

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 27, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to express my concerns with the apparent lack of urgency and speed in which the funds reprogrammed by the Administration to battle the Zika virus have been used.

Since January, I have been an active and vocal leader on the necessity for the Federal government to confront the Zika virus and prepare our country for the inevitable migration of the virus into the United States. Whether it was the Administration's \$1.9 billion request, bipartisan Senate proposals or the House-Senate compromise, I have supported every single Congressional effort to deal with Zika. It is unfortunate that Congress has failed to pass any kind of legislation this summer to deal with the Zika virus. However, it is also deeply concerning that, according to figures provided by the Office of Management and Budget, most of the money reprogrammed by the Administration for the fight against Zika remains unspent. Recent reports have indicated that as much as \$384 million remains unobligated.

Funding is critical and needs to be implemented swiftly to provide the assistance to the states, such as Florida, to combat the Zika virus. After multiple discussions with representatives from state health departments, local health departments, county government officials, infectious disease experts, and health officers from Puerto Rico, I understand the need to address this public health threat immediately and head on. Time is critical for our ability to stay in front of the virus and minimize its impact and there should not be a delay or hold on any funds, either Administrative or Congressional, while so many are at risk.

I urge you to encourage all relevant agencies to use the funds currently available in the battle to contain this illness as expeditiously as possible. This issue is only magnified as we enter deeper into the summer mosquito season and have had possibly the first locally-transmitted case of the Zika virus in Miami, Florida.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
United States Senator