



Friday 11 September 2020

Weekly Report From Your Congresswoman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anna Eshoo".

Dear friends,

Nineteen years ago, 2,977 of our fellow Americans perished when terrorists attacked our country on that fateful September day. The pain and anguish of the families will last for a lifetime, and the soul of America will always be scarred. The memory of each soul lost and the bravery of the first responders will never be forgotten by our entire country.

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The CZU Lightning Complex Fire continues to burn in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties in our Congressional District during a historic wildfire season that has destroyed over three million acres across California. The good news is the fire is now 86 percent contained and families are continuing to return to their homes, however ongoing hot and dry conditions continue to pose a threat and poor air quality caused by wildfire smoke is an ongoing threat to public health throughout the Bay Area. My staff and I are continuing to do everything we can to assist those who've been impacted by the fires. If you need assistance, please contact my office or visit my website.

While the CZU Lightning Complex Fire has been my primary focus for the last several weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take a toll on our country. The U.S. is approaching 6.5 million total cases since the pandemic began and nearly 200,000 Americans have died as a result of the virus. To put the crisis in perspective, the U.S. is losing the same number of Americans every three days to COVID-19 that were killed on September 11th. The severity of the pandemic demands bold action from the federal government. It's been 116 days since

the House passed the *HEROES Act* to provide new assistance to families, small businesses, and state and local governments during the COVID-19 pandemic. House Democrats are continuing to fight for an aid package that will meet the urgent needs of the American people and our country.

I return to Washington, D.C. next week to consider legislation in the full House to address racial inequities in public education, increase protections for pregnant mothers facing discrimination in the workplace, and condemn all forms of anti-Asian bias and bigotry related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the coming weeks, the House will also consider legislation to fund the federal government beyond the end of the current fiscal year, and a package of bills to promote investment and innovation in clean energy technology.

Wireless Companies Opposing Back Up Power for Cell Towers

This week our nation's top wireless carriers [filed a petition](#) opposing a California Public Utilities Commission rule requiring backup power at all cell towers across the state to ensure their customers have access to cell service during natural disasters. We rely on our cell phones to stay connected during emergencies and wireless networks must stay online even when fires or other events shut down power service to cell towers. The CPUC's 72-hour backup power safeguards will save lives and [I issued a statement](#) with 19 of my California House colleagues opposing the carriers' petition.

I've fought for more than a year to require wireless carriers to deploy more resilient infrastructure to keep networks online during wildfires. I introduced the [WIRED Act](#) on July 18, 2019, to protect the ability of states to require the same protections put in place by the CPUC. I also led 12 California colleagues in [writing to the CPUC](#) in support of the agency's wireless resiliency rule when it was proposed in March.

SBA Disaster Assistance Webinar

This week the Northern California Small Business Development Center (SBDC) held a webinar with officials from the Small Business Administration about federal SBA assistance available to homeowners, landlords, renters and businesses affected by the wildfires. You may qualify for disaster assistance loans and other help during this difficult time. You can contact SBA's Outreach Center during their office hours every day between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. EDT by email at FOCWAssistance@sba.gov or by phone at 1 (800)-659-2955.

You can also access SBA factsheets and more information by clicking [HERE](#).

You can watch a recording of the webinar by clicking [HERE](#).

Energy and Commerce Full Committee Markup



This week the Energy and Commerce Committee approved 38 bills for the full House of Representatives to vote on, including 26 bills originating from my Health Subcommittee. Importantly, 12 bills from my Health Subcommittee were approved to help address the mental health and substance use crisis in our country:

- The [***Mental Health Services for Students Act***](#) increases funding for federal grants to support expanded mental health services at schools throughout the country;
- The [***Improving Mental Health Access from the Emergency Department Act***](#) provides grants to hospital emergency departments to provide mental health services for individuals experiencing mental health episodes;
- The [***Effective Suicide Screening and Assessment in the Emergency Department Act***](#) helps hospitals better identify, assess, and treat patients in emergency rooms who are at risk for suicide;

- The [***Suicide Training and Awareness Nationally Delivered for Universal Prevention Act***](#) requires schools receiving federal priority mental health grants to establish and implement a school-based student suicide awareness and prevention training policy;
- The [***Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act***](#) authorizes new grants for high-poverty communities for mental health services and supports research into racial disparities in mental health;
- The [***Mental Health Access Improvement Act***](#) provides coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under Medicare;
- The [***Easy Medication Access and Treatment for Opioid Addiction Act***](#) makes it easier for providers to treat patients with substance use disorders by allowing practitioners to dispense up to 3 days of medication to a person at one time to relieve acute withdrawal symptoms.
- The [***Family Support Services for Addiction Act***](#) authorizes new grants for family community organizations to provide family support services;
- The [***State Opioid Response Grant Authorization Act***](#) authorizes \$1.5 billion in new funding for states to respond to the opioid epidemic;
- The [***Block, Report, And Suspend Shipments Act***](#) places new requirements on drug manufacturers and distributors to crack down on suspicious orders of controlled substances;
- The [***Ensuring Compliance Against Drug Diversion Act***](#) prevents the diversion of opioids and other controlled substances by terminating the controlled substance registration of any registrant who dies or discontinues business or professional practice; and
- The [***Debarment Enforcement of Bad Actor Registrants Act***](#) ensures that bad actors are not able to legally register to manufacture, distribute, or dispense a controlled substance.

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness month and these bills will help address the spike in suicides and will increase funding for and coverage of high-quality mental and behavioral health care.

The Committee also approved legislation to close racial disparities in health outcomes, including the [***South Asian Heart Health Awareness and Research Act***](#), the [***Tribal Health Data Improvement Act***](#), and [**legislation**](#) to strengthen the research conducted by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

Finally, important legislation to help families affected by the wildfires passed the Committee and will be voted on by the full House. The [PHONE Act](#) ensures that families can keep their landline phone number if their home is destroyed in a natural disaster. The legislation is critical right now as California and the Western United States are experiencing a historic wildfire season, including the CZU Lightning Fire in our Congressional District.

To read more about the markup, click [HERE](#).

In the Words of My Constituents

Every week hundreds of my constituents call and write to me to express their concerns, share their passions, and ask questions regarding legislation and policies. Over 108,286 constituents have contacted me in 2020. I actually read every communication and every constituent receives a personal response to their specific questions and comments from me. This week, 1,059 constituents contacted my office about issues including:

- 158 messages concerned about Louis DeJoy’s campaign finance violations.
- 92 messages in support of efforts to protect salmon populations.
- 76 messages opposed to the attacks on the U.S. Postal Service.

Anna’s Recommended Reading and Watching

I frequently read articles or see videos that I think my constituents would benefit from. Check out these articles when you have some time.

***The New York Times* Editorial Board (9/10/20) – “[Mr. Trump Knew It Was Deadly and Airborne](#)”**

***Fareed Zakaria, The Washington Post* (9/10/20) – “[Prepare for election month, not election night](#)”**

***Alexis C. Madrigal and Robinson Meyer, The Atlantic* (9/10/20) – “[The Fog of the Pandemic Is Returning](#)”**

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Let’s continue to keep our neighbors in our prayers, especially those who have lost their homes; our fire fighters and first responders, and in gratitude for the thousands of acts of kindness by so many.

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

