

The President's Weekly Address

September 17, 2016

Hi, everybody. I've delivered a few hundred of these weekly addresses over the years, and you may have noticed a theme that pops up pretty often: The Republicans who run this Congress aren't doing their jobs. And guess what? Congress recently returned from a 7-week vacation, and they've only got 2 weeks left until their next one. But there's a lot of business they need to get done first.

First, even as we're seeing more and more Zika cases inside the United States, they've refused to fund our efforts to protect women and children by fighting Zika in a serious way.

Second, they still need to provide resources to help the people of Louisiana recover from last month's terrible floods and to help communities like Flint recover from their own challenges.

Third, they have made Merrick Garland, a Supreme Court nominee with more Federal judicial experience than any other in history, wait longer than any other in history for the simple courtesy of a hearing, let alone a vote, all because they want their nominee for President to fill that seat.

And there are plenty other bipartisan priorities they should finish this year as well: passing criminal justice reform; attacking the opioids epidemic; funding Joe Biden's Cancer Moonshot; finishing a transpacific trade agreement that will support American jobs and boost American wages; and passing a budget that will make sure all of America's priorities are funded without resorting to shutdown threats and last-minute gimmicks. And none of this list even includes some other big priorities that should get done. It's been almost a decade, for example, since Congress voted to raise the minimum wage.

None of these things should be controversial. All of it is within our reach. This is America; we can do anything. We just need a Congress that works as hard as you do. At the very least, we should expect that they should do their jobs and protect us from disease, help us recover from disaster, keep the Supreme Court above politics, and help our businesses grow and hire.

So if any of these priorities matter to you, let your Congressperson know. And if they still refuse to do their jobs, well, you know what to do in November. Our Government only works as well as the people we elect. And that's entirely up to you.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:05 p.m. on September 16 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on September 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 16, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 17. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Weekly addresses.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Garland, Merrick B.

Subjects: Budget, Federal : Appropriations :: Continuation; Congress : Senate :: Presidential nominations, confirmation process; Diseases : Cancer research, prevention, and treatment; Diseases : Zika epidemic, domestic response and containment efforts; Drug abuse and trafficking : Addiction treatment and reduction efforts; Elections : 2016 Presidential and congressional elections; Judiciary : Supreme Court :: Associate Justice-designate; Labor issues : Minimum wage; Law enforcement and crime : Criminal justice system, reform efforts; Louisiana : Floods, damage and recovery efforts; Michigan : Contaminated tap water in Flint; Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); White House Office : Vice President.

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