

From: Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher <RepLizzieFletcherTX07@mail.house.gov> To:

Andrea.Peterson@mail.house.gov Subject: Weekly Wrap Up Date: Fri, 10 Nov 2023

23:11:31 -0500 Unsubscribe:

<https://fletcher.house.gov/Forms/EmailSignup/?Delete=true&MessageID=1875&Email=Andrea.Peterson@>

Weekly Wrap Up body, table, td, a{-webkit-text-size-adjust: 100%;
-ms-text-size-adjust: 100%;} /* Prevent WebKit and Windows mobile changing
default text sizes */ img{-ms-interpolation-mode: bicubic;} /* Allow smoother
rendering of resized image in Internet Explorer */ /* RESET STYLES */img {
border: 0; height: auto; line-height: 100%; outline: none; text-decoration:
none; }table { border-collapse: collapse !important; }body { height: 100%
!important; margin: 0 !important; padding: 0 !important; width: 100%
!important; }strong { font-weight: bold; } /* Editor reset */ /* FIRESIDE STYLES
*/.component img {max-width:600px;}.component table {mso-table-rspace:10pt;
border-collapse:collapse;}.component { padding: 0px !important; }.press
{padding-bottom: 0px;}@media all and (max-width:650px) { .image-1, .caption-1,
.img-1 img, .image-1 tr, .image-1 td, .image-2, .img-2 img, .image-2 tr,
.image-2 td {max-width: 100% !important; width: 100% !important;}
.responsive-table {width:100% !important;}.responsive-table img
{max-width:100% !important; height: auto !important;}.press .component, .press
td {text-align:center;}.component { margin-left: 20px; margin-right: 20px;}
.component .responsive-table { margin-left: 0px !important; margin-right: 0px
!important;}.wide .video-thumb { width: 100% !important;height: auto
!important; }.wide.video-container { width: 100% !important; }
.component.full-width {margin-left: 0px; margin-right: 0px; } } /*
CLIENT-SPECIFIC STYLES */ body, table, td, a{-webkit-text-size-adjust: 100%;
-ms-text-size-adjust: 100%;} /* Prevent WebKit and Windows mobile changing
default text sizes */ table, td{mso-table-lspace: 0pt; mso-table-rspace: 0pt;}
/* Remove spacing between tables in Outlook 2007 and up */
img{-ms-interpolation-mode: bicubic;} /* Allow smoother rendering of resized
image in Internet Explorer */ /* RESET STYLES */img { border: 0; height: auto;
line-height: 100%; outline: none; text-decoration: none; } table {
border-collapse: collapse !important; } body { height: 100% !important; margin:
0 !important; padding: 0 !important; width: 100% !important; } strong {
font-weight: bold; } /* Editor reset */ /* FIRESIDE STYLES */.component img
{max-width:600px;}.component table {mso-table-rspace:10pt;
border-collapse:collapse; font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;}
.component td, td {font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;}.component {
padding: 0px !important; }.press {padding-bottom: 0px;}.caption-1 td
{font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;} /* Margin/NoMargin STYLES */
.component.full-width{ overflow: hidden; margin: 0px; } /* HEADER STYLES */
.header-bar {width: 100%;}.header-bar-margin {background-color:#ffffff;}
.header-bar h2 {margin: 0 !important; padding: 0 !important; color:
#000000;text-align: center;font-size: 24px;font-weight: bold; }.survey-content
> table > tbody tr td { border-color: #08244a !important; }.survey-content
input.survey-submit { font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif !important; }
@media all and (max-width:650px) { .image-1, .caption-1, .img-1 img, .image-1
tr, .image-1 td {max-width: 100% !important; width: 100% !important;}

.responsive-table {width:100% !important;} .responsive-table img {max-width:100% !important; height: auto !important;} .press .component, .press td, .split .component, .split .component td, .split td {text-align:center;} .component { margin-left: 20px; margin-right: 20px;} .component .responsive-table { margin-left: 0px !important; margin-right: 0px !important;} .wide .video-thumb { width: 100% !important; height: auto !important; } .wide .video-container { width: 100% !important; } }

