

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 13, 2016

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Speaker Ryan,

As Representatives from Florida, which currently has the most residents affected by the Zika virus, we strongly urge the House of Representatives to consider the measure to fully fund efforts to combat this disease. More than 250 people in our state have been diagnosed with Zika, including 43 pregnant women. Tragically, one baby has already been born with Zika-related microcephaly.

As we head into the summer months, tourist season is fully upon us. Thousands of people will travel through Florida on their way to and from the Summer Olympics in Brazil, where the Zika outbreak began, where tens of thousands of people currently have the disease, and where thousands of babies have recently been born with microcephaly. Although everyone diagnosed with Zika in the continental United States has contracted the virus overseas, the rising numbers of confirmed cases and a large influx of travelers increase the chance that mosquitos will begin transmitting the virus between people in this nation. This virus is not only a threat to our health and the health of pregnant mothers, but also a threat to our economy and our everyday lives.

Importantly, shifting funds from one public health crisis like Ebola, to another is not a solution.

The Administration has repeatedly provided detailed information regarding how its proposed emergency supplemental funds will be spent. We cannot let politics stand in the way of promoting the health and safety of our constituents.

If we do not act immediately, we will be staring into the eyes of more babies born with Zika-related microcephaly and asking why we did not do more to help them when we had the power to do so. We must provide the necessary funding for mosquito eradication and vector control, vaccine research, and our local community health centers so they can provide screenings and comprehensive health services.

It is irresponsible for the House to recess without taking action to protect our constituents.

Sincerely,



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



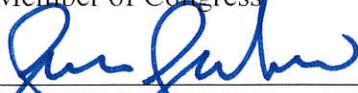
Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



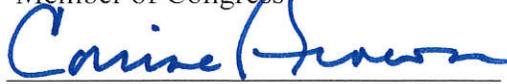
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Alan Grayson
Member of Congress



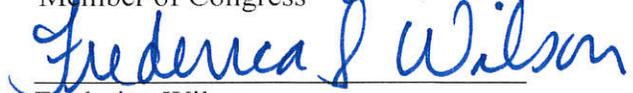
Gwen Graham
Member of Congress



Corrine Brown
Member of Congress



Patrick Murphy
Member of Congress



Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress