



Friday 4 September 2020

## Weekly Report From Your Congresswoman

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

Dear friends,

We're now in the third week of the CZU Lightning Complex Fire that has burned more than 86,000 acres in Santa Cruz and San Mateo Counties in our Congressional District, and it is one of the ten most destructive fires in California history. As I write to you, nearly 1,500 structures have been destroyed, including more than 925 homes. Another 140 structures have been damaged by the fires which, thank goodness, are now 58% contained. State and local firefighters, law enforcement, and first responders have made significant progress against the fires and many evacuation orders have been downgraded in both counties, with many people able to return to their homes. However, a forecasted heatwave this weekend elevates the risk of new fires.

So many are experiencing extraordinary challenges and stress. As we head into the Labor Day weekend and mark the unofficial end of Summer, my entire district office team and I will continue to help guide constituents through these challenging times.

**Briefing with Governor Newsom and First Responders**



*Rep. Eshoo speaks with Governor Gavin Newsom during his visit to our District.*

Governor Newsom came to Felton in our Congressional District this week for a briefing on the CZU Lightning Complex Fire to assess the damage and discuss recovery efforts. I highlighted the extraordinary courage of my constituents and the lifesaving work of all the firefighters, the law enforcement officials and the first responders, especially those in Ben Lomond Volunteer Fire Department, Bonny Doon Fire & Rescue, Boulder Creek Volunteer Fire Department, Felton Fire Protection District, Scotts Valley Fire District, and Zayante Fire Protection District. Representative Jimmy Panetta, Assemblyman Mark Stone and Supervisors Ryan Coonerty and Bruce McPherson were also on hand for the briefing and the Governor was joined by FEMA Director Peter Gaynor, and State Director of the Office of Emergency Services Mark Ghilarducci.

I pointed out the condition of the San Lorenzo Valley water supply, as well as my effort with House colleagues to raise the share of FEMA disaster support from 75 percent to 90 percent. This will help the County which is experiencing a myriad of fiscal challenges. As I looked around the room, the Fire Station in Felton, I saw an entire team pulling in one direction for the benefit of every person that has been impacted by the horrible fires.

### **Visit to Pescadero Local Assistance Center and Santa Cruz Recovery Resource Center**



*Rep Eshoo meets with FEMA leadership in Pescadero.*



*Rep. Eshoo tours San Mateo County's Local Assistance Center.*

Today I visited the Pescadero Local Assistance Center and was joined by County Supervisor Don Horsley. I thanked volunteers, staff and nonprofits for all they are doing to help so many in need. The Center is open to assist victims of the fires on the South Coast and is also open to evacuees from Santa Cruz County as well if it's more convenient for them.



*Rep. Eshoo with her staff and Brian Perkins, Chief of Staff for Rep. Speier.*

Earlier this week I visited Santa Cruz County's Recovery Resource Center where my staff is helping constituents navigate federal agencies for assistance. I also thanked volunteers and the many representatives from state agencies and nonprofits, including the Red Cross. I'm so grateful to my exceptional friend and colleague Representative Speier who sent her staff to help my constituents.

### **New Fire Resources**

I continue to update my website with the latest information about resources to help affected constituents recover from the destructive CZU Lightning Complex fires. You can access the complete list by clicking [HERE](#).

**THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.** *In order to receive federal assistance, you must first register with FEMA by visiting [www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov) or calling 1-800-621-3362. FEMA has already approved over a million dollars of assistance to help victims of the fires. Small business owners who've been impacted by the fires should register with FEMA and the [Small Business Administration](#) for assistance.*

As a reminder, Santa Cruz County and Cal OES have opened a [Recovery Resource Center](#) in Santa Cruz at the Kaiser Permanente Arena, 140 Front Street for those impacted by the wildfires. The Center is open every day from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and my staff is on site to help constituents navigate the multitude of issues, especially requests for federal assistance.

San Mateo County has opened a [Local Assistance Center](#) at Pescadero Elementary School, 620 North Street, Pescadero. The center will be open until further notice from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. every day of the week, including Labor Day.

Cal Fire has completed its preliminary damage assessment of the fires in Santa Cruz County which you can access by clicking [HERE](#), and [HERE](#) for San Mateo County. The California Department of Insurance has put together a list of resources to help those who've been impacted by the wildfires. You can find more information by clicking [HERE](#).

If any constituent needs to replace their Social Security card, you can visit the Social Security Administration's "My Social Security" portal by clicking [HERE](#).

### **Energy and Commerce Briefing with FDA Commissioner**

This week, my Health Subcommittee held a bipartisan briefing with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Stephen Hahn, M.D. about vaccines and therapeutics. He was joined by Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research Director Peter Marks M.D., PhD., and Center for Drug Evaluation and Research Acting Director Patrizia Cavazzoni M.D.

I shared my deep concerns with Dr. Hahn about the agency he leads, and how the American people must be able to trust the FDA. Recent events, including misleading claims about the efficacy of convalescent plasma, raise serious concerns that the Trump Administration is applying political pressure on the agency and interfering with its ability to protect the public health of the American people. I urged Dr. Hahn to testify at a public hearing in September about these critical issues but he did not commit to appear.

### **Letters I Wrote This Week**

## **Letter Calling for Committee Action on Wildfire Smoke Legislation**

Every one of us has been impacted by the smoke that has blanketed our region for more than two weeks as a result of the wildfires. Bay Area cities have endured the worst air quality in the world, and over one-third of the state experienced air quality that the Environmental Protection Agency determined was unsafe even for otherwise healthy individuals.

Last year I introduced the *Smoke Planning and Research Act* which directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to study the health effects of wildfire smoke and provide grants to states, tribes, and local governments to plan and respond to wildfire smoke. Eligible grants include creating shelters for at-risk populations and retrofitting schools with air filters so students can safely attend schools when they reopen. My legislation also establishes four Centers of Excellence at colleges and universities to further study this issue.

This week I wrote to the Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee urging him to include my legislation in the Committee's upcoming legislative markup to ensure Congress does everything it can to respond to the wildfires and protect public health.

To read a copy of the letter, 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 107,060 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, 1,148 constituents contacted my office about issues including:

- 340 messages in support of the US Postal Service
- 112 messages in support of natural treatment alternatives for COVID-19
- 100 messages in support of the *Protect America's Children from Toxic Pesticides Act*

### **Anna's Work in the News**

*My work is often featured in local and national press outlets and I share them with you here for your perusal.*

**My Op-Ed in *San Francisco Chronicle* (8/31/20) - "[FDA commissioner must grow a backbone to resist political pressure](#)"**

***The Mercury News* (9/4/20) - "[Why you can't get a quick, simple at-home COVID-19 test](#)"**

*The Associated Press* (9/2/20) – [“Second Trump appointee out at FDA amid credibility concerns”](#)

*The Hill* (8/28/20) – [“Democrat asks intel agencies if they’re surveilling Members of Congress”](#)

**Anna’s Recommended Reading**

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

Ezekiel J. Emanuel, Cathy Zhang and Amaya Diana Op-Ed, *The New York Times* (9/1/20) – [“Where Is America’s Groundbreaking Covid-19 Research?”](#)

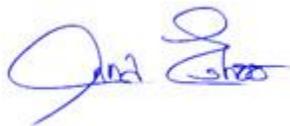
Brian Resnick, *Vox* (9/4/20) – [“A third of Americans might refuse a Covid-19 vaccine. How screwed are we?”](#)

Charlie Warzel Op-Ed, *The New York Times* (9/4/20) – [“Mark Zuckerberg Is the Most Powerful Unelected Man in America: Facebook is too big for democracy.”](#)

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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

