

Guest Column: We must fund the government

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Funding the government is one of the most basic responsibilities we have in Congress. However, as we approach the September 30th deadline for passing a government funding package, the most extreme faction of the House Republican Majority is sowing chaos. There is real, pressing work to do to make life better and more affordable for people in America, but instead, the majority is wasting time with political stunts and partisan games. Once again, MAGA Members of Congress are holding the government hostage with outlandish demands and a radical agenda. Essential services including health care, childcare, education, food assistance, and public safety need funding- not harsh cuts.

My Democratic colleagues and I want to keep the government open and pass a budget that puts people over politics. The American people will pay the price of a government shutdown. It would disrupt the livelihoods of hard-working families, interrupt critical government services, hurt small business, and endanger our national security. It's simple: We cannot afford an extreme MAGA Republican shutdown. It's time for Speaker McCarthy to get serious about governing, and I hope to see him start working across the aisle to get a budget passed for the American people.

Other Priorities I'm Working On:

- **Protecting America's Endangered Species:** We recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of one of our country's most successful environmental laws – the Endangered Species Act (ESA). As part of the festivities, I was honored with an award recognizing my efforts to protect the ESA. It was especially meaningful to have the Yurok Tribe celebrated among my fellow honorees for their incredible work to support our region's iconic wildlife.
- **Supporting the Shasta-Trinity National Forest:** I have been championing legislation to help Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area managers get the consistent funding they need to improve outdoor recreation, boost the local economy, and maintain this regional treasure. I'm excited to share that it just passed out of the House by a unanimous vote. I'm looking forward to seeing my bill pass the Senate and head to President Biden's desk for final passage.
- **Advocating for Tribal Support:** The Department of Justice recently launched a program across ten states to address the crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIP), and while this program is a critical step, I'm disappointed that California was excluded from the list of states receiving assistance. Senator Alex Padilla and I led a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland requesting that the DOJ rectify this grave mistake and provide our Tribes with the support – and justice – they deserve.
- **Restoring our Kelp Forests:** Senator Jeff Merkley, Senator Angus King, and I introduced the Help Our Kelp Act to support and uplift the recovery of our kelp forests.