



Report to the People

13th Congressional District ♦ New Jersey

Congressman Bob Menendez

It's Time for a Balanced Energy Plan . . .

Energy is one of the most critical issues facing our nation today. We have an historic opportunity to adopt a balanced energy policy in this country – one that helps consumers now, increases supply, and protects the environment for future generations. The Congressional Democratic plan I've been working on provides a common sense approach to our nation's energy needs through increased production and efficiency, putting consumers first, and protecting the environment.

But the Administration's Big Oil Plan Fails the American People

I'm disappointed that President Bush has proposed an energy plan that sacrifices the gains we have made cleaning up the air we breathe and the water we drink. Instead, this plan pits our nation's energy needs against our most important environmental protections. We do not need to open our most pristine wilderness areas, like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), to oil and gas drilling when the vast majority of America's oil and gas resources are on less sensitive lands that are already open to development.

Representative Menendez: Fighting for a Balanced Energy Plan

Representative Menendez's Plan: Helping Consumers, Increasing Supply, & Protecting the Environment

Helps consumers today by investigating price gouging now; and providing tax credits this year to consumers and businesses to improve energy efficiency

Focuses on both energy supply and demand by providing tax credits to promote domestic oil & gas production while encouraging ways to conserve energy

Protects the environment by reducing air pollution, and safeguards wilderness areas from drilling

Invests in the future by increasing funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy research and development

The President's Plan: No Immediate Relief; No New Solutions

Fails to provide consumers with any immediate relief from high electricity and gas prices; **Cuts** energy assistance programs that help consumers pay high energy bills

Fails to provide a balanced approach to both supply and demand; Instead, focuses on increasing supply by allowing drilling in environmentally sensitive areas

Fails to protect the environment and encourages drilling in environmentally sensitive and protected areas

Cuts federal funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs

Working for Real Patient Protections

On June 29, the Senate, under the new Democratic Leadership, passed a strong, enforceable, bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights. Now Republican House Leaders, despite their public position last year, are trying to defeat meaningful reform. They say one thing, and support another. They say they support real patient protections, but they really support HMO's rights over patients' rights. Don't let the rhetoric fool you, take a look at the details:

Real, Bipartisan Ganske-Dingell-Norwood Patients' Bill of Rights

- ✓ Provides all protections to all Americans with private health insurance
- ✓ Guarantees access to emergency care, specialists, ob-gyns, and prescription drugs
- ✓ Ensures that doctors, not insurance company bureaucrats, make medical decisions
- ✓ Ensures timely, fair, and independent external review of medical decisions
- ✓ Ensures that HMOs are held accountable, like any other American business, when they make medical decisions that cause injury or death; preserves existing state laws which allow injured patients to hold their HMOs accountable for negligent medical practice

House Leadership HMO's Bill of Rights

- ✗ Fails to provide protections to state and local government workers
- ✗ Filled with loopholes that weaken access to emergency care, fail to ensure access to specialty care, require women to get pre-authorization to see an ob-gyn for certain routine and non-routine care, and fail to provide patients affordable, medically necessary drugs that are not already approved by the HMO
- ✗ Fails to protect the doctor-patient relationship by: limiting doctors' communications with patients, allowing HMOs to retaliate against providers who advocate on behalf of patients, and allowing HMOs to continue to use improper incentive payments to force doctors to limit medically appropriate care
- ✗ Stacks the external review process against patients by allowing HMOs to choose reviewer, limiting reviewers' decision options, and failing to ensure that decisions are made as quickly as a patient's medical condition requires
- ✗ Eliminates existing legal rights for patients and preempts current state laws that already provide patients with legal recourse; severely limits legal remedies as well as access to courts

Increased Temperatures Don't Have to Mean Increased Energy Bills

While Republicans and Democrats may agree on the need for energy legislation, we have significant differences in how we address our nation's energy needs. But consumers don't have to wait for these differences to be resolved. There are a number of ways to reduce energy consumption in your own home, many of which cost little or no money to you, but result in savings on your monthly energy bills.

