



Report to the People

From Congressman

Bob Menendez

13th Congressional District ♦ New Jersey

Dear Constituents:

First let me extend the warmest of greetings for the new year to you and your family. We've been through a lot in the last few months, and there's no doubt that it's been tough. So many families have lost so much. At the same time, as someone who has spent his whole life here, I've never been prouder to have you all as neighbors and friends. The Northern New Jersey hospitals and first responders were called upon early and often to assist those in need. They did an incredible job. Everyone has pulled together, helping each other, or just being there for each other. Flags are proudly displayed all over. Our children are learning just how strong real-life heroes can be. In many very real ways, we're stronger as a community than we have ever been.

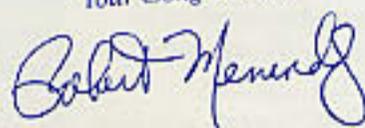
Just as we've come together as a community, our nation is rallying around a common fight — and against a common enemy we must and will defeat. International terrorism is a threat to freedom-loving people everywhere. So when it comes to the war effort, there are no Democrats and Republicans, only Americans.

That said, our united front in defeating terrorism does not mean that strong, principled differences in other important areas no longer exist. As the Vice Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I helped lead the fight to federalize our nation's air travel security — taking it out of the hands of the private companies whose own security lapses have become well-known. I've fought for an economic stimulus package that extends unemployment and health care benefits to working families, and emergency assistance to small businesses; and for full tax relief for victims' families, including payroll tax relief for lower-income families, and favorable treatment for credit card debt that is forgiven.

With all the struggles families are facing today, and in our area more than many others, these are principles and issues worth fighting for, and will continue to be a part of my agenda.

In this work, I gather great strength from the strength and resiliency of our community. We will overcome the challenges we face. The new year is bright with promise.

Your Congressman,



Menendez Helps Win Federalized Security at Airports

We have federal officers at our nation's borders, patrolling our nation's waterways, and protecting the U.S. Capitol. And that's the right way to do it. I argued from the start that we needed to bring that high level of federal security to our nation's airports.

But for many weeks, the Republican Leadership in the House argued that it was acceptable to continue using poorly-trained

workers, hired by the same private companies that have cut corners in the past so that they could be the lowest bidder.

Keeping the status quo is the wrong approach because protecting our air travel system shouldn't be an entry-level job.

When it comes to aviation security, we need to get strict safety controls in, and get the profit-motives out. That's why we Democrats stood our ground on

this crucial issue, until public pressure finally got the Republicans to agree to federalize our airport security. Although we lost a lot of time during this period of negotiation, it was an issue worth fighting for.

And although it will take time to put all the new mandates into effect, we won important victories in requiring that all checked baggage be screened and that security at airports comes under full federal responsibility.

Menendez Leads New Homeland Security Task Force

September 11, 2001, like December 7, 1941, will forever live in infamy. The challenge, as during the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, is in our response. First, we must and will fight and defeat terrorists and those who harbor them — wherever they are. Second, we need to make our homeland safe and secure.

The horrific events of Sept. 11 have challenged each and every one of us to do whatever we can to ensure that such a tragedy will never happen again. The surviving spouses of the attacks care for their fatherless or motherless children with determination and warmth. Friends and neighbors in our community are working hard to help those affected. Social service organizations are working overtime. Countless men and women, grandparents and grandchildren, do their share through deeds, large and small. All inspire us to transcend this cowardly attack on America and the way of life we so cherish. And we will.

What is your Government doing? Two weeks after the terrorist attacks, Leader Dick Gephardt asked me to serve as Chairman of the House Homeland Security Task Force of the Democratic Caucus. The events of Sept. 11 shocked our nation, but the need for swift and thoughtful action by Congress was urgent, and over 80 Members joined our Task Force right away, determined to protect America from terrorism, and to prepare us for the challenges ahead.

The anthrax attack on Capitol Hill may have temporarily shut down our offices, but it did not keep Task Force members and staff from working. We met during this time in a Capitol Hill townhouse.

Little over a month later, the Task Force announced BioPAct, H.R. 3255, "The Bio-terrorism Protection Act of 2001", to comprehensively address the threat of bio-terrorism in America. BioPAct is a pact between the people and their government, working together, marshaling our vast resources, to keep America safe from bio-terrorism, drawing upon the American spirit, intellect and creativity, breaking new frontiers, and setting a standard for the world.

BioPAct is the product of a truly collaborative effort of Members of Congress in consultation with constituents and local, State and Federal officials throughout America.

The legislation will:

- ▲ Proactively assess new threats and risks we face.
- ▲ Eliminate biological threats at the source.
- ▲ Secure our borders on land and at sea.
- ▲ Protect our food and water.
- ▲ Equip our communities with the resources to prevent and respond to bioterrorism.
- ▲ Prevent disease outbreaks through early detection and availability of rapid treatment.
- ▲ Strengthen our Intelligence through full coordination.

