



Congressman  
**Jerrold Nadler**  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

*Jerrold Nadler*  
M.C.  
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Congressman  
**Jerrold Nadler**

Report to New York's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**DISTRICT OFFICES**

201 Varick Street  
Suite 669  
New York, NY 10014  
(212) 367-7350

445 Neptune Avenue  
Brooklyn NY 11224  
(718) 373-3198

**WASHINGTON OFFICE**

2334 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-5635

nadler.house.gov

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**Revolutionizing Higher Education**

I am proud to have joined in passing the single largest increase in federal student aid in history. The *Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act* will make college dramatically more affordable – at no cost to taxpayers. The Act:

- ▲ Invests \$36 billion over 10 years to increase the maximum annual Pell Grant to nearly \$6,000.
- ▲ Supports Historically Black Colleges and Universities with \$2.55 billion to give students support toward graduating.
- ▲ Finances the increased loans and grants by saving \$61 billion over 10 years by ending the wasteful subsidies currently given to banks that administer student loans. All federal loans will now be made through the more cost-efficient Direct Loan program administered by the Department of Education.



Rep. Nadler at the opening of the High Line, one of the projects for which he was able to secure critical federal funding.

**Focus on New York's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District**

My staff and I always work to respond to the needs of the people in the district, to advocate on important local issues, and to bring key federal resources to the communities of Manhattan and Brooklyn. Some of my recent local efforts include:

- ▲ Through my work with advocates and community members, the City and the EPA will soon conduct comprehensive PCB abatement at P.S. 199 on the Upper West Side, removing these dangerous chemicals once used in school construction.
- ▲ Led community members and local officials in successfully retaining endangered branches of the U.S. Postal Service in the West Village, Port Authority, and Brighton Beach.
- ▲ Secured \$500,000 for NORC support services for Penn South, a program which allows seniors to age in place within the comfort of their own homes.
- ▲ Last December, the House passed my resolution recognizing the U.S.S. New York, a newly commissioned Navy ship forged partly from recovered World Trade Center steel and honoring the victims and heroes of 9/11.
- ▲ Secured \$1,500,000 in funding for GMHC's youth HIV prevention program.
- ▲ Worked for months to prevent the closure of St. Vincent's Hospital and am committed to fighting for a robust, new facility to meet the health care needs of the Lower West Side.
- ▲ Worked for years with the residents of Coney Island, local businesses, the City, and the area's local officials to usher in a new phase in Coney Island's redevelopment. I will continue to support affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, jobs, and economic development in the neighborhood.
- ▲ Secured \$200,000 for Project Chernobyl at the NY Eye and Ear Infirmary, a major thyroid cancer prevention effort to screen immigrants exposed to the Chernobyl disaster of 1986.

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Dear Friend,

This Congress has been one of the most productive in U.S. history. In fewer than two years we have overturned a Supreme Court decision which prevented women from receiving equal pay for equal work, passed historic health insurance reform, and revolutionized the student loan industry to make college more affordable. We acted aggressively to address the worst economic conditions since the Great Depression through passage of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* and numerous jobs bills designed to put America back to work. We also made history when the House passed the first legislation ever to comprehensively address the threats posed by climate change.

While much has been accomplished, there is a great deal that remains to be done. I look forward to building on our achievements and continuing to work on behalf of the people of New York.

Sincerely,  
*Jerrold Nadler*  
Jerrold Nadler

**Ending the Wars**

It is time to bring the troops home. I opposed the war in Iraq from its inception and have consistently supported efforts to end our involvement in a war that was horribly misguided. President Obama has committed to bringing combat operations to an end this year, and I intend to hold him to this promise.

I also opposed sending more troops to Afghanistan. It is unlikely that the U.S. and our allies will be able to end the 35-year Afghan civil war, nor is it our responsibility to do so.

If our initial mission in Afghanistan was to destroy the terrorist training camps and to eliminate Al Qaeda's presence in that country, then that mission has largely been accomplished, as the CIA reports there are now fewer than 100 Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. But our mission has unfortunately expanded to include breaking the Taliban's hold on large territories and shoring up a central government in a nation with no history of a strong central government. Continued U.S. involvement only fuels the rising insurgency, and we have become bogged down amidst a long-standing civil war between feuding Afghans of differing tribes, classes, and regions.

Clearly, it is time to rethink our dangerous policy in Afghanistan. That is why I have co-sponsored a bill introduced by Rep. McGovern that would require the Secretary of Defense to develop a firm exit strategy for U.S. military forces in Afghanistan.



Rep. Nadler looks on as the President signs into law the *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act*, which strengthens women's ability to fight pay discrimination. The bill, which Rep. Nadler helped write, was the first that the President signed into law.

**Reforming America's Health Care System**

I was proud to cast my vote in favor of health insurance reform this spring and joined President Obama at the White House as he signed it into law. Much of my adult life has been spent fighting to make health care a right, not a privilege. This bill, although far from perfect (lacking, for example, the public option I fought for), represents historic progress in this effort, and will be

remembered on a par with the *Social Security Act of 1935* and the *Medicare Act of 1965*.

