

Saturday, March 18, 2006

30 DAYS LEFT TO CLAIM YOUR TAX CREDIT! EFFORTS CONTINUE TO HELP CITY FAMILIES CLAIM THE EITC

U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton Records EITC Radio Public Service Announcement

With the tax deadline just 30 days away – April 18th - the number of New Yorkers calling 311 about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) continues to escalate. To keep the strong momentum going, U. S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D., New York) joins more than 100 public and private EITC Coalition partners by recording a radio public service announcement. Senator Clinton's message urges all qualifying New Yorkers to claim the EITC, directing filers to free tax sites in every borough. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg launched New York City's expanded EITC Campaign on January 19, boasting the largest, most comprehensive effort in the country.

During the first seven weeks of the 2006 New York City Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Campaign, nearly 7,000 New Yorkers have called 311 to find out about the EITC and where they can have their taxes filed for free. Free tax sites run by NYC EITC Coalition partners report a higher volume of filers with approximately 30,000 filers.

"The Earned Income Tax Credit provides tax relief to New York's hardest-pressed workers. That is why I am proud to join with the Department of Consumer Affairs to encourage New Yorkers to utilize free tax preparation services around the city," Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton said. "Free tax preparation helps working families and strengthens the economic health of the entire community by putting more money back into the local economy and helping families climb up the economic ladder."

"Senator Clinton's support and participation in New York City's EITC Campaign will help us reach thousands of hard working families claim the nearly \$6,000 in tax credits owed to them," said Jonathan Mintz, Acting Commissioner of the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs. "The clock is ticking -- with just 30 days left in the 2006 tax season, we continue to urge all City families earning less than \$37,000 to call 311 and find out if they could qualify for money back."

The EITC is a federal, state and city tax credit that could return as much as \$6,000 to qualifying working families who earn less than \$35,000 a year, or if married and filing jointly, less than \$37,000 a year, just by filing their taxes. Individuals ages 25-64 who earn less than \$12,000 may also be eligible. Those who are eligible can also file retroactively for up to three years, sometimes doubling or tripling their refund. Last year, New Yorkers received more than \$2 billion in EITC credits but approximately 200,000 more that were eligible missed out. In 2004, the average New York City combined refund was \$2,355.

To help taxpayers claim the money they deserve, the DCA launched an expanded campaign that includes locations citywide where individuals can have their taxes prepared for free before April 18th. Millions of materials are being distributed citywide in eleven languages: Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Haitian-Creole, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. New Yorkers are urged to call 311 (or 212-NEW-YORK) 24 hours a day with access to 170 languages, or go online to www.nyc.gov/eitc to find EITC qualifications and the nearest free tax preparation location and operating hours.