

HOLT HOSTS "D.C. DAY" FOR NEW JERSEY RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) hosted more than 60 religious leaders from throughout his Central New Jersey 12th Congressional District for another in his series of "DC Days." Participants met with Members of Congress, executive branch staff, and national religious leaders to discuss the religious landscape in America and faith-based issues facing the nation. Participants learned how to connect with federal agencies to access resources and participate in existing programs that would benefit their communities. The day built on the recent 3 Faiths Walks that Rep. Holt helped initiate in Mercer, Middlesex, and Monmouth Counties.

The participants also had the opportunity to view rare religious texts at the Library of Congress. At Holt's invitation, one participant, Reverend Darrell Armstrong of Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton, delivered the opening prayer at the House of Representatives. Video of the prayer can be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USAUnZgnXLQ> . Video of Rep. Holt introducing Armstrong can be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI2MBiB7WJ4>

"These religious leaders have a unique perspective on the challenges facing our communities," Holt said. "Hearing their ideas are on issues affecting Central New Jersey and the nation is vital, and I'm glad they had the opportunity to have a frank discussion with policy-makers in Washington. I look forward to continuing the dialogue in the coming months."

"I thank Congressman Holt for having the foresight to bring religious leaders together. I think one of the biggest commodities we need in the world today is religious tolerance. For me to be with 70 clergies from Central New Jersey was inspiring and impactful, and it gives me a mandate to work harder in my local community in Trenton," Reverend Armstrong said. "In terms of being given the great honor of delivering the prayer, I was deeply humbled and honored that a foster kid from South Central Los Angeles could one day grow up and stand behind a desk where only Presidents and a few other folks could stand. To me, it's a message to foster children and displaced children that it's not where you start, it's where you finish."

Throughout the year, Holt hosts "D.C. Days" to bring representatives of various New Jersey groups to Washington for discussions with policy makers and opinion leaders. Wednesday's speakers included New Jersey native Joshua Dubois, Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships; U.S. Representatives John Lewis (GA), Keith Ellison (MN), David Price (NC), Tom Perriello (VA), and House Majority Whip James Clyburn (SC); Reverend Daniel Coughlin, House Chaplain; Luis Lugo, Director of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life; Reverend Clete Kiley, President of the Faith and Policy Institute; Jannah Scott, Department of Homeland Security; Mark Linton, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Cedric Grant, Department of Commerce; Alexia Kelley, Department of Health and Human Services; Max Finburg, Department of Agriculture; Rabbi David Saberstein, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; and Joe Volk, Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation.

"I want to thank Congressman Holt and his staff for bringing together a remarkably diverse segment of the religious community," said Bruce Davidson, Director of the Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministry in New Jersey. "It was wonderful to walk into a room where there were Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews, and others. It was a remarkable program that helped us to see the diversity of religion in America and understand the role faith plays in governing and politics."

Participating congregations included:

Abiding Presence Lutheran Church (Pennington) Archdiocese of North America (Cedar Grove) Bharat Sevashiram Sangha of North America (Kendall Park) Bob
Gov Educational Institute of NY & NJ (South Brunswick)

Boy Scout Troop 114 (Monmouth Junction)

Central: A Christ Centered Church (Ewing)

Chabad of Central New Jersey (South Brunswick)

Colts Neck Reformed Church

Congregation Beth Chaim (West Windsor)

Diocese of Trenton

Galilee Baptist Church (Trenton)

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Glen Rock)

Greater Harvest Church World Wide Ministry, Inc.

Holmdel Community United Church of Christ

Islamic Center of Ewing

Islamic Circle of Mercer County (Lawrenceville)

Islamic School of Trenton

Islamic Society of Monmouth County (Middletown)

Jewish Congregation of Concordia (Monroe)

Korean Presbyterian Church of Trenton

Living Waters Lutheran Church (Flemington)

Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministry (Trenton)

Mount Pisgah A.M.E. Church (Princeton)

Muslim Center of Middlesex County (Piscataway)

Nassau Presbyterian Church (Princeton)

New Jersey Buddhist Vihara (Princeton)

New Jersey Commission on Civil Rights (Paramus)

New Jersey Council of Churches (Trenton)

NJ Catholic Conference (Trenton)

Noor-UI-Iman School (Monmouth Junction)

Princeton Theological Seminary

Religious Ministries, Princeton Healthcare System

Schneerson Center of CT & NJ (South Brunswick)

Seacoast Missionary Baptist Association (Marlboro)

Shiloh Baptist Church (Trenton)

Six Mile Run Reformed Church (Franklin Park)

Somerset Presbyterian Church

St. Joseph's Church of Trenton

St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church (East Brunswick)

St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Freehold)

Temple Beth Ahm (Holmdel)

The Church of the Living Water (Newark)

The Crisis Ministry of Princeton and Trenton (Princeton)

Trinity Deliverance Tabernacle Church (Piscataway)

Union Baptist Church of South River

United Methodist Church of Milltown

Zubaida Foundation (Hamilton)