



Dear Neighbors,

After Republicans forced through trillions in tax cuts [predominately for billionaires and big corporations](#), while [cutting \\$1 trillion from Medicaid](#) and the Affordable Care Act, kicking 17 million Americans off their health insurance, Speaker Mike Johnson decided there weren't any other pressing issues to attend to. So he canceled the House's session for the week.

While Members of Congress were back in their districts, we saw a [historic and tragic flood](#) in Texas that took the lives of at least 120 people, 36 of whom were children. It's one in [a series of severe weather disasters](#) across the country that come following months of the Trump administration [gutting the National Weather Service](#). Looking ahead to next week, Congress is back in session and I'm looking forward to getting to work.

Violent Storms and How to Prevent Tragedy

Over the past week, we've seen devastating storms across the country, including [deadly thunderstorms](#) in Plainfield, NJ, and horrific flooding in Central Texas, which took the lives of over 120 people, including 36 children at a summer camp. Bill and I are praying for the families of these victims.

Early warning systems and forecasts are essential to limit the loss of life that results from storms. That requires updated infrastructure and adequate staffing at places like the National Weather Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which work to track and predict storms and warn those in harm's way. Further cuts to these programs, like the ones in the proposed budget, put lives in grave danger. I'm working with my colleagues in the Appropriations Committee to ensure NOAA and similar organizations have what they need to keep our families safe as storm intensity and frequency increase.

Earlier this week, I joined over 20 of my colleagues in an [urgent letter](#) to the Secretary of Commerce and the Director of NOAA, imploring them to reject the proposed funding cuts to NOAA that would eliminate funding to some of our most crucial weather tracking and modeling stations around the country. The proposed cuts include eliminating the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory in Princeton, which helps us model and predict weather patterns, among other vital research projects. As we've seen in recent weeks, as well as during the L.A. wildfires in January, changing weather patterns are extremely hazardous, and the ability to predict and warn of coming storms is essential to save lives.

Black Women's Equal Pay Day

Yesterday was [Black Women's Equal Pay Day](#), the day Black women finally catch up to what white men were paid last year. That's more than 6 months of additional work. For every dollar a non-Hispanic white man makes, Black women earn just 66 cents. Over the course of a career, this can add up to nearly \$1 million. And this gap hasn't narrowed much over the past several decades.

The pay gap is due to a variety of factors. Lack of adequate pay transparency means Black women cannot fairly negotiate for the wages we deserve. Occupational segregation has relegated many Black women to lower-paying sectors of the economy, and excluded us from more lucrative leadership positions. Hiring discrimination means fewer Black women land high-paying jobs and even when we do, we're less likely to be selected for promotion.

I remain committed to working alongside my fellow Co-Chairs on the Caucus on Black Women and Girls to dismantle these barriers through legislation, and will continue to

raise awareness of these conditions until equal pay for Black women is a guaranteed right, not a restricted privilege.

Keeping Our Homes Safe From Fire

Yesterday, Congressman John Rutherford (FL-05) and I reintroduced the [Public Housing Fire Safety Act](#). This bipartisan bill provides critical funding for public housing authorities to install fire sprinkler systems in older government-owned high-rise buildings. The legislation addresses a growing public safety issue by helping protect vulnerable residents in buildings constructed before modern fire safety requirements.

For families living in aging public housing, especially those built before the 1992 Federal Fire Safety Act. The lack of basic sprinklers drastically reduces fatalities and injuries; thousands of government-owned buildings across the country, including many in Florida and New Jersey, remain unsprinklered decades later.

"The growing frequency of climate-driven disasters like wildfires has only magnified the need to act. As this country faces emergency after emergency, it's our responsibility to mitigate and provide solutions so that the American people aren't suffering. By ensuring our citizens living in public housing have the most basic fire safety measures, they become the priority. The added benefit that it will help save the lives of our nation's bravest makes this a no-brainer.



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