Rep. Holt talks with constituents on the Jersey Shore. He has helped lead the effort in Congress to pr

"John F. Kennedy said in March 1961, 'It is our task in our time and in our generation to hand down undiminished to those who come after us, as was handed down to us by those who went before, the natural wealth and beauty which is ours.'" – Rush Holt

Rep. Rush Holt has stood up for our nation's environmental crown jewels, and is committed to safeguarding our National Parks and Preserves. He supports efforts to clean up our air, land, and water, and to preserve open space. A member of the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition, he is a leader in promoting environmentally sound alternative energy sources that do not harm our environment. For his work, Rep. Holt has earned a 100 percent lifetime rating from the League of Conservation Voters.

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Land and Water Conservation Fund

Throughout his career, Rep. Holt has been a strong advocate for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and its State Assistance

Delaware & Raritan Canal - Photograph by Jim Williams

program, which provides matching funds to states and communities to preserve open spaces. Early in his career, he was able to restore the state-side grant portion of the program, and he has since fought to retain and increase funding for it. In the 110th Congress, Rep. Holt led a bipartisan coalition that helped secure $125 million for the LWCF and $25 million for the state-side grant portion. He is leading the effort to secure LWCF in the current Congress as well.

The LWCF State Assistance program has aided local recreation projects in over 98% of all U.S. counties, including the preservation of over 73,000 acres of land in New Jersey alone . This land has been used to clean up playgrounds, build baseball fields, develop waterfront parks, and restore open spaces. This is land that otherwise may have been developed for private use

or otherwise rendered unusable.

Clean Air and Water

Rep. Holt supports states rights to lead the way on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles. He has supported legislation to allow states like New Jersey to create stronger regulations regarding vehicle emissions.

Rep. Holt strongly supports efforts to protect the Clean Water Act. He has cosponsored legislation that would reestablish the original intent of Congress in the 1972 Clean Water Act, ensuring that it applies to all water of the United States. He also supports efforts to fully fund the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund .

Holt also is a founding member and co-chair of the Children's Environmental Health Caucus, which aims to raise awareness of environmental issues that affect health, particularly that of children, among his colleagues in Congress.

Click here to read about Rep. Holt's work on clean energy, including his efforts to increase automobile fuel efficiency standards for the first time in nearly 30 years.

Superfund

Rep. Holt supports the "polluter pays" principle that the financial burden to clean up toxic pollution at Superfund sites should not fall on the backs of taxpayers.

Congress created the Superfund in 1980 to clean up the nation's worst toxic waste sites. Congress placed the financial onus for cleanups on polluting corporations. This system worked as it was intended until 1995 when the 105th Congress let the Superfund revenue authority expire. Superfund still had funding until the Fiscal Year 2003 budget. Yet, the Bush Administration failed to request renewal of the Superfund taxes in any subsequent budget,

resulting in the Superfund running dry.

This has stalled cleanup efforts in Superfund sites throughout the country, including in Marlboro, NJ, which has waited for the clean up of the Imperial Oil Company site for more than 25 years.

Rep. Holt continues to work to reinstate the Superfund tax on corporate polluters.

Historic Space Preservation

Rep. Holt has led the effort in Congress to preserve historic lands, as he believes that preserving historic spaces is essential to educating the current generations and future generations and about our rich cultural heritage. This year, he reintroduced the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Battlefield Protection Act, legislation that would help preserve open spaces by authorizing additional funding to protect historic sites dating from these two wars.

Additionally, in 2007 Rep. Holt secured $150,000 in federal funding for the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area, which he helped to create in 2006. The Crossroads of the American Revolution highlights the role of New Jersey during the American Revolution and brings protection to many historic landmarks, including battlefields, lighthouses, mills, wells and the other Revolutionary War area sites in New Jersey.

Protecting the Jersey Shore

Representing a state that is highly dependent on the ocean for its economy, tourism, and recreation, Rep. Holt is committed to ensuring that our coasts and oceans are clean. Rep. Holt has voted against allowing potentially disastrous oil drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). He also has cosponsored OCEANS-21, comprehensive legislation that would develop a

national policy to ensure the health of our nation's oceans for future generations.

Green Schools

In January 2009, Rep. Holt reintroduced the School Building Enhancement Act, legislation that would help schools implement energy saving measures to reduce their energy costs. Energy bills are the second-highest operating expenditure for schools after personnel costs, with the annual spending by schools on energy at $8 billion in 2007.

Holt's bill would authorize $6.4 billion over five years for school construction, including funding to help schools become more energy efficient. On May 14, 2009, the House of Representatives passed Holt's Green Schools initiative as part of the School Modernization Bill.

Natural Resources Committee

As a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Rep. Holt has worked to preserve America's natural treasures, including its parks. Recently, he helped pass the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (H.R. 146), historic legislation that combines more than 160 individual measures. Among its many provisions, the bill includes new wilderness designations, wild and scenic rivers, National Park units, hiking trails, heritage areas, water projects, and historic preservation initiatives. The bill preserves New Jersey's heritage as one of the leaders of the Industrial Revolution by creating the Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park and the Edison National Historic Park.

Rep. Holt has led efforts to oppose the destruction of environmentally fragile wilderness areas, including:

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In 2007, Rep. Holt led an effort, with 86 of his colleagues, to urge the Secretary of the Interior to oppose increased snowmobile use – which can damage the air and land - in Yellowstone National Park.

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In December 2007, Rep. Holt spearheaded a successful effort, with 57 other Members of Congress, asking the Obama administration to overturn a last minute decision by the Bush administration to auction off pristine public land in Utah's Wilderness to oil and gas companies.

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In 2007, Rep. Holt successfully offered an amendment to the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act that would ensure that national parks are protected from the hazardous byproducts of hardrock metal mining.

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Rep. Holt opposes proposals to drill for oil within sensitive environments like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He does not believe that we should harm irreparably the nation’s remaining wilderness in order to produce oil that will not meet the demand for energy.

Endangered Species

Rep. Holt believes it is important for the federal government to designate and protect critical habitats that are vital to the continued survival of endangered and threatened species. He strongly supports allowing scientists - not politicians - to identify what is needed to enhance and de-list endangered species. Holt is working to strengthen the Endangered Species Act and has participated in a number of hearings on this issue as a senior member of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Animal Rights

Rep Holt believes that the humane treatment of animals is a mark of civilized society. Because of his efforts on behalf of animal rights, Rep. Holt was awarded an A+ from the Humane Society Legislative Fund in 2008. Rep. Holt has cosponsored legislation to prohibit the use of birds in animal fighting, to ban the riding of captive elephants in road shows, and to require wounded livestock to be humanely euthanized, rather than be left to suffer a slow and painful death. Rep. Holt is a strong supporter of the Endangered Species Act and has consistently opposed attempts to weaken this law.

Rep. Holt has introduced the Fox Penning Prohibition Act, legislation which would prohibit the transport of foxes and other animals for the purposes of “wildlife penning.” "Wildlife penning" is an inhumane treatment of animals by which they are put in fenced enclosures where wild animals are ripped apart by packs of dogs in competitive animal fights.

As Rep. Holt has said, “The practice of fox penning is inhumane and unsportsmanlike. The foxes and coyotes captured for these purposes are mistreated from the moment they are trapped to the moment they are torn apart by dogs in an escape-proof enclosure. I have introduced legislation to stop this practice by outlawing the transport of animals for the purposes of fox penning.”