



Volume 3 Issue 1

Standing for Government Transparency, Immigrant Communities and Housing Resources

A Note from Rep. Velázquez

Dear Friends,

We are a little over 100 days into the new Administration and it has been a busy few months. I thought it would make sense to take a few minutes and update you on some of my recent activities.

I've been working to protect our immigrant communities, preserve our environment and oppose budget cuts that would harm New York housing and undermine other vital services.

As I continue these efforts, it is important that I hear from all of you. In that regard, I recently held a "Telephone Town Hall" and [two in-person Town Halls in New York's 7th District](#). As I plan additional events like these, I encourage you to participate. You can also always reach out to my Washington, D.C. and District Offices with thoughts, questions and concerns.

Finally, if you don't already, please take a minute to follow me on social media. [My official Facebook page can be found here](#). My Twitter handle is @NydiaVelazquez. Social media is a great way to stay in touch with what I'm doing, so please sign up!

Thank you again for reading.

Sincerely,



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Fighting for Transparency and Accountability in Government

Like many Americans, Congresswoman Velázquez believes the new Administration must be as transparent as previous ones. In addition she believes we need a full, open and thorough investigation of Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. election.

In December, in a letter to then-Attorney General Loretta Lynch, the Congresswoman was the first Member of Congress to call for a Special Counsel to investigate Russia's interference in the U.S. election, including whether any Americans were involved. [The Washington Post covered her letter](#). You can [read her December letter here](#). Since then, she [repeated her call](#) for a Special Counsel when the President's National Security Advisor resigned due to unreported contact with Russian officials.

The Congresswoman also [called for Attorney General Sessions](#) to resign after it was revealed that he potentially misled Congress about previous meetings with Russian officials.

The Congresswoman has also [cosponsored legislation](#) to establish an independent, "9-11-style" Commission to investigate. She believes the American people deserve all the facts and is supporting multiple efforts to unearth them.

Standing for New York's Immigrant Communities

Congresswoman Velázquez believes that immigration makes both our nation and our city stronger. As she says, "In New York, immigrants are our neighbors. And New Yorkers stand up for their neighbors."

With the Administration escalating detainment and deportation policies, the Congresswoman has taken a lead role in opposing policies that she believes create fear in immigrant communities.

The Congresswoman recently introduced legislation that would suspend a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) program that enlists local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration rules. She believes that city and state police resources should go toward stopping dangerous criminals, not pursuing undocumented immigrants and their families. Moreover, these agreements have a long history of creating distrust between

immigrants and police, making everyone less safe. [You can read more about that legislation here.](#)

Likewise, when federal immigration authorities wear the word “police” on their apparel, it can create confusion among immigrants. Many immigrants have been known to unnecessarily grant access to their homes when seeing the words “police”, thinking they are cooperating with local law enforcement. This misleading practice also sows distrust between immigrant communities and law enforcement. To that end, [the Congresswoman has also authored legislation](#) that would prohibit Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Patrol from wearing the words “police”.

A number of news outlets covered this legislation, including the [LA Times](#), [CNN](#), the [Washington Post](#), the [New York Daily News](#) and the [New York Post](#).

Finally, Velázquez has been out front in opposing the President’s Executive Orders seeking to prohibit travel from Muslim nations. In January, when the first Executive Order was being implemented, the Congresswoman went immediately to JFK Airport, helping secure the release of two detained travelers. You can [read her statement from that day here](#). A number of media outlets covered the Congresswoman’s efforts including [New York Magazine](#), [NBC New York](#) and [the New York Times](#).

The Congresswoman was pleased that the Courts, to date, have blocked implementation of the President’s travel ban. She will remain outspoken on this issue. You can [read her latest statement on the topic here](#).

Defending Quality, Affordable Housing

The availability of safe, livable and affordable housing is a signature issue for Rep. Velázquez and she has steadfastly worked to protect New Yorkers’ housing options. In particular, the Congresswoman has opposed proposed cuts to the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) budget.

In March, in advance of the release of the President’s short-version of the budget, the Congresswoman led Democratic Members of the New York City Congressional delegation in writing to the Administration calling for adequate funding for HUD. [You can read that letter here.](#)

Later that month, the Congresswoman led New York City Democratic Members in writing to the House Appropriations Committee in calling for adequate funding for HUD and the New York City Housing Authority. The [letter, which is online here](#), called for funding the Public Housing Capital Fund at \$5 billion and increasing the Public Housing Operating Fund to \$5.3 billion.



Rep. Velázquez discusses housing issues with constituents

The Congresswoman has also spoken at events in New York City where she emphasized the need to prevent cuts to our nation’s housing system. Going forward, she will continue working to ensure there are adequate funds not only for the New York City Housing Authority, but also for vouchers in the Section 8 program.

Working for Healthy Communities

The Congresswoman remains dedicated to ensuring New Yorkers can raise their families in a healthy manner. Part of this includes protecting our environment locally and nationally. As such, she has drafted legislation that would exempt the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from the Trump Administration’s “hiring freeze” and has vocally opposed the Administration’s proposal to cut the agency’s budget by 30%. In February, she submitted comments to the House Appropriations Committee, seeking adequate funding for the EPA. You can [read her comments here](#).

She is concerned that reducing staff and resources at EPA could result in delays in important environmental remediation projects like the Gowanus Canal and Newtown Creek. The Brooklyn Eagle covered her efforts in articles online [here](#) and [here](#).

The Congresswoman has also been working to protect New Yorkers’ access to medical coverage. She has opposed Republican efforts to roll back the Affordable Care Act speaking out on the floor against the legislation. You can [read her statement online here](#) and [view video here](#). She will continue to oppose any legislation that would deprive Americans of healthcare coverage and weaken protections that prevent insurance company abuse.

Bringing Federal Resources to New York

Congresswoman Velázquez continues her work to support wise federal investments in local programs that benefit New Yorkers. Since October of last year, New York’s 7th Congressional District award recipients have directly received more than \$33 million in funding.

In March, she was [pleased to announce that Henry Street had received \\$360,000](#) in funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For community organizations and individuals interested in the grant process, there are a number of resources the Congresswoman makes available. This [“Grants Resources” page](#) on her website provides valuable information for those seeking to navigate the process. In addition, the Congresswoman periodically issues a “Grants Newsletter”. [The latest issue is online here.](#)

Residents of New York’s 7th Congressional District can also reach out to the Congresswoman’s district staff for information on federal grants.

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