



Gridlock Hurts Real People

October 28, 2025

Dear Leader Schumer,

The government remains shut down, with no end in sight. Every day that Washington stays paralyzed, the damage deepens. Families are facing missed paychecks, veterans are losing access to critical programs, and small businesses are left in uncertainty. Millions of Americans who rely on essential services are left to wonder how much longer they can hold on.

For countless individuals nationwide, this isn't mere political posturing; it's their grim reality. They are undeserving victims caught in the crossfire of Washington's dysfunction. The government needs to be reopened now, and then you can engage in the political dealmaking and policy debates you were elected to carry out.

Rather than taking responsible action to reopen the government and protect the truly vulnerable—including single mothers, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and military families—you have chosen to prioritize expanding subsidies for higher-income households and maintaining policies that discourage work. As Patrice Onwuka, director of Independent Women's Center for Economic Opportunity, **put it**, this Democrat-led shutdown is "cutting off aid to the poor to give the rich cheaper insurance."

For our military families, the toll is especially devastating. Over two million service members are being forced to work without pay, and for **one in five**, the military is their family's sole income. With **one in four** already struggling with food insecurity, it is shameful to consider missed paychecks for our troops an acceptable political cost.

Republicans have already advanced measures to fund the military and preserve essential programs for vulnerable populations. Shamefully, Democrats refuse to act.

Independent Women launched the **"Gridlock Hurts Real People" campaign** to highlight the real experiences of Americans directly affected by this unnecessary shutdown.

Their stories reveal the very real human cost of your refusal to act:

- A mother in Alabama shared that her son, a service member, and his family are struggling to pay rent and buy groceries without his regular paycheck. “This is selfish abuse of power to meet political goals,” she wrote. “We’re not stupid.”
- In Utah, a woman’s brother—a veteran who now works for the VA—has been forced off the job. “His livelihood is currently shut down,” she said. “Congress is grandstanding instead of doing the work of compromising.”
- A senior in Maryland said she and her husband are worried about losing their Social Security checks. “It’s appalling,” she said, “that our military, TSA agents, and border patrol are working without pay while politicians collect theirs.”
- A military spouse in Maryland described the anxiety spreading through her community: “Families are unsure whether they’ll receive their next paycheck. Our troops already sacrifice so much—playing politics with their livelihoods is cruel.”
- A grandmother in Tennessee told us her Navy family is moving cross-country for a new post, but can’t access the relocation funds they were promised. “They’re putting everything on credit cards just to serve this country,” she said. “It’s unfair and frightening.”
- In Virginia, a military wife with young twins, said, “If they don’t pay my husband, we will literally starve and lose our home while he’s deployed.”
- A disabled veteran in Minnesota shared that her son, also serving, will soon miss his paycheck. “We’ll support him as we always have,” she wrote, “but this shouldn’t be happening.”
- And a woman in North Carolina battling cancer wrote, “I depend on government programs for survival. Please have compassion—these games are risking the lives of your most vulnerable citizens.”

These are not just partisan talking points; they are the voices of real Americans seeking leadership and compassion. With every passing day, the pain grows for the very people you were elected to serve.

American families, veterans, and service members should not be used as leverage in political disputes. The collateral damage Americans are experiencing is a direct consequence of Democrats' inaction. Democrats should embrace bipartisanship and join Republicans to pass a clean continuing resolution, as has happened 13 times in the last four years. End this shutdown now.

Respectfully,



Carrie Lukas
President
Independent Women



Heather R. Higgins
CEO
Independent Women's Voice



Patrice Onwuka
Director, Center for Economic Opportunity
Independent Women's Voice



Meaghan Mobbs
Director, Center for American Safety and Security
Independent Women's Voice

**SHUTDOWN HARM
STORIES SHARED WITH
INDEPENDENT WOMEN
BY THE FOLLOWING
AMERICANS**

Daisy H	AL
Shawne B	AL
Eric F	AL
Jaime P	AL
Shannon D	AL
Candy J	AL
Michelle W	AL
Gabriel E. M	AL
Christine L	AL
Tabby S	AL
Marisela F	AL
Doris Y	AL
Karen S	AL
Alisa H	AL
Beverly J	AL
Annette H	AL
Kris L	AL
Amee Nicole L	AR
Johnny B	AR
Billy S	AR
Linda S	AR
Randy M	AR
Jackie Y	AR
Camellia H	AR
Kym C	AR
Angela P	AR

Christina G	AR
Heather D	AR
Fran S	AR
Tessa G	AZ
Shelley L	AZ
Dusty C	AZ
Theresa A	AZ
María M	AZ
Cynthia R	AZ
Cynthia R	AZ
Amber D	AZ
Kathleen L	CA
Robert P	CA
Joyce W	CA
Iris P	CA
Joyce W	CA
Ashlee S	CA
Eugene K	CA
Louise M	CA
Dianne F	CA
Beverly S	CA
Bob H	CA
Craig S	CA
Judith H	CA
V. David G	CA
Sheryl R	CA
Kathryn D	CA
Dean H	CA
Kimberly D	CA
Robin H	CA
Deanna M	CA
Shayla C	CA

