

Dr. Burgess Weekly Address May 4, 2018

Preparing North Texas for Emergencies

Hello, this is your Congressman Michael Burgess.

We've all experienced it. North Texas weather can be unpredictable – especially at this time of the year. To help the 26th District plan and prepare for emergencies, I hold an annual summit with local and federal experts. Last Saturday, I held my 10th annual Emergency Preparedness Summit and Fair at Little Elm High School. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mayor Hillock, the Town of Little Elm, Little Elm ISD, and Denton County Emergency Services for their partnership to hold this event.

During this year's summit, we had a special focus on the lessons learned from Hurricane Harvey. Almost eight months after the storm made landfall, southeast Texans still are working towards recovery. To help prepare for future emergencies, Dr. Kevin Yeskey from the Department of Health & Human Services and Tony Robinson, the FEMA Region 6 Regional Administrator, discussed the Trump Administration's response to the disaster. Also looking back at the response to Hurricane Harvey, several local officials spoke about the use of Unmanned Aerial Systems in disaster response.

The Emergency Preparedness Summit also included a panel with weather experts Rick Mitchell from NBC 5, Mark Fox, and representatives from the National Weather Service who spoke on "making sense of North Texas weather," if that is possible.

Finally, we know that there are hazards beyond severe weather. It is important that North Texans are prepared for any danger they may face. During his remarks, Dr. Yeskey discussed the Department of Health and Human Services' response to the Las Vegas Shooting last fall. The summit also included a panel of local school leaders who discussed school safety and preparedness. Year in and year out, this is part of our preparedness forum, and it is imperative that we are ready for any scenario.

Each year, I learn from this event and hope that it is helpful for those who are able to attend or watch online. We never can be too-prepared for severe weather and unforeseen natural and man-made disasters that could impact our region. As we head into the summer, I encourage all of you to make a plan to protect your family from emergencies and most importantly a way to communicate with each other.

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