

## House Republican Leadership Strongly Supports Wallenberg Gold Medal

**WASHINGTON DC** — Momentum is building very rapidly in support of the legislation introduced by Representatives Nan Hayworth and Gregory Meeks for the Congressional Gold Medal for legendary Holocaust hero Raoul Wallenberg. The bill that they recently introduced in the United States House of Representatives has already garnered close to 200 co-sponsors in recognition of the upcoming centennial of Wallenberg's birth—a campaign that is being spearheaded by the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Commission. According to Ezra Friedlander, CEO of The Friedlander Group

and spokesman for the Commission, the goal is to have the "requisite two thirds of the Congress sponsor the legislation which will lead to the legislation voted on unanimously and presented in 2012, which is being referred to as the Year of Wallenberg in everlasting tribute to a great humanitarian whose unparalleled heroism resulted in his rescue of over 100,000 Jews in the waning days of World War II."

The Wallenberg Commission recently concluded high level meetings in Washington, DC. The delegation met with several US Senators: Frank Lautenberg, Michael Bennet, Bob Corker,

Richard Blumenthal, Robert Casey, and Mike Johanns. The delegation was also received by the Republican (Majority) leadership of the House of Representatives including Majority leader Eric Cantor, Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy and Congressman Bob Turner. The group also met with White House Director of Jewish Outreach Jarrod Bernstein. All were unified in their support of the campaign to award Raoul Wallenberg with a Congressional Gold Medal, which is one of the two highest US Government medals. The participants at these high level meetings included:



L-R: Wallenberg Board Member Erol User; Friedlander Group CEO Ezra Friedlander; Majority Whip Leader Kevin McCarthy, Wallenberg Board Member Peter Rebenwurzel.

Peter Rebenwurzel whose late father provided canned goods and meat to the Jews in the Budapest Ghetto; Erol User who flew in from Istanbul, Turkey, and

Patricia Tiffany who represented Flushing Bank, an official corporate sponsor of the educational activities of the Wallenberg Commission.

## Obama Sets Lower Fees For Some Homeowners

**WASHINGTON (LOS ANGELES TIMES - MCT)** - As many as 3 million homeowners could save about \$1,000 a year because of a reduction in fees, announced yesterday by President Barack Obama, on refinancing their government-backed mortgages.

In addition, the White House said it was taking new steps to help military members whose homes were improperly foreclosed by large mortgage servicers.

Among the steps, the servicers have agreed to conduct a review overseen by the Justice Department of all foreclosures of military members since 2006 to determine if they violated a federal ban on such actions for active duty service members. Any violations will result in the servicer paying the military member's lost equity, plus interest, plus \$116,785.

The moves were the latest by the Obama administration to address the struggling housing market.

"While the government cannot fix the housing market on its own, the president believes that responsible homeowners should not have to sit and wait for the market to hit bottom to get relief when there are measures at hand that can make a meaningful difference," the White House said.

The broadest step is a reduction of refinancing fees by the FHA on mortgages it backs. By significantly cutting the fees to refinance loans made before June 1, 2009, the typical borrower could save about \$1,000 a year because of lower mortgage payments. The FHA has had to raise fees in recent years to offset losses on bad mortgages.

The administration estimated 2 million to 3 million homeowners would be eligible for the reduced fees, which would be part of the FHA's existing program to streamline refinancings.

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