Dear Neighbor, It was another full week in Washington, and I write to share this update with you. Dear Neighbor, It was another full week in Washington, and I write to share this update with you. On Monday, the House convened. First, House members debated several bills under suspension of the Rules, passing during the week the Women's Suffrage National Monument Location Act (H.R. 1318), authorizing the placement of the Women's Suffrage National Monument on National Mall, the American Battlefield Protection Program Enhancement Act (H.R. 3448), protecting and preserving America's battlefields, the Hershel Woody Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act (H.R. 2717) authorizing the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish a commemorative work to honor the valor, service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients, a bill to transfer National Forest System land near in Arizona to the Bureau of Reclamation for the Salt River Federal Reclamation Project (H.R. 1607), and the Fort San Gerónimo Preservation Act (H.R. 359), establishing Fort San Gerónimo in Puerto Rico as an affiliated area of the National Parks System. All of these bills passed the House on a bipartisan basis. Much of the rest of the week was spent debating two government funding bills and proposed amendments to them: the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (H.R. 4820) and the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2024 (H.R. 4664). Although we debated the bills and many amendments to them, neither bill passed the House. In fact, the House did not even vote on final passage of either one. These appropriations bills continue to move through the House on a partisan basis for two principal reasons. First, they violate the bipartisan budget agreement reflected in the Fiscal Responsibility Act, which established spending levels for appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2024 in exchange for lifting the debt ceiling. Congress passed this bill on a bipartisan basis and President Biden signed the bill into law just this summer. Yet, each appropriations bill the House has considered this year, including the two this week, has cut those funding levels in violation of the agreement, often drastically. Second, the bills include all kinds of other unserious provisions, including many that are meant to divide Americans over issues often utterly irrelevant to the legislation. Some of the amendments we voted on this week illustrate the point. Here is a small sample of the kinds of amendments the House debated and voted on this week: Prohibiting funding for the Executive Office of the Vice President. Reducing the salary of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to \$1. Reducing the salary of White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre to \$1. Reducing the salary of SEC chairman Gary Gensler to \$1. Reducing the salary of the Deputy Secretary of Transportation to \$1. Reducing

the salary of the Acting Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to \$1. Reducing the salary of the Assistant Secretary for Housing and the Federal Housing Commissioner to \$1. Preventing funds from being used for the Office of Gun Violence Prevention. Prohibiting funds from being used to produce official documents containing the term "Latinx" or "Latin-x." As proposed and amended, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024, H.R. 4820, would raise commuting and housing costs for American families and cut crucial agencies responsible for enforcing the law and protecting the welfare of Americans, including, for example, cutting Department of Transportation (DOT) funding by over \$7 billion, decimating grants for disaster recovery and mitigation projects, threatening funding for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS program, and restricting development of electric vehicle infrastructure. For a detailed summary of provisions of the bill prepared by the Democrats on the House Appropriations Committee, you can click [here](#). I also want to note that, while we debated these silly amendments, the amendment I introduced was excluded from consideration. My amendment provided that heirs' property homeowners without documentation of property title would be provided resources and streamlined options to prove their ownership when applying for disaster relief funds. (Heirs' property is a term for family-owned land that is jointly owned by descendants of a deceased person whose estate did not clear probate. It is estimated that more than a third of Southern Black-owned land is heirs' property. Several recent cases, including in Texas, demonstrate the difficulties in demonstrating ownership and the risk to families of losing possession of the land through various legal channels.) I'll keep working on this issue, but I was disappointed that this meaningful amendment was not considered. Likewise, the proposed Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2024, cut funding to the Department of Treasury, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, the Executive Office of the President, and other agencies by nearly 60 percent. These drastic, unworkable cuts would make it impossible for these agencies to do their jobs, which entail protecting Americans from scams (and robocalls!) and providing funding for election security grants. The bill also contains poison pill provisions like banning all federal employees from accessing abortion services through their health insurance and banning small business loans to disadvantaged communities. For a detailed summary of provisions of the bill prepared by the Democrats on the House Appropriations Committee, you can click [here](#). By the end of the week, neither of the two bills slated for consideration were brought to the House floor for a vote. In addition to these bills, on Tuesday, the House considered another privileged resolution to censure Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) (H.Res. 845) for statements she has made regarding the Hamas attack in Israel and related matters. Once again, Democrats offered a motion to table the resolution, which I voted for, but the motion to table failed and the House considered the bill. As I explained last week, until recently, Congressional censure was reserved for

