

## American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funding Making a Difference

So far, hundreds of millions of dollars in Recovery Act funds have come to our district to create and preserve jobs, provide greater tax relief to workers and families, increase unemployment and food stamp benefits, and provide more money for TennCare.

We are seeing hopeful signs that the ARRA's job-creating investments are paying off by promoting new ideas for home weatherization and renewable energy, and creating "green jobs" such as those at Sharp Solar. Along with funding the "Cash for Clunkers" program, providing small businesses with low-interest loans, and creating a new first-time home buyer tax credit, it has also provided specific funding for a number of programs in the Ninth District. Here's a sampling of how ARRA funds are making a difference in our community:

- \$98.3 million for Recovery Zone Bonds to jump-start construction projects and invest in job training.
- \$24.5 million for a one-time \$250 check to Social Security and SSDI recipients.
- \$13.5 million to modernize public housing (HOPEVI).
- \$12.4 million for crime prevention programs – including \$6.3 million to hire 37 new Memphis Police officers.
- \$120.3 million for Memphis City Schools – including \$28 million for school modernization.
- \$2.1 million for HIV/AIDS assistance programs.
- \$132 million in additional unemployment benefits for Tennessee.

## Federal Funding

In the last three years, more than \$2 billion in federal funding has flowed into the Ninth District. In recent years, federal funding has helped to build University Place and the new \$4 million UT-HSC regional bio-containment lab, which is helping Memphis become a leader in biotechnology.

For 2009, my office was able to secure over \$24.6 million in federal funding for specific projects that will spur economic development, reduce crime, and invest in health care. Key 2009 funding highlights include:

- \$1 million for the City of Memphis for Operation Safe Community.
- \$1.6 million for a University of Memphis battlefield nursing program to support troops deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- \$399,000 for the dredging of Wolf River Harbor.
- \$476,000 for the expansion of the emergency room at the MED.
- \$475,000 for Elvis Presley Boulevard Improvements.
- \$4.5 million for Memphis International Airport improvements.

## Legislative Accomplishments

In the 111th Congress, I've authored and introduced 25 legislative measures – 10 of which have already passed the House. These include designating June as Black Music Month, honoring Memphis musical artists' contributions to our rich musical heritage; protecting authors from foreign libel suits; and, improving oversight of federal agencies. Through the appropriations process, the House has endorsed my proposals to increase funding for a number of local priorities. These successes include a proposal to honor the final wishes of fallen military service members as part of the Defense Authorization bill; increased funding in the Homeland Security bill for disaster response for trauma hospitals; increased Interior budget funding to protect national treasures; and, increased help for VA hospitals so they can recruit and retain talented doctors by forgiving a portion of their student loans as part of the VA budget bill.

To view all the legislation that has been sponsored or co-sponsored on your behalf, visit  
**COHEN.HOUSE.GOV**

# Congressman Steve Cohen Guide To Constituent Services

## Services Available Through My Memphis Office

Contact my district office to get advice or assistance regarding:

- Social Security and Medicare Benefits
- Veterans' Benefits and Military Service Issues
- Small Business Administration Loans and Services
- FHA, VA Home Loans
- Civil Rights Complaints (EEOC)
- Federal Grants
- Workers Compensation Claims
- Civil Service Pensions and Benefits
- Railroad Retirement Benefits
- Passports
- IRS Problems

## Seniors

We can ask the U.S. Treasury to replace lost social security checks, inquire on your behalf regarding Medicare reimbursement disputes and check the status of appeals of unfavorable decisions regarding retirement, disability or survivor benefits. Please contact my office if your problem has not been resolved to your satisfaction.

## Veterans

We can investigate and help you with denied veterans' benefits such as pensions and medical care.

## Student Information

Internships are available in my District Office and my Washington, DC Office. An internship provides an excellent opportunity to utilize academic lessons in a hands-on work environment. Internships may be full or part-time and may qualify for college credit.

In addition, my office can provide information on federal student loan programs such as Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, PLUS Loans, Federal Work Study, Perkins Loans, and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants.

Information is also available on the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Program, which includes the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, the Aspire Award, the Tennessee HOPE Access Grant, the General Assembly Merit Scholarship and the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant programs.