- ❖ **Turn Up Your Thermostat** when you're away
- ❖ **Use Fans to Reduce Air Conditioner Use**
- ❖ **Use Appliances Wisely** — don't stand in front of the refrigerator, freezer, or hot oven with the door open
 - Laundry** — use cold or warm water, line dry clothes when possible, and when you need to use the dryer, run full loads
 - Dishwasher** — run your dishwasher only when it's fully loaded, turn off the dry cycle and air dry dishes instead
 - Cooking** — heat water and food in the microwave instead of on the stove top
- ❖ **Turn Off Lights and Appliances, Unplug Electronic Devices and Chargers**
- ❖ **Replace Air Conditioner Filters and Professionally Seal Ducts** to improve airflow and reduce cooling costs up to 25%
- ❖ **Weatherize Your Home, Install Window Shading** — weather-strip, seal, and caulk leaky doors and windows; install window coverings, shading screens, or patio covers and awnings to shade your home from the sun
- ❖ **Choose Energy Efficient Products and Appliances** — Compact fluorescent bulbs use 75% less energy and last longer than incandescent light bulbs

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Consumer Issues

Consumer Beware!

New computer technology has made it much easier for criminals to get access to your personal information and use it for their own benefit. These scams come in many different forms—identity theft, telemarketing fraud, promises of prize winnings or financial gain, and credit card fraud.

Seniors, in particular, are the largest targets of telemarketing fraud. Fraudulent telemarketers direct between 60% and 80% of their calls to older consumers. Overall, telemarketing scams cost American consumers more than \$40 billion every year.

Don't Be a Victim of Phony Telemarketers!

- ❖ Know the company's name, address, product, and refund policy
- ❖ Ask the caller to send written materials for you to review
- ❖ Report suspicious telemarketing calls to the Attorney General's office; ask if any complaints have been filed against a company before you agree to purchase anything
- ❖ **DON'T** ever pay for any prize or send any money to improve your chances of winning
- ❖ **DON'T** allow any caller to intimidate or bully you into buying something on-the-spot
- ❖ **DON'T** give any caller your bank account number
- ❖ **DON'T** give your credit card number to anyone over the telephone, unless you made the call

Protect Yourself, Protect Your Personal Information

- ❖ Tear up charge receipts, bank statements, expired credit cards, and pre-approved credit offers
- ❖ Only give out your Social Security number when required; don't print it on checks
- ❖ Reduce the number of cards you carry; don't carry your Social Security number, birth certificate or passport with you
- ❖ Be aware of others nearby when entering your PIN
- ❖ Don't give your credit card or bank account number over the phone unless you have placed the call and know the business

Hoax Targets Seniors

The Social Security Administration (SSA) recently warned senior citizens to exercise great caution when responding to solicitations that promise additional Social Security benefits. SSA's Inspector General found that over 25,000 seniors had been victims of fraudulent flyers promising extra Social Security benefits and/or slave reparations in exchange for supplying sensitive personal information. One flyer promised \$5,000 for seniors, born before 1927, as a result of the "Slave Reparation Act."

There is no such law - THE FLYER IS A HOAX. Another flyer targets "notch babies" born between 1917 and 1926, promising a \$5,000 lump sum "settlement" if they submit sensitive personal information. While there has been legislation introduced to address the "notch" issue, **NO LAW HAS BEEN PASSED TO PROVIDE FOR THESE PAYMENTS.**

According to the investigation, the return address on the flyers belongs to the TREA Senior Citizens League (TSCL), although TSCL denies involvement with the flyers. The investigation did find, however, that TSCL collected individuals' personal information in a database and responded to victims of the scam, disavowing any responsibility but including TSCL's standard fundraising brochure.

