



September 27, 2016

Re: Support for Relief Funding for Flint, Michigan

Dear Senator/Representative,

On behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), we urge you to pass a short term Continuing Resolution (CR) that includes disaster relief funding for Flint, Michigan. In one of our nation's most severe man-made public health crises, tens of thousands of people, many of them children, have been exposed to lead poisoned water. The community of Flint has struggled to provide clean water for its residents for over a year and emergency assistance to deal with this egregious health crisis is long overdue.

The ACLU's Michigan affiliate played an instrumental role in bringing this crisis to light and we will continue to play a role in seeking its remedy. In the past year, we have taken numerous steps to ensure accountability for this disaster and provide support to the people of Flint. Since the discovery of lead-poisoning in Flint's water supply, the ACLU has:

- Filed a lawsuit alleging violations under the Safe Drinking Water Act;
- Petitioned the EPA for emergency response;
- Called for Governor Snyder to waive his FOIA exemption immediately and release all emails relating to the decision to use the Flint River as the city's water source;
- Called for Michigan state lawmakers to reform the Michigan FOIA law to ensure a similar crisis will not occur in the future;
- Conducted an ongoing investigation into the condition of the water and provision of educational and nutritional services in the public schools;
- Sought protections and access to clean water for undocumented immigrants living in Flint; and
- Opened a regional office in Flint to further monitor the crisis and work with community residents to address city-wide systemic failures.

Despite these efforts, much more must be done to rectify the damage caused by this tragedy. As an impoverished community composed largely of people of color, the residents of Flint represent some of our country's most vulnerable populations. It is imperative that Congress provide aid without further delay.

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While we applaud Leader McConnell for proposing necessary emergency funding to address the floods in Louisiana, it is unacceptable that he has simultaneously rejected fully offset funding to address the crisis in Flint. Both Louisiana flood victims and Flint residents have suffered from disaster and require immediate assistance. It is crucial that emergency relief is provided in the Continuing Resolution for both communities before Congress recesses this week. To delay assistance for either Louisiana or Flint would be negligent and unjust.

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact ACLU Legislative Counsel Jennifer Bellamy (202-715-0828; or jbellamy@aclu.org).

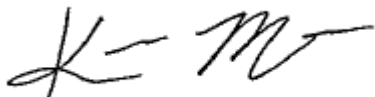
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karin Johanson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karin" being more prominent than the last name "Johanson".

Karin Johanson
Director
Washington Legislative Office

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Bellamy". The signature is very stylized and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" being the most legible part.

Jennifer Bellamy
Legislative Counsel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kary Moss". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Kary" being the most prominent.

Kary Moss
Executive Director
ACLU of Michigan