- ▲ Use our most advanced technology to fight bioterrorism.
- ▲ Ensure a full and open dialogue with the public.
- ▲ Protect our nation against bioterrorism, thereby strengthening our public health system—a dual use benefit.

The House recently passed "The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Response Act", including many of the provisions of BioPAct.

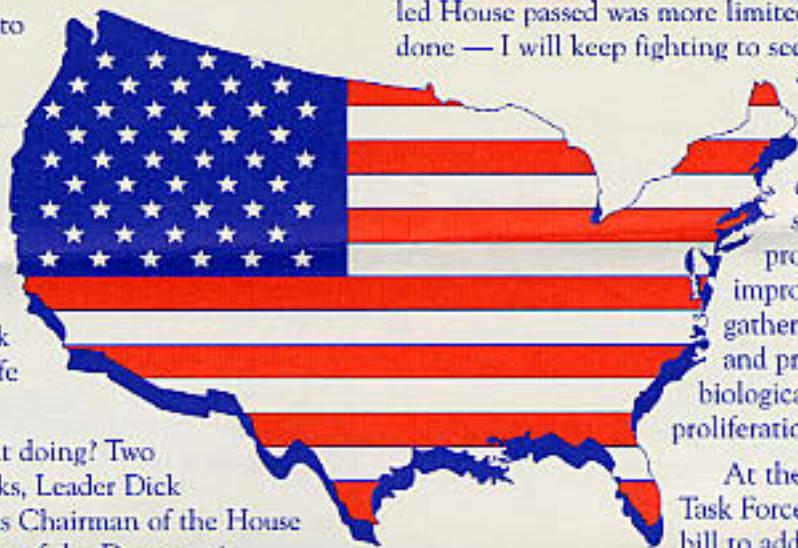
Unfortunately, unlike BioPAct, which is comprehensive in its approach, the bill the Republican-led House passed was more limited. More needs to be done — I will keep fighting to see that it is. The threat we face requires a much broader response, including enhancing customs and border security capabilities, protecting food and water, improving intelligence gathering and coordination, and preventing worldwide biological and chemical agent proliferation.

At the end of the Session, the Task Force introduced a second bill to address all aspects of terrorism beyond bio-terrorism, the United States Security Act of 2001.

This bill will:

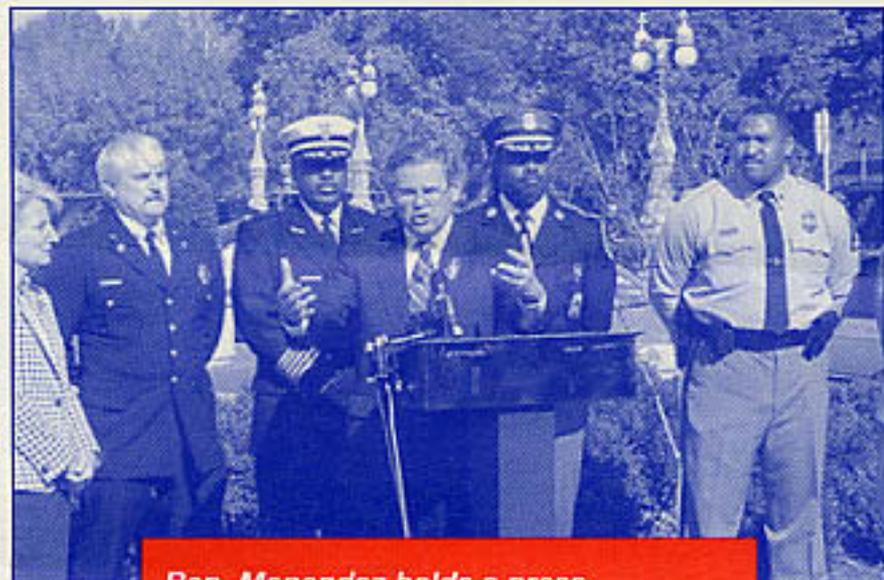
- ▲ Adapt America's Public Health Infrastructure for New Threats.
- ▲ Secure all modes of transportation and the national transportation infrastructure.
- ▲ Protect America's critical physical and information infrastructure, including nuclear facilities, oil refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, the electrical power grid and information systems.
- ▲ Enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to fight terrorism while preserving our cherished constitutional rights.
- ▲ Improve intergovernmental and interagency coordination and information sharing among Federal, State and Local authorities.
- ▲ Prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear, chemical, and biological materials abroad.
- ▲ Prepare America's Armed Services to fight terrorism.
- ▲ Give the Director of the Office of Homeland Security the authority he needs to effectively coordinate the efforts of over 40 agencies to prevent, prepare for and respond to terrorism.

I hope that, in the same bipartisan spirit in which we supported the first step on bioterrorism, the Republican Leadership will agree to continue the effort we began months ago—an effort to comprehensively address the needs of our communities and our nation in the wake of the new threats we face.



