

Congresswoman Doris Matsui Announces Passage of Funding Bill for Domestic Priorities Labor, Health

Congresswoman Doris Matsui Announces Passage of Funding Bill for Domestic Priorities Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill Clears U.S. House of Representatives

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Washington, D.C. — Last night, Rep. Doris Matsui joined a strong majority in the U.S. House of Representatives in approving the appropriations bill to fund the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education for FY 2008 (H.R. 3043). The bill contains key funding for America's top domestic priorities, and will make investments in children's health initiatives that Rep. Matsui was instrumental in securing.

“The bill we passed represents the core of what the American people want us to do. It supports job training programs, elementary and higher education, and vital health research. I am especially pleased that today's bill invests in the National Children's Study, which with this funding, takes landmark steps in providing for the health of future generations,” said Rep. Matsui.

Rep. Matsui spoke on the House floor in support of the bill and the funding it contains for the National Children's Study. Since coming to Congress, Rep. Matsui has been a strong advocate for the Study, convening panels and sending letters to make sure that is fully-funded for the coming fiscal year. In addition, she has launched a Congressional Working Group to keep her colleagues informed about this important study and its findings, and to ensure that Congress addresses the Study's further funding needs.

The National Children's Study will track 100,000 children nationwide from before birth to the age of 21. It seeks to identify the environmental causes behind childhood diseases, and develop cures for diseases like autism, asthma, childhood obesity, and diabetes.

“The March of Dimes applauds Representative Doris Matsui and the many Members of Congress who ensured the inclusion of full funding for the Study in the FY2008 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations bill. This is an incredibly important scientific undertaking and merits the strongest possible support from the administration and all

Members of Congress," said Dr. Marina L. Weiss, Senior Vice President, Public Policy and Government Affairs, March of Dimes.

The House-approved Labor/HHS/Education appropriations bill also makes investments in National Service Programs such as AmeriCorps and the National Civilian Community Corps, which maintains a campus in Sacramento. Over the last few years, these programs have provided humanitarian and educational assistance to the victims of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. More recently, they have offered their services to help calm the wildfires that have devastated California.

"National Service Programs are essential to the health of our communities. They foster volunteerism, enterprise, and community involvement that are an essential part of our culture," said Matsui.

Under this bill, service programs will receive funding to sustain and build upon current activities. The National Civilian Community Corps will receive over \$24 million in funding, keeping Sacramento's campus vibrant and allowing for the establishment of two new training campuses. Other programs that are essential to the health of American communities also are set to receive high levels of funding, including Learn and Serve America, Volunteers in Service to America, and Americorps State and National.

"Today's legislation is about making our priorities clear. Protecting children's health and encouraging national service are not choices we have as Members of Congress. They are responsibilities. I am pleased that today's legislation fulfills our collective responsibilities to the American people," said Rep. Matsui.

As a Co-Chair of the National Service Caucus, Rep. Matsui has established a long record of championing service programs during her career.

"I call on my colleagues in the Senate to recognize the importance of these initiatives for the American people, and preserve these investments in our national health and well-being. As we prepare to send the first spending bill to the President, I urge him to honor the priorities of our great country and sign this bill," said Matsui.

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