cases of severe ethics violations by a member of Congress. And, until this point, censure has been used to address a member's conduct, not political speech. This resolution, however, concerns speech of a member, which is protected not only by the First Amendment to the Constitution but also by its Speech and Debate Clause. Freedom of speech is among the most foundational and important freedoms in our democratic society. And while I don't agree with the speech that was the subject of the resolution, I voted against this resolution. As my friend Congressman Jamie Raskin said in his remarks on the floor, "[i]t's easy to defend freedom of speech for people when you agree with them. The test for each member today is whether you can defend freedom of speech for people when you most fundamentally and vehemently disagree with them." The House passed the resolution by a vote of 234-188. As a reminder, you can always find a list of all the votes I have taken for the district on my website. As you may know, I serve as the Chair of the New Democrat Coalition's Trade Task Force. This week, members of our Task Force sent a letter to President Biden outlining our comprehensive policy plan to maintain the United States as a leader in the global marketplace and enact trade policies that will benefit American workers, consumers, growers, producers, and businesses. Our eight key objectives to build on and strengthen U.S. trade policy include: Countering Competitive Threats and Abuses from China Establishing a Durable and Sustainable Approach to Trade Returning to Reciprocal Bilateral/Regional Trade Agreements Strengthening the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) Building a More Robust Trade Relationship with Taiwan Reducing Barriers to Trade that Increase Costs for Americans and Hurt U.S. Businesses Promoting the U.S. Digital Economy and Lead Negotiations on Agreements Related to Digital Trade Supporting Agricultural Exports by Reducing Tariff and Non-Tariff Barriers To read our full letter, [click here](#). I co-sponsored several bills on issues important to our community, including a resolution Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali, (H.Res. 844) and several bills supporting our military veterans, who we honor this week with Veteran's Day: The Veteran Service Recognition Act, H.R. 4569, which allows non-citizen service members to apply for naturalization and for deported non-citizen veterans to return to the U.S. and obtain legal permanent resident status; The Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023, H.R. 542, which improves and expands home and community-based services for elderly veterans, helping them stay in their homes and receive the care they need; The Not Just a Number Act, H.R. 4157, which requires the VA to examine benefit usage in their annual suicide prevention report and study the factors that best prevent veteran suicide; The VA Loan Informed Disclosure (VALID) Act, H.R. 4335, which increases awareness and accessibility of VA home loans for veterans and their families; and The Correcting Guam's History in the PACT Act, H.R. 1191, which expands eligibility for a presumptive service connection for herbicide exposure for veterans who served in Guam. I also joined my colleagues in sending several letters also on issues important to our community, including: a letter to Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, and Senior Advisor to the President John Podesta requesting that they provide flexibility on the 45V tax