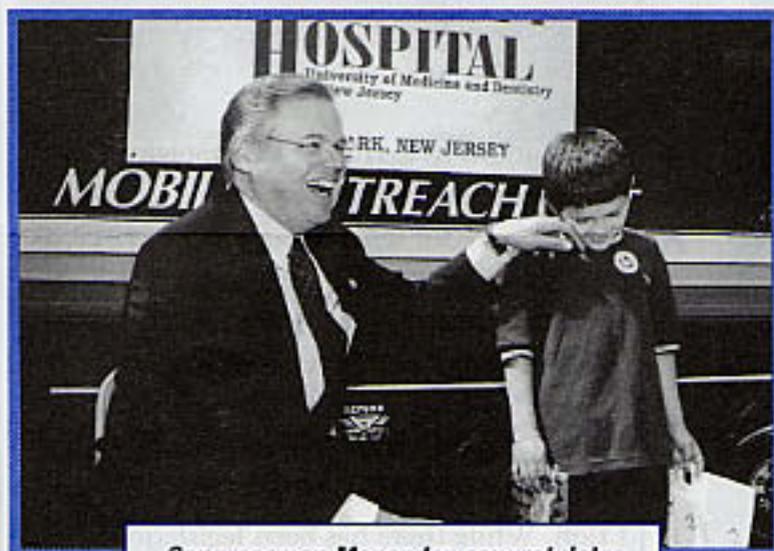
Be Alert, Prevent Identity Theft

The telephone is not the only way for criminals to steal your money and identity. Thieves can get access to your personal information by stealing your purse or wallet, taking information from your mailbox, getting a copy of your credit report, watching ATM transactions to get your PIN number, or picking credit card receipts out of the trash. Once a thief has this personal information, they can assume your identity—known as "identity theft"—and apply for loans, credit cards, or make withdrawals from your bank account. According to the U.S. Secret Service, identity theft cost consumers and institutions \$745 million in 1997 alone.

Menendez Immunization Day

It's back to school time, which means it's time for this year's Menendez Immunization Day. In the back-to-school rush, don't forget to review your children's immunization records. Most childhood immunizations should be given by age 2, so it's very important to review all of your children's records, even if they're not yet beginning school.

In 1999, the Menendez Immunization Day provided more than 150 free immunizations to children and enrolled many of those children in the New Jersey KidCare program, which provides health insurance coverage to uninsured families that do not qualify for Medicaid coverage. The event also included a discussion of ongoing federal efforts to increase childhood immunization rates. Mark your calendar for this year's event:



Congressman Menendez congratulates a young constituent, after he bravely receives his immunization.



Visit Congressman
Menendez
on the Internet:

Web site: Menendez.house.gov

DATE:
Wednesday,
August 29, 2001

TIME:
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

LOCATIONS:
JERSEY CITY
Citimarket
360 Martin Luther King Blvd.

UNION CITY
Summit Bank
3109 Bergenline Ave.

BRING YOUR CHILDREN'S IMMUNIZATION RECORDS. IMMUNIZATIONS CANNOT BE GIVEN WITHOUT IMMUNIZATION CARDS.

Rep. Menendez Introduces Children's Lead Poisoning Bill

This year, I have re-introduced the Children's Lead Screening Accountability For Early Intervention (SAFE) Act of 2001, a bill that would improve lead screening and treatment for children at risk of blood lead poisoning. Under current law, Medicaid is required to screen two year-olds for lead poisoning, but only 20% of those children are actually tested. It's estimated that almost 900,000 children have harmful levels of lead in their blood, which can cause learning disabilities and impair growth in young children.

The legislation I've introduced would:

- ✓ Increase lead screening for young children enrolled in federal programs such as Medicaid, CHIP, WIC, and Head Start
- ✓ Ensure that Medicaid covers medically necessary treatment for children with elevated blood lead levels
- ✓ Require that Medicaid provide emergency assistance to eliminate the source of lead poisoning for children and pregnant women with extremely high blood lead levels in order to prevent additional exposure
- ✓ Provide bonus funds for states that screen more than 65% of their Medicaid children

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Official Business



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MC
PRSRT STD

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