

Residents of Georgia's 12th Congressional District traveled to Washington, D.C. today to participate in Congressman John Barrow's *12th District Day*. The event helped local constituents learn about valuable government programs and services that exist to help their business and ventures succeed during these tough economic times.

"With all the partisan gridlock people see on TV, folks often forget that government is about providing services and help to citizens," said Congressman Barrow. "I hope folks found today's event valuable and that they came away with a better sense of programs and funding opportunities that are available to them. Times are tough for far too many Georgians, but there are a lot of things that we can do to help, and I hope folks know that my door is always open to them."

Participants – who included local elected officials, small business owners, members of the agriculture community, college and university officials, and others – spoke with heads of key government agencies that provide federal grants and assistance to their respective specialties. In addition, bipartisan policy experts provided information on issues ranging from the economy and foreign policy to immigration and energy.

"Congressman Barrow is to be commended for pulling all of this together for us," said Edna Jackson, Mayor Pro-Tem for the City of Savannah. "This program helped all of us understand exactly what resources are available and how we can use these resources to better help our communities. I feel it's very important that this effort is continued in years to come."

"It's not every day that we have an opportunity to engage with senior leaders from across several federal agencies," said Dr. Charles Patterson, Vice President for Research & Dean of Graduate Studies at Georgia Southern University. "Today's event allowed us to express directly to these leaders the needs of our various organizations – be them businesses, colleges and universities, or municipalities – as well as share with them additional services they could be providing that would be helpful to our endeavors."

Speakers included:

- Georgia Senator Johnny Isakson;

- Jordan Haas, Deputy Assistant Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration;
- Dallas Tonsager, Under Secretary for Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture;

- Thomas Guevara, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs, Economic Development Association;
- Valerie Piper, Deputy Assistance Secretary for Economic Development, Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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