credit to be used for hydrogen production of different fuel source varieties and the reduction of carbon intensity to ensure the success of the hydrogen hub program; a letter to House and Senate Agriculture Committee leaders requesting that they include provisions in the Farm Bill to provide food assistance programs for students enrolled in college more than part-time; and a bipartisan letter to Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg supporting United Airlines' application to establish a new nonstop route from George Bush Intercontinental Airport to Tokyo International Airport. For the last four weeks, work in Washington has focused on matters of foreign policy and addressing the ongoing crisis in the Middle East in the days since Hamas' attack on October 7. Tuesday marked one month since the attack, and I joined a bipartisan group of House members in a candlelight vigil to remember the victims and the hostages taken by Hamas militants. Many of us visited with family members of the hostages, and are working to support efforts to ensure their return. The United States has expressed its unequivocal support for and commitment to Israel's security and its right to respond to the October 7 attack on October 7 as well as a commitment to the humanitarian needs of the innocent people of Gaza who are in harm's way. Representatives of the United States, including President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken have urged a humanitarian pause to allow safe passage for civilians and to facilitate humanitarian assistance in Gaza, and Israel instituted a pause this week on a daily basis going forward. President Biden has requested supplemental funding from Congress to advance our national security priorities, including support for Israel's defense against terrorism, providing life-saving humanitarian assistance to Gaza and supporting Palestinians in the West Bank, defending Ukraine against Russian aggression, and maintaining peace and security in the Indo-Pacific. The request also strengthens the American economy and creates new American jobs, ensures military readiness by investing in American defense, supports new financing for developing countries, strengthens border security, and addresses urgent needs in our immigration system. The Senate is moving forward on a bipartisan proposal to support this request. And time is of the essence. And it is tied to a related and critical issue that was the focus in Washington this week: the next deadline for agreement on continued government funding, which is next Friday. House Republicans have not yet announced a plan to address the government funding deadline. As I have said before, a government shutdown would have devastating consequences. House Democrats, Senate Republicans and Democrats, and President Biden are willing to and are working together to avoid those consequences and keep the government open. We hope to see a proposal this weekend, and I will keep you informed as we move forward. It's always a joy to visit with Houstonians in my Washington, D.C. office! This week, I was glad to meet with members of Descendants of Olivewood and the National Trust for Historic Preservation and to discuss historic preservation and funding opportunities for Olivewood, Houston's first incorporated African American cemetery, just next to our district. I also met with TX-07 students who were in town for an advocacy week to talk about issues on high school and college campuses.

On the topic of keeping our community safe, I had a briefing with the FBI following my request upon hearing FBI Director Christopher Wray's testimony in a Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee Hearing last week that the Bureau had recently arrested a man in Houston who had threatened our Jewish community. On our call, we discussed the importance of partnership and communication in keeping our community safe. Preventing hate crimes is a top priority within the FBI. If you believe you are a victim or a witness of a hate crime, report it to the FBI by calling 1-800-CALL-FBI or submit a tip at tips.fbi.gov. I also had the chance to sit down in the office with national leaders of the Sikh Coalition to discuss the importance of protecting Sikh communities and upholding the right to religious freedom and expression. And a little further afield, I joined the Panda Team for the departure ceremony for the Smithsonian National Zoo pandas as they returned to China. There, I visited with the zookeepers, representatives from the Embassy of China, and the transport team at FedEx responsible for their safe return home. At the intersection of conservation and cultural exchange, these pandas have brought important learning opportunities to many Americans. At home in Houston, Team TX-07 attended a METRO Bus Shelter Opening with Chairman Sanjay Ramabhadran and the Thriving Together in Harmony Luncheon at the Chinese Community Center. And in Washington, our team met with representatives from University of Houston's APEX Accelerator. Our team continued to talk with constituents throughout the week on matters of importance to them, and, of course, to help them with matters before federal agencies. As I hope you know by now, our team of constituent advocates assists TX-07 residents every day with matters before federal agencies, like obtaining benefits from Social Security, Medicare, and the VA, and resolving matters with the IRS and USCIS. Recently, Constituent Advocate Fatimah helped TX-07 neighbor Thomas L., who shared this with us about his experience: "Representative Fletcher assisted me in obtaining reimbursement from the Center for Medicare Services (CMS). After I'd paid Quest Diagnostic for tests that a doctor had ordered, CMS held I'd no responsibility for those charges because Quest had not told me that CMS wouldn't cover them. For about one year, I unsuccessfully followed their directions to obtain reimbursement from Quest. I contacted Representative Fletcher, and CMS paid me and wrote that it intended to obtain reimbursement from Quest. Had it not been for Representative Fletcher's intervention, I would've never received reimbursement for payments wrongfully withheld by Quest in defiance of CMS' ruling." I'm glad to hear this story and many more-and hope you know how hard our team in Houston is working on these matters for our neighbors in the district. While we cannot guarantee a favorable outcome, we can promise you we will do our best to help you receive a fair and timely response. To request assistance, click [here](#). Last year, I voted for-and President Biden signed into law-the Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act to deliver health care coverage to veterans who have been exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. TX-07 is home more than 20,000 veterans. From August 10, 2022, to October 13, 2023, these veterans

