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Dear Friends,

Friday marked one year since I was given the honor of representing Illinois' 2nd District in Congress. And in the past year, we've made much progress in addressing the complex challenges facing our district.

My casework teams in Chicago, Matteson and Kankakee have provided thousands of hours of assistance to constituents. We've helped veterans get the benefits they deserve, assisted homeowners with mortgage modification efforts, and helped our seniors with their Medicare and Social Security claims.

This is just a snapshot of some of the things we've accomplished together in one short year. There is still more important and exciting work ahead, and I look forward to continuing to work for you and with you.

Again, it's been an honor to serve the Second District, and I look forward to continuing our work together. Thank you for staying engaged and involved. If you have any questions, concerns, or recommendations on how we can improve life in our district, please contact me at www.robinkelly.house.gov, or at 202-225-0773.

Sincerely,

Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

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District Events

Getting the Second District back to work is my top priority and I'm committed to helping spur job growth to accomplish this goal.

Last May, I led a "Make it in America" tour of the 2nd District. I met with manufacturers and innovators to

discuss what we can do to help businesses grow and create jobs here at home. Helping manufacturers produce more goods here in Illinois, and maintaining America's innovation edge by training a highly skilled workforce are key to the long-term economic growth of our district.

In October, I held the 2nd Congressional District Job Fair in South Holland, where I connected over 1,400 residents looking for work with employers looking to hire. To help entrepreneurs, I hosted a Small Business Workshop in Riverdale, where I helped over 100 local business owners and leaders get information on accessing capital to grow their businesses, effective marketing strategies, and programs at the Small Business Administration that help businesses prosper. Also, to help local municipalities, churches, and non-profits, I hosted a Grants Workshop on grant opportunities.

This past summer, I coordinated The National Summit on Violence in Urban Communities, where Members of Congress from across the country came together with local officials and community stakeholders to address gun violence in cities like Chicago. One of my principle missions in Congress is to put an end to the stall tactics that have held up national gun reform efforts. I am committed to stopping the gun violence that is destroying communities across Chicagoland.

Far too many homeowners in the 2nd District are struggling to maintain their mortgages. To address this, I held the 2nd Congressional District Housing Expo in Matteson, where I assisted hundreds of district residents who'd fallen behind on their mortgages, were in danger of foreclosure, or who were looking to buy a home for the first time. Home ownership and access to affordable housing are the foundation for financial security for families and I am committed to increasing housing options in the district.

On Saturday, I hosted the 2nd Congressional District Health & Wellness Resource Fair at Corliss Early College STEM High School in Chicago. The fair offered participants health-related resources and screenings, access to social service program information, as well as fitness, nutrition, and stress management sessions. I'm committed to promoting preventive health care and early detection, and to encouraging residents of the 2nd District to live healthier and more active lives.



Rep. Kelly toured a Ford Assembly Plant with Whip Hoyer in Chicago

Introduced Legislation

Over the past year, I have introduced bills in Congress to help make families safer, to give my constituents better access to job opportunities, and to strengthen the local economy.

I first introduced two gun safety bills - H.R. 2464, The Improving Gun Safety Standards Act and H.R. 2465 – The Recognizing Gun Violence as A Public Health Emergency Act. H.R. 2464 amends the Consumer Product Safety Act to allow for stricter safety standards on guns and ammunition to help reduce gun-related deaths. H.R. 2465 requires the U.S. Surgeon General to submit to Congress an annual report on the effects of gun violence on the public’s health in order to develop informed strategies on how best to protect our communities from gun violence.

I introduced H.R. 3328, the American Opportunity Act, which would help reduce unemployment by extending the Work Opportunity Tax Credit for businesses that hire long-term unemployed workers and other groups at risk for high unemployment.

To assist servicemen and servicewomen who’ve returned home and are looking for work, I introduced H.R. 3327: The Veterans Opportunity Act. This bill puts veterans back to work by giving employers a tax incentive to hire them. This is a win-win that helps our veterans, our businesses, and our economy.

I introduced H.R. 3956, the Community Investment & Empowerment Act. This bill authorizes the Small Business Administration to make grants available to economically underserved communities, and incentivizes businesses, like grocery stores, retail chains, and restaurants, to locate in areas that have struggled to recruit and retain businesses to meet residents’ needs.

I also introduced H.R. 3955, the Skilled Seniors Promotion Act, a bill that helps break down barriers to employment for older unemployed Americans by helping them acquire new skills to assist in their reentry into the workforce.

To preserve our District's historical treasures, I introduced H.R. 3929 the Pullman National Historical Park Act, which designates the Pullman historic district as a National Park. Designating Pullman as a National Park will create a wonderful tourist attraction in the area that will be a local job creator as well as a boon for the national economy.

District Initiatives

Soon after taking office, I formed the 2nd Congressional District STEM Council. The council consists of key innovators, educators, and business leaders in our community who are committed to working with me to find effective ways to promote science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to train the workforce of tomorrow.

As an extension of this goal, I formed the 2nd District STEM Academy for local students. The academy offers STEM boot camps to help expose kids to STEM careers and to encourage them to pursue STEM educations. The key to America's global competitiveness is propelling our students to the top of the pack in science and math achievement. Providing our local students with access to creative STEM curriculum taught by leaders in STEM fields is a big step in the right direction and is the core mission of my STEM Academy.

As part of my efforts to increase educational opportunities for our young people, I started a book donation program in my office. Through the Library of Congress Surplus Books Program I've given over 1,000 books to schools in the 2nd District since the start of the school year. It's imperative that our students have access to the resources they need to succeed in school and I am committed to helping connect them with those resources.

To help encourage economic development and improve our infrastructure, I convened a meeting in Washington between Illinois officials and U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and Federal Aviation Administration representatives to discuss how we can make the South Suburban Airport a reality by expediting final approval of this important project (see picture below).



Contests

To commemorate Black History Month, I hosted a video contest in which students between in kindergarten through 8th grade were asked to submit a 90-second video explaining why Black History Month is important to them. All of the videos are available for viewing on my YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEquFGPIS2idaaPWVXdYdbfNxVfKT8KS>.

In keeping with my STEM push, I am participating in the Congressional STEM App Challenge. High school students can submit apps until April 30th. For more information on how to apply, visit <http://robinkelly.house.gov/student-app-challenge>.

Each year, Congress hosts a Congressional Art Competition, inviting the best high school artists to compete to have their work hung in the United States Capitol Building. Submissions are due April 14th. For rules and guidelines, visit <https://robinkelly.house.gov/services/art-competition>.

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