According to a Harvard Medical School Study, 45,000 Americans die each year because they lack health insurance. Furthermore, most personal bankruptcies are caused by health care costs for people without insurance or whose insurance proves inadequate in a crisis. This new

law will provide health insurance to 32 million uninsured Americans and, in so doing, should save nearly 45,000 lives a year. The law also bans coverage denials based upon pre-existing conditions and ends annual and lifetime limits on coverage. It places a cap on a family's out-of-pocket costs, no matter how expensive a person's illness. The

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## Health Care

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law will also extend the solvency of the Medicare trust fund from 2017 to 2029, phase out the prescription drug “donut hole,” and lower annual Medicare premiums by nearly \$200 per beneficiary.

And the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office says the bill will reduce the federal deficit by \$143 billion over the next 10 years, and by \$1.2 trillion over the second decade.

### The Impact of Health Care Reform in New York’s 8th Congressional District

- ▲ Improves coverage for 436,000 people who already have health insurance.
- ▲ Gives tax credits to 172,000 families and 26,200 small businesses to help them afford coverage.
- ▲ Extends coverage to 18,000 uninsured residents.
- ▲ Allows 53,000 young adults to remain on their parents’ insurance plans until age 26.
- ▲ Helps 27,600 small businesses buy health insurance through a nationwide exchange which has lower group rates and a greater choice of insurers.
- ▲ Guarantees that 7,800 residents with pre-existing conditions can obtain coverage.

Source: House Energy and Commerce Committee.

### Caring for 9/11 Responders and Survivors

This year we have made important progress on finally providing critical health care and compensation to first responders and area residents, workers, and students sickened through exposure to deadly toxins from the collapse of the World Trade Center. The *9/11 Health and Compensation Act* has passed both the House Judiciary and Energy and Commerce committees. The bill – of which I am co-author and lead co-sponsor – would provide dedicated federal funding to those still suffering from the effects of the attacks, rather than keeping this care subject to the whims of the annual appropriations cycle. The bill would also reopen the federal Victim Compensation Fund. We must now work to bring this essential bill to the House floor for final passage.

## Protecting our Civil Liberties

Since 2007, I have served as Chair of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties. My job is to ensure that Congress safeguards the checks and balances on the executive and judicial branches in order to protect the civil rights and civil liberties codified by our Constitution and laws. Protecting the rule of law and Americans’ right to

privacy and due process is one of my greatest responsibilities.

My priorities have been to fight for an end to abusive policies – such as torture, extraordinary rendition, illegal surveillance, and unlawful detention – and for accountability for government officials at all levels who have abused their power.

### Safeguarding both State Secrets and Due Process

In order for the rule of law to have any meaning, individual liberties and rights must be enforceable in our courts. There is an ancient maxim in law that there is no right without a remedy. If the government violates your rights – if it wiretaps your phone without a warrant, if it invades and ransacks your house, if it kidnaps and tortures you – your only real remedy is to sue the government for an injunction or for damages, or both.

But if the Executive can have any court case dismissed merely by claiming a “state secrets” exemption without having to prove to a court that the concerns about revealing sensitive national security information are real – and not simply an excuse to shield embarrassing

or illegal acts – then you have no remedy and, therefore, no rights. There can be no law, no rights, and no liberty if the Executive can do anything it wants behind an impenetrable wall of secrecy. This application of the state secrets doctrine was first used by the Bush Administration, and represents the single greatest threat to our civil liberties.

That is why I have introduced the *State Secret Protection Act*, which will prohibit a case from being dismissed on state secrets grounds alone, but will permit the suppression of evidence if the court determines that the government’s state secrets claim is based on a bona fide national security interest which cannot be satisfied in a different way.

## Returning the Nation to Economic Prosperity

In the midst of the worst recession in decades, the Democratic-led Congress has worked with President Obama to pull our economy back from the brink and put us on the path to recovery. While we have considerable work ahead of us to return the nation to economic prosperity, this Congress has taken aggressive measures toward this goal.

The *Recovery Act* injected billions of dollars into our economy, stimulating demand and creating jobs while making critical investments in clean energy and infrastructure. It gave key assistance to states that enabled them to retain tens of thousands of teachers, firefighters, and law enforcement personnel. To date, an estimated 2.5 million jobs have been saved or

created as a direct result of the *Recovery Act*. We continue to work to extend unemployment insurance and COBRA benefits to those hardest hit by the recession.

I have also introduced the *Transportation Job Corps Act*, which would put at-risk youth to work in the transit industry – providing these vulnerable youth with career skills while bolstering our mass transit system.

Of course, we cannot content ourselves merely to recover from the current recession; we must ensure that we never again repeat the mistakes that led to this crisis. That is why I strongly supported the House’s sweeping financial regulatory reform to make markets more transparent and banks more accountable.



Rep. Nadler with community members and local officials who oppose hydraulic fracture drilling within NYC’s watershed.