submitted 1,145 PACT Act-related benefit claims for disability payments. Some examples of how veterans might qualify: If a veteran with no dependents served in Afghanistan, was exposed to burn pit fumes during his or her service, has been diagnosed with cancer, and is unable to work, the veteran would now be presumptively eligible for free medical care at a local VA medical center and to receive \$43,460 in annual disability benefits. If a married veteran with one child and dependent elderly parents served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, is suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other respiratory disorders, and is unable to work, the veteran would now be able to receive free medical care through the VA and could potentially receive annual disability benefits up to \$51,550. Survivors of veterans are now eligible to reapply for benefits that may have been unavailable to them, including retroactive payments. For example: If a widow in the district who was married to a Vietnam Veteran who died from lung cancer was previously denied survivor benefits, the widow could now reapply and receive retroactive benefits as well as a minimum monthly survivor benefit payment of \$1,562.17. Go to [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) and apply today. For more information about how the PACT Act is helping veterans and their survivors, visit VA's PACT Act Dashboard. To apply for care or benefits today, visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MYVA411.

Last Sunday, we got an extra hour as we adjusted our clocks from Daylight Savings Time. I always prefer falling back to springing forward. Last year, our Energy & Commerce Committee held a hearing on a proposal to make Daylight Savings Time permanent. It hasn't happened yet-and apparently it really will take an act of Congress to happen-so, I want to hear from you: Do you support making either Daylight Savings Time or Standard Time permanent and ending the semi-annual time change? Yes No Undecided Submit survey to sign up for updates.*

Tomorrow is Veterans Day, and I look forward to honoring our veterans at home in Houston. On Veterans Day, we pay tribute to the personal sacrifices made by veterans and their families. I will continue to make sure veterans receive health care, disability benefits, and other services they have earned. Our TX-07 team is here to assist our veterans in all the ways we can. Also this weekend, people across our community are celebrating Diwali. Happy Diwali to all who celebrate, in TX-07 and across our area, the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. I hope this season of joy, festivities, and warmth ushers in brighter days ahead. Finally, our spring internship deadline is next Friday, November 17. Students interested in public service in both Washington and Houston are invited to apply. Fill out the application [here](#). The House will be back in session next week, and we are expecting to consider more appropriations bills, including Commerce, Justice, and Science (H.R. 5893) and Labor-Health and Human Services (H.R. 5944). We are also expecting to consider the No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act (H.R. 5961) and a privileged resolution from Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene impeaching Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. And, as I mentioned above, the current continuing resolution to fund the government expires next Friday at 11:59pm. So, we are expecting an extended week in

Washington, and I am sorry to say I've had to postpone some events at home. I am proud to represent you and I am here to help you. Please call my office at (713) 353-8680 or (202) 225-2571 or email here at any time to ask for assistance or share your thoughts. I look forward to hearing from you. Best wishes, Washington, DC Office 346 Cannon HOB Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-2571 Fax: (202) 225-4381 Central Houston Office 3700 Buffalo Speedway Suite 610 Houston, TX 77098 Phone: (713) 353-8680 Fax: (713) 353-8677 Sugar Land Office 1600 Highway 6 Suite 455 Sugar Land, TX 77478 Phone: (713) 353-8680 Fax: (713) 353-8677 Unsubscribe Click Here to view this email in your browser Click Here to be removed from this list View in your browser