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February 4, 2016

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol S-230
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McConnell,

The state of emergency in Flint, Michigan requires immediate action from the United States Senate. Our children have been poisoned because of poor decision-making by some and inaction by others who are responsible for protecting the most vulnerable among us. Senate Republicans should not prevent federal emergency assistance to the people of Flint by blocking the common-sense amendments offered by Michigan Senators Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters to the Energy Policy and Modernization Act. Instead, both parties should come to an agreement on an emergency relief package for the people of Flint.

While there are no flooded streets or people stranded on the roof of their home, poisoned water still runs through the faucets in Flint. There are children with visible scars, and those who will have mental health issues and learning disabilities that we cannot yet see. Bottled water is not a solution. It is a band-aid that will not heal this gaping wound. The City of Flint is in crisis.

Providing emergency assistance to Flint is not a bailout. The Stabenow-Peters amendments would: a) provide emergency funding to help repair Flint's water infrastructure, b) notify the public of concentrations of lead in the water, and c) connect children and adults exposed to lead poisoning with community services and health experts. Moreover, other communities currently dealing with lead water crises in states like Ohio and elsewhere could also benefit from these resources.

Republican senators have routinely requested this type of assistance when disasters occurred in their states. The people of Flint deserve nothing less. Republicans must join Democrats in meeting our moral obligation to protect the health of our children.

Senator McConnell, we are asking for your leadership to ensure your Republican colleagues do not condemn the people of Flint to more pain and suffering by blocking these amendments.

Very truly yours,


G. K. Butterfield
Chairman
The Congressional Black Caucus

cc: Senator Harry Reid