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*Steve Cohen*  
M.C.  
Presorted Standard

U.S. House of Representatives  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4208  
PUBLIC DOCUMENT  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

# CONGRESSMAN STEVE COHEN

## Fall 2009



## Service Academy Nominations

Each year, I recommend high school graduates for admission to the United States service academies (Army, Navy, Air Force and Merchant Marines). Applicants must live in Tennessee's Ninth Congressional District and be between the ages of 17 and 23. The nominations are made on a non-political, competitive basis. We suggest you begin the application process in your junior year.

## Non-Profit Organizations & Municipalities

Please visit my office or my web site (cohen.house.gov) for information about opportunities to receive federal grants and federal loans.

## Contact Me

Clifford Davis/Odell Horton Federal Building  
167 North Main Street, Suite 369  
Memphis, TN 38103  
Telephone: (901) 544-4131  
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**WEBSITE: COHEN.HOUSE.GOV**

- A Message from Your Representative
- 111th Congress Legislative Update
- Guide to Constituent Services
- Contact Me



# CONGRESSMAN STEVE COHEN

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

It is an honor to represent you in the U.S. Congress. This has been an historic year. We've seen the inauguration of President Barack Obama, the beginning of our military withdrawal from Iraq, and our economy begin to recover from the economic downturn. During the last nine months, constituent input via calls, letters, emails, personal meetings, public events and telephone town halls has shaped my voting record in Congress to best represent you.

In travels to the district's schools, community and senior centers, places of worship, veterans' halls, hospitals and public forums, you have shared your thoughts on issues such as the economy, jobs, crime, education, health care, and energy.

I'm pleased to report that the House of Representatives has taken action on a number of these fronts – passing a landmark energy bill that invests in renewable energy to end our dependence on foreign fuels, lower gas prices, create jobs for the 21st Century, and protect the planet; enacting laws and holding workshops to help homeowners avoid foreclosure; passing additional funding to put more cops on the streets; and, passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) which sent hundreds of millions of dollars to our district to create and retain jobs, helped families keep more of their hard-earned money, and jump-started our economy by investing in modern schools, roads and bridges.

Congress passed, and the president signed into law, an extension of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) that provides health insurance, prenatal care and medical care to kids so that they can start out life healthy. President Obama also signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which ensures women get an honest day's wages for an honest day's work.

As I'm sure you're aware, Congress is working toward reforming our health care system. We are closer than we have been in decades to an agreement on how to make our health care system work for, and not against, consumers.

To learn more about this proposal, visit my official website – [cohen.house.gov](http://cohen.house.gov). This website contains a wealth of information, including a complete listing of legislation sponsored and supported on your behalf, videos of floor speeches, constituent service information, press releases, and much more.

Additionally, each week's district and Capitol events are reported in my e-newsletter to those constituents who have "opted in." You may sign-up for the e-newsletter at [cohen.house.gov](http://cohen.house.gov) or by calling (901) 544-4131. Keeping the lines of communication open is vital to best serve you.

Most sincerely,

Contact Me

Telephone: (901) 544-4131

To receive periodic email updates on Congressional activity, please visit [COHEN.HOUSE.GOV](http://COHEN.HOUSE.GOV)

### Health Care Reform

One of the most serious challenges facing our nation is health care reform. 47 million Americans including 107,000 in the Ninth District don't have access to quality, affordable and comprehensive health care. For them, the only option is overcrowded emergency rooms. In 2008, health care providers in the district extended \$188 million worth of uncompensated care to individuals who lacked insurance coverage and were unable to pay their bills. That amounts to hundreds of dollars in hidden taxes to each of us and results in higher premiums for all who have insurance.

The growing cost of health care is one of the biggest drags on our economy and one of the leading factors in consumer debt and personal bankruptcy. As Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee that deals with bankruptcy, I am troubled by the alarming increase in medical bankruptcies across the country, so I scheduled a hearing on the issue. The bottom line is that too many families are just one major medical crisis away from losing their homes and being plunged into a debt so great they simply can't recover from it. Last year alone there were 4,320 health care-related bankruptcies in the Ninth District.

We can lower costs, offer more choices, end the days of staying in the same job just to keep health care insurance, and improve the quality of health care throughout the system. This reform is an absolutely crucial part of our long-term plan to rebuild our economy in a responsible way and lower health care costs for American families and businesses.

