

A Resolution

EXPRESSING the opposition of the Loudoun County Democratic Committee to Rep. Comstock's vote on Zika Virus funding.

WHEREAS, the Zika virus is a serious threat to public health. There will likely be mosquito-borne transmission within the continental U. S. by this summer. The Zika virus is a cause of microcephaly (that eats away the fetal brain and destroys the ability to think), other severe fetal brain defects, as well as neurological disorders and other health problems. Currently there is no vaccine ready or any known effective therapy to stop Zika; and

WHEREAS, in February, the Administration submitted a request for \$1.9 billion in emergency supplemental funding to Congress to begin taking necessary steps to protect the American people from this virus. The funding is needed to better control mosquitoes; develop new tools, including vaccines and better diagnostics; and conduct crucial research projects needed to better understand the impact of the virus on infants and children. However, Congress took no action and the Administration was forced to redirect \$500 million dollars from fighting Ebola to temporarily address activities aimed at Zika. Note that Ebola still remains a threat, and cases are still being reported in West Africa; and

WHEREAS, on 18 May 2016 the U. S. House of Representatives did pass H.R. 5243, the Zika Response Appropriations Act of 2016, by a vote of 238 Republicans. This Act would provide \$622.1 million to combat Zika. Congresswoman Barbara Comstock voted in favor of the Act. However, the Administration opposes this Act because it expires in fiscal year 2016, the funding is insufficient, and it only redirects previously appropriated funds and will harm the Nations ability to address a range of other urgent, emerging, and ongoing health challenges, such as yellow fever; and

WHEREAS, fighting Zika should be treated as an emergency similar to Ebola and H1N1 (influenza) viruses. Public health experts say that even if this Act becomes law, the total funding is still woefully inadequate to support the response needed to reduce the risk of Zika; and

WHEREAS, on 16 May, the Senate passed amendments #3899 and #3900 to H.R. 2577 to initiate their own measures to address the Zika emergency (Congressional Record - Senate, May 16, 2016, pp S2844-S2806). Rather than rearrange existing funding, the Senate voted to waive budget rules and add the cost of the \$1.1 billion Zika measure to the deficit; and

WHEREAS, in late June, Congressional Republicans agreed with House and Senate negotiators to add "poison pill" provisions to the legislation by offering to provide the \$1.1 billion by taking \$750 million from other appropriations, such as restricting the role of Planned Parenthood (Zika can be transmitted sexually), cutting \$540 million from the Affordable Care Act and removal of an additional \$107 million from already depleted Ebola programs, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED on this the 7th day of July, 2016, the Loudoun County Democratic Committee believes that Representative Comstock, by her voting record and support for Republican leadership, has not been sufficiently proactive in her duties to protect and promote the safety and security of her constituents. And, the Republican House should immediately join with the Senate to pass the amended H.R. 2577 Bill—with "poison-pill" amendments removed—on an emergency basis to adequately fund the initial efforts required to meet the Zika emergency as requested by the Administration.