

Dr. Burgess Weekly Address September 1, 2017 Hurricane Harvey's Impact on Texas

Hello, this is your Congressman Michael Burgess.

This week, our Texas community was shocked by the devastation that occurred in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. Our hearts are heavy as we mourn the lives that have been lost and consider the damage our neighbors in southeast Texas have sustained.

Unfortunately, the effects of the hurricane are wide-reaching and extend even further than the floodwaters. Here in the 26th District, I am aware that a number of North Texans are having problems finding gasoline. I wanted to give you a brief update on steps the federal government is taking to ease this problem.

Secretary Perry and the Department of Energy are making it easier for fuel to reach affected areas. All environmental and transportation waivers requested have been granted, easing restrictions that delay the availability of fuel for our area and all of Texas. For example: Despite the typical seasonal limitations, all types of gasoline will be made available. Furthermore, hours of service restrictions for truck drivers contributing to the recovery effort have been lifted with the intention of helping fuel reach areas with shortages much faster. The Department of Homeland Security is also close to granting a waiver to allow fuel to be transported by ship from other parts of the country.

Here's the good news: There is fuel headed to Texas from all over the United States, and measures are being taken to ensure Texans have access to fuel soon. We expect any shortages to be short-lived as the federal government takes steps to clear hurdles and ultimately get the refineries back up and running.

This week in Texas, in the midst of disaster, we have witnessed the best of the American spirit: neighbors helping neighbors, citizens helping citizens. Many of us have been struck by the heroism displayed throughout our state over the course of the hurricane and the subsequent flooding.

Here in North Texas, I was able to visit both the FEMA Region 6 Headquarters in Denton and the mega-shelter set up in the Dallas Convention Center to receive

briefings on efforts to help those impacted by Hurricane Harvey. From deploying volunteers and equipment to collecting donated items, many from our area have contributed to this cause.

Texans are strong and resilient. We will stick together, and we will get the job done. No storm could ever compromise the spirit of our neighbors in southeast Texas, and I know that they will recover from this disaster.

I am also thankful for all of those who have chipped in to help those affected by the storm. A disaster of this magnitude requires a team effort, and each and every Texan plays a part. I appreciate your patience and your care for your fellow Texans during this very difficult time, and I will provide updates as we know more about relief efforts.

As always, I appreciate your comments and your concerns on this issue or any issue. May God bless you and your family, have a safe Labor Day, and as the song says, God bless you Texas.