

dent, M. Luis Construction Co. Inc., and their parents Albertina and Manuel Luis; Reps. Michele M. Bachmann and Marlin A. Stutzman;

and 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney. He also referred to H.J. Res. 59.

The President's Weekly Address *October 5, 2013*

Good morning. Earlier this week, the Republican House of Representatives chose to shut down a Government they don't like over a health care law that they don't like. Now, I've talked a lot about the real-world consequences of this shutdown in recent days: the services disrupted, the benefits delayed, the public servants kicked off the job without pay.

But today I want to let the Americans dealing with those real-world consequences have their say. And these are just a few of the many heartbreaking letters I've gotten from them in the past couple weeks, including more than 30,000 over the past few days.

Kelly Mumper lives in rural Alabama. She works in early education, and she has three kids of her own in the Marines. Here's what she wrote to me on Wednesday:

Our Head Start agency was forced to stop providing services on October 1 for over 770 children, and 175 staff were furloughed. I'm extremely concerned for the welfare of these children. There are parents who work and who attend school. Where are they leaving their children? Is it a safe environment? Are [they] getting the food that they receive at their Head Start program?

On the day Julia Pruden's application to buy a home for her and her special needs children was approved by the USDA's rural development direct loan program, she wrote me from Minot, North Dakota:

We put in an offer to purchase a home this weekend, and it was accepted. If funding does not go through, our chances of the American Dream [are] down the drain. We've worked really hard to get our credit to be acceptable to purchase a

home. If it weren't for the direct lending program provided by the USDA, we would not qualify to buy the home we found.

These are just two of the many letters I've received from people who work hard, try to make ends meet, try to do right by their families. They're military or military spouses who've seen commissaries closed on their bases. They're veterans worried the services they've earned won't be there. They're business owners who've seen their contracts with the Government put on hold, worried they'll have to let people go. I want them to know, I read the stories you share with me.

These are our fellow Americans. These are the people who sent us here to serve. And I know that Republicans in the House of Representatives are hearing the same kinds of stories too.

As I made clear to them this week, there's only one way out of this reckless and damaging shutdown: pass a budget that funds our Government with no partisan strings attached. The Senate's already done this. And there are enough Republican and Democratic votes in the House of Representatives willing to do the same and end this shutdown immediately. Unfortunately, the far right of the Republican Party won't let Speaker Boehner give that bill a yes-or-no vote. Take that vote. Stop this farce. End this shutdown now.

The American people don't get to demand ransom in exchange for doing their job. Neither does Congress. They don't get to hold our democracy or our economy hostage over a settled law. They don't get to kick a child out of Head Start if they don't agree to take her parent's health insurance away. That's not how our democracy is supposed to work.

That's why I won't pay a ransom in exchange for reopening the Government. And I certainly won't pay a ransom in exchange for raising the debt ceiling. For as reckless as a Government shutdown is, an economic shutdown that comes with default—with America not paying its bills—would be dramatically worse.

I'll always work with anyone of either party on ways to grow this economy, create new jobs, and get our fiscal house in order for the long haul. But not under the shadow of these threats to our economy. So my message is simple: Pass a budget. End this Government shutdown. Pay our bills. Prevent an economic shutdown.

These Americans and millions of others are counting on Congress to do the right thing. And I will do everything I can to make sure they do.

Thanks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3 p.m. on October 4 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on October 5. In the address, the President referred to H.J. Res. 59. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 4, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 5.

Remarks on the Federal Government Shutdown *October 7, 2013*

Okay. I'm here at FEMA for a couple of reasons. First of all, I want to thank Craig Fugate, his entire team, and the incredible workers who are here at FEMA. They are having to, under less than optimal situations, still respond to Mother Nature, which doesn't stop just because the Government has shut down.

I wanted to get initially a briefing on what had happened with Hurricane Karen, became Tropical Storm Karen, and then fortunately dissipated, so we dodged a bullet there. In the meantime, we're on tornado watch here in the Mid-Atlantic States because of severe weather patterns. And we've got blizzards up north; we've got some weather patterns in the middle of the country that we're still monitoring. And so I just want to say thank you to all of you for the incredible work that you're doing.

I think it's important to understand that the people here at FEMA have been doing everything they can to respond to potential events. Here at FEMA, they're in touch with their State and local partners in case resources are needed. FEMA remains prepared for natural disasters year around, with supplies prepositioned in distribution centers across the country.

But their job has been made more difficult. Thanks to the folks at FEMA, we were prepared for what might have happened down in

Florida. Nevertheless, the Government is still shut down, services are still interrupted, and hundreds of thousands of hard-working public servants, including many FEMA professionals, are still furloughed without pay, or they're not allowed to work at all.

So Craig was just explaining to me, here at FEMA, about 86 percent of the FEMA workforce is furloughed. In response to the potential event that might have happened down in Florida and along the coasts, Craig called back 200 of those workers. Keep in mind, calling them back doesn't mean they were getting paid, it just means they had the privilege of working without pay to make sure that they were doing everything they can to respond to the potential needs of their fellow citizens.

Now that this particular storm has dissipated, Craig is going to have to refurlough at least a hundred of those folks who were called back. So think about that. Here you are, somebody who's a FEMA professional dedicated to doing your job; at a moment's notice, you're willing to show up here in case people got in trouble and respond to them, even though you're not getting paid, even though you don't have certainty. And now you're being put back on furlough because the Government is shut down. That's no way of doing business.