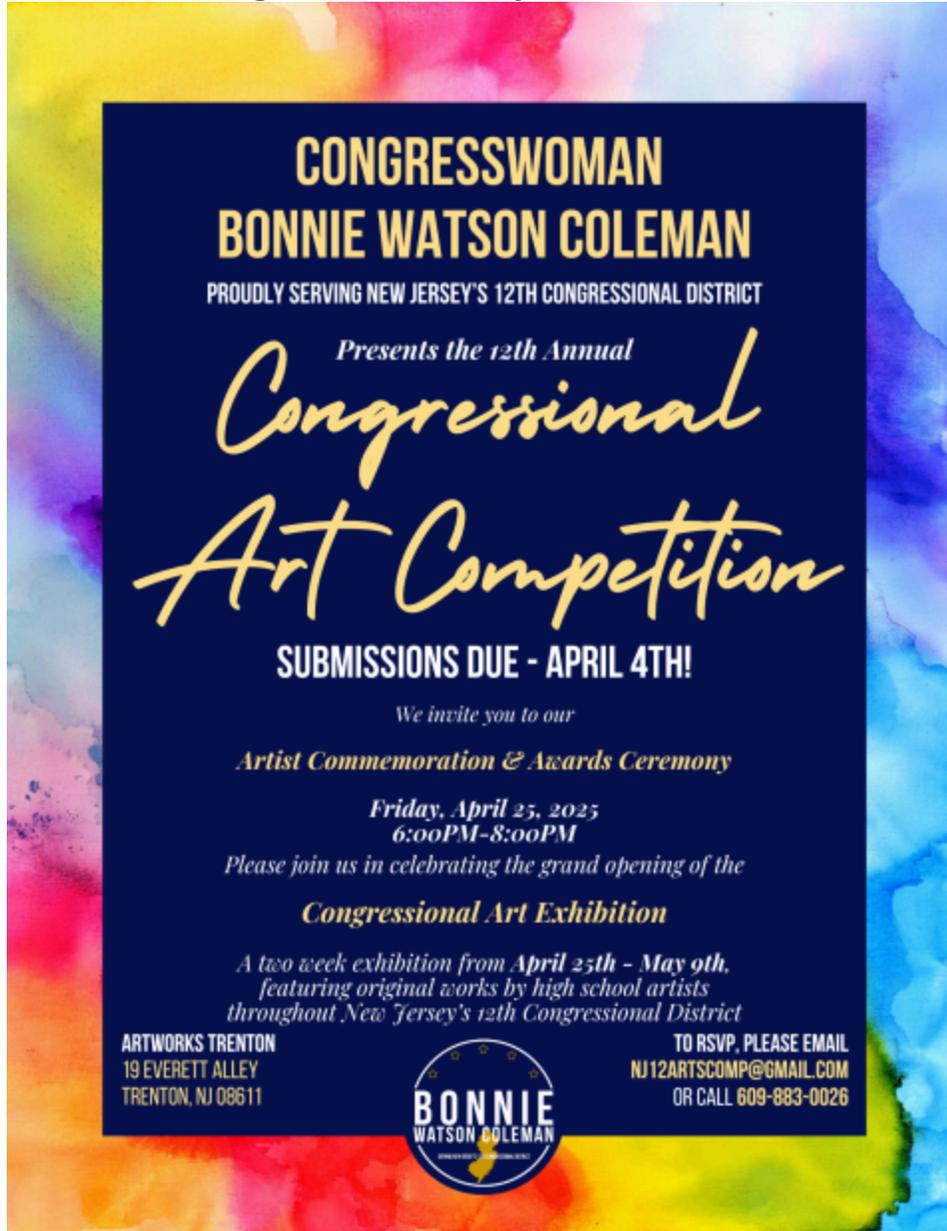


Congressional Art Competition

Submissions for our [Congressional Arts Competition](#) are OPEN to high school artists in the 12th District!

Winners will have **their work displayed at the Capitol**, my DC Office and my District Office in Ewing. All submissions that meet the requirements will be displayed at a two-week exhibit at Trenton ArtWorks from April 25th - May 9th.

Submissions are due April 4th by 4pm. Please [click here](#) for more info and be sure to **share this info with the high school artists you know.**

A vertical poster with a dark blue background and a colorful watercolor border. The text is centered and reads: 'CONGRESSWOMAN BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN PROUDLY SERVING NEW JERSEY'S 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Presents the 12th Annual Congressional Art Competition SUBMISSIONS DUE - APRIL 4TH! We invite you to our Artist Commemoration & Awards Ceremony Friday, April 25, 2025 6:00PM-8:00PM Please join us in celebrating the grand opening of the Congressional Art Exhibition A two week exhibition from April 25th - May 9th, featuring original works by high school artists throughout New Jersey's 12th Congressional District'. At the bottom, it lists 'ARTWORKS TRENTON 19 EVERETT ALLEY TRENTON, NJ 08611' on the left, a circular logo for 'BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN' in the center, and 'TO RSVP, PLEASE EMAIL NJ12ARTSCOMP@GMAIL.COM OR CALL 609-883-0026' on the right.

**CONGRESSWOMAN
BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN**
PROUDLY SERVING NEW JERSEY'S 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

*Presents the 12th Annual
Congressional
Art Competition*

SUBMISSIONS DUE - APRIL 4TH!

*We invite you to our
Artist Commemoration & Awards Ceremony*

*Friday, April 25, 2025
6:00PM-8:00PM*

*Please join us in celebrating the grand opening of the
Congressional Art Exhibition*

*A two week exhibition from April 25th - May 9th,
featuring original works by high school artists
throughout New Jersey's 12th Congressional District*

ARTWORKS TRENTON
19 EVERETT ALLEY
TRENTON, NJ 08611

**BONNIE
WATSON COLEMAN**

TO RSVP, PLEASE EMAIL
NJ12ARTSCOMP@GMAIL.COM
OR CALL 609-883-0026



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