

BIOGRAPHY
CONGRESSMAN DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.



Congressman Donald M. Payne, Jr. is a Democratic congressman representing New Jersey's 10th Congressional District, which covers portions of Essex, Hudson, and Union counties. A Newark, New Jersey native, he was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2012, and is now serving in his third full term. Congressman Payne, Jr. is a tireless fighter for New Jersey families, working to create jobs and grow the economy, protect and invest in our children, and ensure the health and safety of our communities.

As Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, Congressman Payne, Jr. has built a record of achievement in a divided Congress. He introduced two bills that were signed into Public Law by President Barack Obama, including the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act of 2015, which ensures that DHS personnel can reliably communicate during emergencies. He also introduced six bills that passed the U.S. House: the First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act (2016, 2017), the State and High-Risk Urban Area Working Group Act, the Partners for Aviation Security Act, the State Wide Interoperable Communications Enhancement Act, and the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act of 2014. Additionally, Congressman Payne, Jr. passed the language of his SMART Grid Study Act through the U.S. House as part of a larger appropriations bill.

In 2017, Congressman Payne, Jr. was appointed to the powerful House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the 115th Congress. The Committee has jurisdiction over national infrastructure and all modes of transportation, including aviation and mass transit.

In representing New Jersey's 10th Congressional District, which is home to Newark Liberty International Airport, the New Jersey Transit Authority, and Port Newark-Elizabeth Marine Terminal, Congressman Payne, Jr. fights to increase transportation security, water security, chemical hazard prevention, and emergency preparedness to make sure that New Jerseyans are protected and that businesses that conduct trade at our ports have the security and efficiency they need to effectively engage in commerce. Congressman Payne, Jr. also successfully fought for a much-needed \$51 billion Hurricane Sandy relief package, and is working closely with federal officials to ensure the funds are delivered to the families and small business owners who need them most.

A strong advocate for investing in and protecting the health of our children, Congressman Payne, Jr. introduced the TEST for Lead Act to protect children from lead-contaminated drinking water in schools. He also introduced the Promise Neighborhoods Act of 2015, which encourages a holistic community-based approach to educating children in distressed neighborhoods, as well as the SAFE in Our Schools Act of 2013 to better protect children and students in the event of emergencies. Congressman Payne, Jr. also fights for equal opportunities for foster care youth and students with disabilities, and he supports increased funding for Head Start and tuition-free community college for certain students.

Congressman Payne, Jr. is a leader in protecting and expanding access to affordable, quality health care for New Jerseyans. He is the lead Democratic co-sponsor of the Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act, bipartisan legislation that would remove financial barriers to life-saving colorectal cancer screenings and

treatment for Medicare beneficiaries. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Men's Health Caucus, he promotes efforts to improve the health and well-being of men, boys, and their families. Congressman Payne, Jr. also fights to raise awareness about the importance of preventive care and to help reduce health disparities across diseases, from cancer to diabetes.

Congressman Payne, Jr. is a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act, which provides thousands of New Jerseyans with access to high-quality, affordable health care. He is also a vocal advocate for cancer prevention, introducing the National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month Resolution to raise awareness about the importance of regular cancer screenings. Additionally, for three consecutive years, Congressman Payne, Jr. secured from President Obama a presidential proclamation designating March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

Congressman Payne, Jr. fights to expand access to capital for small business owners and increase job training so that our workers have the skills to compete in an advancing global economy. He works to protect and give voice to disadvantaged small business owners, and seeks to foster economic justice in the African-American business community. He led a U.S. House effort for greater transparency in small business lending to better understand and meet the credit needs of women-owned and minority-owned small businesses.

A member of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressman Payne, Jr. fights for civil rights, justice, and equality for all Americans. He is a proud co-sponsor of the Voter Empowerment Act, the Paycheck Fairness Act, and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

Additionally, Congressman Payne, Jr. is a strong advocate for common-sense gun safety reform. He introduced the Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buyback Act of 2015 to keep guns out of the wrong hands by incentivizing gun owners to sell back guns. He also supports legislation to improve background checks, outlaw high-capacity magazines, and prevent suspected terrorists from buying guns.

Prior to Congress, Congressman Payne, Jr. served as Newark Municipal Council President and Essex County Freeholder-at-Large. As Newark Municipal Council President, he was instrumental in brokering a deal that brought Panasonic's North American Headquarters to Newark, where the company built a \$200 million office tower and is expected to create 1,000 permanent jobs.

Congressman Payne, Jr. also served as director of student transportation for the Essex County Educational Services Commission. Additionally, during his time as a council member, he created an educational leadership program, Embracing Arms, and an after-school academic-athletic program, Above the Rim.

Congressman Payne, Jr. has made preserving the arts a personal mission. He served as a member of the Board of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and serves on the Board of Aljira. He also created Newark Idol, a program that supports young performing artists. Congressman Payne, Jr. sponsors the March of Dimes' "March for Babies," and his Preserve Our Legacy program increases awareness surrounding the benefits of stem cell research.

Congressman Payne, Jr. began his long career in public service when he founded Newark South Ward Junior Democrats, becoming its first president. He also served as an adviser to the YMCA Youth in Government program. He attended Kean College (now Kean University), where he studied graphic arts.

Congressman Payne, Jr. lives in Newark with his wife Beatrice and their 18-year-old triplets, Donald III, Jack, and Yvonne.