



# 2012

**ANNUAL REPORT TO NORTHERN MICHIGAN**

**U.S. REPRESENTATIVE DAN BENISHEK M.D.  
MICHIGAN'S FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
JANUARY 15, 2013**

# **2012 ANNUAL REPORT TO NORTHERN MICHIGAN**



**U.S. REPRESENTATIVE DAN BENISHEK M.D.  
MICHIGAN'S FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
JANUARY 15, 2013**

**[WWW.BENISHEK.HOUSE.GOV/2012ANNUALREPORT](http://WWW.BENISHEK.HOUSE.GOV/2012ANNUALREPORT)**

**COVER PHOTO BY: MICHIGAN NUT PHOTOGRAPHY – [WWW.MICHIGANNUTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM](http://WWW.MICHIGANNUTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)**



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Dear Michigander:

As a new year dawns and a new Congress is sworn in, the challenges facing our nation remain the same—an economy that is not growing fast enough, too many people out of work, and a federal government that has grown so big we can no longer afford it. For over ten generations, the promise of the American Dream has made our country like no other, but today many fear that promise is in doubt.

Like many in Northern Michigan, my family didn't have much when I was growing up, but I worked hard, saved money, and was able to become a doctor and raise my family in Upper Michigan. My goal since coming to Congress has been to ensure that our children and grandchildren will have the same shot at the American Dream that I did growing up. That's why I've been focused on supporting policies that will improve the economy and create jobs in our region.

---

**“My main focus has been and will remain to support policies that will create jobs and allow our children and grandchildren to continue living and working in Northern Michigan.”**

---

As your voice in Congress, I have never pretended to know all the answers to our nation's problems. What I have done during my first term in Congress is to read, line by line, each piece of legislation that has come across my desk and to vote in a way that I believe reflects the values and interests of Northern Michigan's citizens. I have also worked to ensure my office is as helpful as possible to the constituents of Michigan's First District and advocated for the issues that are important to the people of our region.

There is no doubt that many critical decisions for our nation lie ahead, but the power of our people's union is greater than all the challenges America faces. I believe if we remain true to the principles that have always made this country great—liberty, limited government, and a free economy—we can renew the promise of the American Dream for generations to come.

Please know that I am honored to continue serving as your representative in Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Benishek". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Dan Benishek M. D.  
Member of Congress  
Michigan's First District

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



<b>I. Sponsored Legislation</b> .....6	<b>VII. Constituent Casework</b>
<b>II. Cosponsored Legislation</b> .....15	▪ Background of Constituent Casework.....168
<b>III. Committee Activities</b>	▪ Constituent Cases .....169
▪ Committee on Natural Resources.....39	▪ Constituent Cases by Issue.....170
▪ Committee on Veterans' Affairs .....41	▪ Constituent Cases by County.....171
▪ Committee on Science, Space & Technology.....43	<b>VIII. Special Initiatives</b>
▪ GOP Doctors' Caucus.....45	▪ Veterans Meeting With Chairman Jeff Miller.....173
<b>IV. Listening To Northern Michigan</b>	▪ Northern Michigan Jobs Fair.....174
▪ Public "Meet and Greets" .....47	▪ Vocational Education Roundtable Meetings.....175
▪ Northern Michigan Farm Visits.....48	▪ Protecting Northern Michigan's Farmers .....176
▪ Classroom Visits.....49	▪ U.S. Service Academy Days.....177
▪ Job Provider Visits.....50	▪ Veterans Disability Claims Backlog.....178
▪ TeleTown Hall Meetings.....56	▪ Protecting Michigan's Great Lakes.....179
<b>V. Official Communications</b>	▪ Fighting For County Road 595.....180
▪ Floor Statements.....58	▪ Keeping the Cheboygan Hospital Open.....181
▪ News Releases & Statements.....67	<b>IX. Benishek 'By The Numbers'</b> .....182
▪ Opinion Editorial Columns.....153	<b>X. The New First District</b> .....184
<b>VI. Constituent Correspondence</b>	<b>XI. Acknowledgements</b> .....186
▪ Correspondence by Month .....164	
▪ Correspondence by Issue.....165	
▪ Correspondence by County.....166	

## ABOUT DR. DAN BENISHEK

Dan Benishek's story is like that of many people from Northern Michigan. Dan was born in Iron River, Michigan. His family didn't have much when he was growing up, and his father was killed in a mining accident when he was only 5 years old. After his father's death, Dan's mother, with the help of family, raised Dan and his brother, Tim.

As a boy, Dan worked in his grandmother's business—the Iron River Hotel. Dan made beds, hauled beer, and cleaned the spittoons. His grandmother paid him \$10 a week for his efforts, but he had to save it for the future.

After Dan graduated from West Iron High School in 1970, he went on to earn a B.S. in biology from the University of Michigan in 1974. Dan graduated from Wayne State Medical School in 1978 and completed a Family Practice internship in Flint at St Joseph's Hospital. He has served as a general surgeon in Michigan's Upper Peninsula in a private practice since 1983. He has worked part-time at the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center in Iron Mountain for the past twenty years.



Dan worked as a general surgeon in Iron Mountain for nearly 30 years and raised his family in Iron Mountain. Along the way, it never occurred to him to get into politics, let alone run for Congress. But, like many people in Northern Michigan, Dan just got tired of seeing career politicians in Washington waste taxpayer dollars our nation doesn't have on bills they didn't even read.

Since coming to Congress, Dan has been fighting every day to create jobs in Northern Michigan, improve services to our veterans, and renew the promise of the American Dream for our children, grandchildren and future generations.

Dan is an avid hunter and fisherman and a proud member of the NRA and the GOA. Dan and his wife Judy live near Crystal Falls, Michigan. They have five children and three grandchildren. Prior to being sworn into Congress on January 5, 2011, Dr. Benishek had never sought nor held any previous public office.

## 2012: A YEAR IN PICTURES



*Dr. Dan Benishek speaks with Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) at the 2012 March For Life on the National Mall on January 23, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek attends arguments at the U.S. Supreme Court regarding the constitutionality of the new health care law on March 28, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek helps 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in Iron River plant a tree on May 2, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek is briefed by local emergency workers during the Duck Lake Fire in Luce County on May 26, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek meets with Joshua Ische, a West Point Military Academy nominee, on April 4, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek meets with girls from the Elk Rapids 4H Club on June 18, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek attends a joint memorial ceremony on the East Front of the U.S. Capitol to remember the 9-11 terror attacks on September 11, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek and his wife Judy in Iron Mountain, on Election Day, November 6, 2012.*



*Dr. Dan Benishek, joined by his son Mick Grunlund and nephew Trent Benishek, is sworn into his second term by House Speaker John Boehner on January 3, 2013.*