The foundation of any reform effort needs to be the right to retain coverage that you currently have, including keeping your doctors. For those who don't currently have coverage, reform needs to provide affordable quality health care. Equally important, reform must:

- ensure patients with pre-existing conditions are eligible for coverage;
- eliminate the donut hole for seniors and lower prescription drug prices;
- encourage new doctors to practice in inner cities by forgiving student loan debt;
- expand access to community health centers;
- ensure timely and appropriate reimbursements for doctors; and,
- limit outrageous insurance premium increases.

It is also important that health care reform focus on wellness and prevention. Of particular concern to me is the alarming fact that Memphis has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country – and equal to or greater than many Third World nations. This is one of the reasons it is imperative that we have a national effort dedicated to outreach and research to ensure that children have the chance to start out life healthy. The NEWBORN Act, which I authored, would begin this effort and should be part of the final health care reform bill.

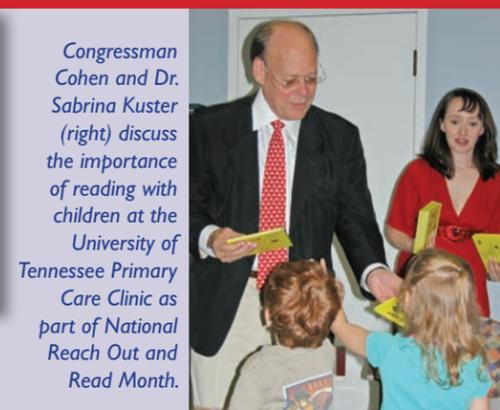
Several hundred showed up at BRIDGES for an August town hall meeting to express their views on health care reform



U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis (center) and District Director Randy Wade (right) meet with Beverly Robertson (left), President of the National Civil Rights Museum during the Secretary's visit to Memphis to announce the administration's "Green Jobs" initiative.



During the recent Congressional trade and fact-finding trip to Africa, the delegation stopped at the infamous slave prison known as Cape Coast Castle in Ghana.



Congressman Cohen and Dr. Sabrina Kuster (right) discuss the importance of reading with children at the University of Tennessee Primary Care Clinic as part of National Reach Out and Read Month.



Congressman Cohen speaks with students from Lucie E. Campbell Elementary school about civics during their recent visit to Washington, DC.



U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (left) visits with Whitehaven High School students during his recent trip to Memphis as part of a listening tour on No Child Left Behind.

### Africa Trade and Fact-Finding Trip

In August, I joined Democratic Representatives Sheila Jackson Lee (TX), Gwen Moore (WI), William Lacy Clay (MO) and G.K. Butterfield (NC) on a trade and fact finding trip to Morocco, Liberia, South Africa and Ghana. As part of the trip, we discussed trade and economic development opportunities with elected officials and saw first-hand how U.S. aid is helping to combat poverty, HIV/AIDS and improve the quality of life for citizens in these nations.

The visit to Ghana also presented an opportunity to meet with Ms. Joyce Adonteng, a local tailor and huge supporter of Amp Elmore's all-African home in Memphis. Ms. Adonteng worked with Amp in getting many of the furnishings for his house and in designing a tuxedo made from Kente cloth for President Obama. She is now designing clothes she hopes will be worn by First Lady Michelle Obama.

In Liberia we met with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf – who was honored in 2007 with the Freedom Award from the National Civil Rights Museum. I also met with the Pieh Family from Memphis who are in Liberia working for the State Department.

### Equal Employment for All Act

The unemployment rate in Memphis hovers around 10.3 percent. That's higher than the national average. At a time when people are struggling to find jobs, credit checks should not be used as a basis to deny employment to otherwise qualified candidates.

It is unfair to penalize job seekers who want to work hard but have had personal financial difficulties by denying employment solely on the basis of their credit report. That's why I've authored HR 3149, the Equal Employment For All Act, which would prohibit employers' use of consumer credit checks as part of the hiring or firing process, unless the job involves national security, FDIC clearance, or significant financial responsibility (such as bank managers, loan officers, or financial managers). More than 34 members of Congress have expressed their support of this bill.