



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

Senator Parker Expresses Concern for the Victims of the Federal Government's Shutdown

KEVIN S. PARKER October 2, 2013

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(Brooklyn, NY) - "Speaker Boehner and Congressional Republicans' actions last night in shutting down the federal government will create significant hardship for New York's working families. Starting today, the families of over 50,000 federal employees in New York City will not be able to pay their bills. As the temperature cools, families that receive support from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) will be hurt. In addition, federal grants that fund elder abuse protection, senior services, veterans, and child care will not be disbursed, leaving our vulnerable populations without vital services. Additionally, children from low-income families who attend Head Start will lose access to this important childhood development program.

Our communities have lost services today because Congressional Republicans believe it is more important to hold the country hostage to try to destroy the Affordable Care Act, than to keep our nation's promises to our greatest generation, to our children and to the disabled. The Affordable Care Act (a/k/a "Obamacare") went into effect today, and more than 2 million New Yorkers visited New York's health exchange web site to see how they might lower their healthcare costs, or get access to the quality health insurance they could not afford before today.

If Congress continues to keep the federal government locked down, through October, a number of other essential programs and vulnerable populations will be in jeopardy. Children and nursing mothers will run the risk of going hungry because critical programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (food stamps), school breakfast & lunch, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), will be at risk. Even the federal money for disaster assistance recovery from Superstorm Sandy will be at risk, if Speaker Boehner does not end Congress' dysfunction.

If the government shutdown continues into November, our gradual recovery from the Great Recession is in peril of turning into a new recession, and deepening unemployment. However, we can avoid that unnecessary self-inflicted suffering. I urge Speaker Boehner to act responsibly to pass a Continuing Resolution and raise the federal debt ceiling without any more threats or gimmicks. America's children, middle-class, seniors and working families must not be sacrificed by Speaker Boehner to make a political point that will help no one, and harm many."