Menendez Attends Groundbreaking for New JCMC Hospital

During a November 19th groundbreaking ceremony, we took a historic next step in the long effort to provide the residents of Jersey City and Hudson County with a new state-of-the-art Medical Center. The new \$200 million facility became possible after the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) approved the hospital's loan guarantee, which is the largest insured hospital loan that HUD has ever approved in the State of New Jersey. The new hospital will provide Jersey City with a new heart center, a children's hospital, a trauma center and emergency room, an imaging center, operating rooms, an outpatient facility with doctors' offices, and an EMS communications center. Public transportation will make the hospital fully accessible by all residents, and the new development is an integral part of the Liberty North Redevelopment Area. The hospital is expected to be complete by 2004.



Rep. Menendez holds a press conference with police and firefighters to discuss his efforts to secure the overtime pay they deserve in the wake of the September 11th attacks.

Congressman Bob Menendez

District Offices

911 Bergen Avenue
Jersey City, N.J. 07306
(201) 222-2828

263 Hobart Street
Perth Amboy, N.J. 08861
(732) 324-6212

654 Avenue C
Bayonne, N.J. 07002
(201) 823-2900

3109 Bergenline Avenue
2nd Floor
Union City, N.J. 07087
(201) 558-0800

Washington Office

2238 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-7919

website:

<http://menendez.house.gov>

email address:

menendez@mail.house.gov

House Passes Historic Education Bill

After a year-long effort to enact bipartisan education reform, the House, Senate and the White House finally reached agreement on historic legislation that will provide all children equal access to quality education in this country. H.R.1, the No Child Left Behind Act, reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and provides much-needed additional resources to improve our education system and give all students the same chance to succeed, regardless of race, ethnicity or income.

Democratic negotiators succeeded in making significant improvements to the President's initial proposal, most notably the elimination of private school vouchers and state block grants. In addition, we were successful in increasing overall program funding, including funding for Title I targeted schools, bilingual education programs, and teacher training. The Conference Report also authorizes funding for school construction and modernization, preserves separate after-school and violence prevention programs, funds hate-crime prevention and maintains strong civil rights protections – none of which were included in the President's original proposal.

The legislation authorizes \$26.3 billion for ESEA programs, which is approximately \$8 billion more than in Fiscal Year 2001. The actual appropriation level for Fiscal Year 2002 will be about \$4 billion, or 20%, more than the current funding level.

This landmark agreement sets firm targets for closing achievement gaps and improves targeting of federal funds to poor school districts that need them the most. The increased accountability and targeting of resources, combined with the funding increases needed to carry out those goals, will ensure that all students have the same opportunity to learn. And that knowledge will be the key to opening doors to success in the future.

How You Can Get Help

The LIHEAP and Weatherization Assistance programs are available to eligible low-income families across the country. To qualify in New Jersey, a family must be within the following income guidelines:

Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income
1	\$1,253
2	\$1,693
3	\$2,134
4	\$2,574
5	\$3,014
6	\$3,455
7	\$3,895
8	\$4,336
9	\$4,776
10	\$5,217
11	\$5,544
12	\$5,657

To determine eligibility for household sizes greater than 12, add \$113 for each additional member.

Applications will be accepted until March 29, 2002. To apply or to get more information, contact

Essex County

La Casa De Don Pedro
317 Roseville Avenue
Newark, NJ 07107
973-485-0701 (Weatherization Program)
973-485-0796 (Home Energy Assistance)

Hudson County

Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation
555 Kennedy Boulevard
Bayonne, NJ 07002
201-437-7222

Puerto Ricanos Asociados for Community Organization (PACO)

389 Monmouth Street
Jersey City, NJ 07302
201-864-3774 (Weatherization Program)
201-217-0583 (Home Energy Assistance)

3700 Bergenline Avenue
Union City, NJ 07087
201-864-3774 (Weatherization Program)
201-217-0583 (Home Energy Assistance)

Middlesex County

Puerto Rican Action Board
22 Joyce Kilmer Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08903-0240
732-828-4510 (Weatherization Program)
732-828-4541 (Home Energy Assistance)

Union County

PROCEED
1126 Dickinson Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07102
908-351-7727

Urban League of Union County

288 North Broad Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07207
908-351-7200

Heating Assistance for Low-Income Households

As a result of the September 11th attacks and the economic downturn, many families are facing very difficult times, and the coming winter weather will make it even more difficult for families to heat their homes. However, assistance is available through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Weatherization Assistance Program. These programs have provided assistance to millions of low-income Americans who otherwise might have lost their heat in winter because they couldn't pay their bills, or continued to pay higher heating bills because their homes were not properly insulated.

LIHEAP is a federally-funded block grant to states that helps ease the energy cost burden of low-income households. Eligibility for the program is based on income, and the amount of the benefit is determined by the state.

The Weatherization Assistance Program is one of the largest energy conservation programs in the nation, and has been proven to save money and reduce energy use. It provides low-income households a wide range of weatherization assistance, including caulking and weather stripping of windows and doors, installing storm windows and doors, insulating attics, and efficiency improvements to existing space heating and water heating systems.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Robert Menendez
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13th Congressional District
New Jersey

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