## Fighting for Equality

The fight for equality for LGBT Americans is one of the most significant civil rights struggles we face today. Among our recent victories in this struggle is the signing into law of the *Hate Crimes Prevention Act*. The bill – of which I was an original co-sponsor and author – reverses the exclusion of LGBT Americans and others from federal hate crime protections. It also provides crucial federal resources to state and local law enforcement officials in order to prevent and prosecute hate crimes. President Obama has also issued an executive order that expands the rights of gays, lesbians, and others in regard to **hospital visitation** and medical decision-making for their partners and family members.

These are important victories, but we are still far from achieving equality for LGBT Americans. While the President should be applauded for these historic steps, we must move further and faster to put an end to “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” sign into law the *Employment Non-Discrimination Act*, and repeal the *Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)*.

Rep. Nadler introducing the *Respect for Marriage Act* to advance marriage equality for LGBT Americans.



I am proud to have introduced the *Respect for Marriage Act (RMA)* which would repeal DOMA, a 1996 law which denies lawfully married same-sex couples all of the federal rights and protections normally afforded to married couples, including access to programs like social security. RMA embraces the common law principle that marriages which are legally valid in the state in which they are entered into should be recognized as valid by the federal government. This critical legislation has won support from President Clinton – who signed DOMA into law – and former Rep. Bob Barr, DOMA’s original author.

And, as the nation prepares to debate immigration reform, one often-overlooked issue is discrimination against LGBT Americans under federal immigration law. Current law prohibits LGBT Americans from sponsoring their permanent partners for legal residency, as other citizens can. As it is gratuitously cruel to keep committed couples – and families – apart, I have introduced the *Uniting American Families Act* in order to bring equality to immigration law and protect LGBT families from being singled-out for discrimination.

## Improving Transportation and the Environment

For over 30 years, I have consistently fought for better transportation policies and, as our region’s senior Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, for increased funding for key New York infrastructure projects.

During last year’s efforts in Congress to pass economic recovery legislation, I pushed to include as much funding for transportation as possible. The House passed my amendment to **increase transit funding** in the stimulus bill by \$3 billion – a 33% increase. Federal transit dollars go toward crucial upgrades of our aging rail and mass transit systems, as well as to major new projects like the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Subway and East Side Access. Although some of the transit funding in the final bill was diverted to fund high speed rail, this year I am leading an effort to

increase federal transit funding from the \$10.8 billion requested in the President’s budget proposal to \$14.88 billion. I am also co-sponsoring H.R. 2746 to provide operating assistance to transit agencies like the MTA which are facing severe budget crises.

Since 1999, I have called on the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to accept responsibility for **regulating the helicopter industry** in New York, where our overly congested air corridors endanger residents and visitors and subject our neighborhoods to intolerable noise. After years of inexcusable delay by the FAA, our fears were terribly confirmed by last August’s fatal midair crash above the Hudson River. With community support, pressure on the City, and a favorable legal settlement, we have succeeded in closing the West

30<sup>th</sup> Street Heliport to all tourist helicopters and significantly reducing tourist flights from the Downtown Manhattan Heliport. We have greatly reduced the number of tourist helicopters in Manhattan and have banned them from crossing the island at West 79<sup>th</sup> Street; tourist helicopter flights over Brooklyn have been banned altogether.

In order to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions and make New York’s taxi cabs more environmentally friendly, I have introduced the *Green Taxis Act* to amend federal law to allow the City to mandate a greener fleet of taxis. In New York City alone, upgrading taxis could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 296,000 tons each year – or the equivalent of taking 35,000 cars off the road.

## Housing for ALL New Yorkers

Because of the importance of federal funds in ensuring stable and affordable housing for many of our neighbors, I work every year to increase congressional spending on housing programs. Last year, my efforts helped lead the House to significantly increase funding for Section 8 rental assistance and for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids program (HOPWA). While these are essential expenditures, funding frequently falls short of our city’s overwhelming housing needs.

For the upcoming fiscal year, I am calling for the funding of 250,000 new Section 8 vouchers and am working with leaders of the Financial Services Committee to ensure that New Yorkers’ housing needs are met. I have also worked to increase funding for HOPWA and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, which provide services for half a million people each year. Last year, we achieved the highest level of HOPWA funding ever – \$350 million – and I hope to obtain more this next cycle to help the thousands of Americans living with HIV/AIDS.

### Housing and Unemployment

- ▲ For information on affordable housing, call 311 or 1-718-707-7771
- ▲ For information on unemployment benefits, call 1-888-209-8124 or visit the NYS Department of Labor website at [www.labor.state.ny.us](http://www.labor.state.ny.us)
- ▲ For information on federal COBRA coverage, call 1-866-444-3272 or visit the US Department of Labor website at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)
- ▲ For New York State mini-COBRA coverage, call 1-800-342-3736 or visit the NYS Insurance Department website at [www.ins.state.ny.us](http://www.ins.state.ny.us)