Shirley D	CO
Judy M	CO
Rebecca B	CO
Debra S	CO
Elizabeth P	CO
Margaret I	CO
Tammi M	CO
Anne M	CO
Tammi M	CO
Deborah R	CO
Diana S	CO
Cindi P	CO
Carma R	CO
Brent H	CO
Jan S	CT
Nancy E	CT
Debra C	CT
Dorothy R	DE
Sauri H	FL
Eva J	FL
Suzanne O	FL
Fabian C	FL
Regina C	FL
Patti W	FL
Marie M	FL
Nanette S	FL
Sandy L	FL
Morton H	FL
Laura B	FL
Joseph D	FL
Phil and Paul B	FL
Morton H	FL

Marilyn C	FL
Gayle F	FL
Amanda B	FL
William C	FL
Adriana M	FL
Sherry B	GA
Kristen D	GA
Bonnie F	GA
Corina G	GA
Kristen H	Ga
Valuda B	GA
Michelle R	GA
Kasey J	GA
Dana B	GA
Sandra H	GA
Steven B	GA
Rita R	GA
Allen H	GA
Melanie W	GA
Sue C	GA
Sharon R	GA
Debbie S	GA
Tiffany J	GA
Robert B	GA
Stephanie S	GA
Christine J	GA
Angel F	GA
Marcella M	GA
Dale D	GA
Marvin M	GA
Cynthia H	GA
Mary M	GA

Tammy P	GA
Kim C	GA
Beverly D	GA
Larry B	GA
Ashlie A	GA
Harold D	GA
Sondra H	GA
Beverly M	GA
Sondra H	GA
Linda M	GA
Henry L	GA
Nancy H	GA
Pati R	HI
Colton M	IA
Wanda T	IA
Tammy B	IA
Nancy M	IA
Codie K	IA
Kerry D	IA
Karen S	ID
Irene C	ID
Debbie C	ID
Mickey C	ID
Jessica V	ID
April B	IL
Francis M	IL
Cynthia F	IL
Corinna C	IL
Francis M	IL
Rick W	IL
Catherine C	IL
Mary K G	IL

Eugenia G	IL
Linda M	IL
Deanna P	IL
Colleen F	IL
Karen M	IL
Dana T	IL
Anthony W	IL
JJ P	IL
Louise P	IL
George R	IL
Jennifer H	IL
Karen C	IL
Dennis F	IL
Julia H	IL
Tamara B	IN
Heather G	IN
Jenny P	IN
Lisa H	IN
Paris G	IN
Pamela S	IN
Marian R	IN
Susan H	IN
Nancy K	IN
Albert R	IN
Davina S	IN
Brian B	IN
Carl S	IN
Yvonne F	IN
Elizabeth D	IN
Kendra B	IN
Victoria A	IN
Jeffery H	KS

Deanna M	KS
Deanna M	KS
Doris D	KS
Katherine G	KS
Mike S	KS
Shanicqua J	KS
Rebecca A	KS
Janice M	KY
Ruby V F	KY
Dolly J M	KY
Debbie L	KY
Jennifer D	KY
Juanita S	KY
Vickie H	KY
Rebecca S	KY
Courtney B	KY
Letha Y	KY
Constance S	KY
Deborah T	KY
Courtney B	KY
Michele W	KY
Michelle T	KY
Jessica Q	KY
Jeanie M	KY
Magan P	KY
Maudie S	KY
Joanna L	KY
Charles F	LA
Lisa M	LA
Bridget L	LA
Joyce B	LA
Barbara W	LA

Constance B	LA
Rita L	LA
Jessie S	LA
Lou S	MA
Benjamin A	MA
Irene L	MA
Sharron H	MA
Signe S	MA
Maureen R	MA
Mary H	MA
Lisa L	MA
Lynne K	MA
Ashley B	MA
Caitlain L	MA
Lisa B	MA
Kendal P	MA
Kimberly J	MD
Catherine N	MD
Emma M	MD
Stacy T	MD
Ruth M	MD
Deborah K	MD
Sandra W	MD
James W	MD
Michelle M	MD
Julie W	MD
Aleesha B	MD
Lynn B	MD
Don K	ME
Wendy C	ME
Valerie M	ME
Penny M	ME

Joanne M	ME
Charlene I	MI
Liberty A	MI
Brea S	MI
Tim M	MI
Babbette C	MI
Linda B	MI
Mandy G	MI
Holly D	MI
Frannie B	MI
Christina L	MI
Kelly K	MI
Alexsis S	MI
Teresa D	MI
John G	MI
Faith T	MI
Cassandra N	MI
Lynn G	MI
Rebecca C	MI
Marie S	MI
Karri B	MI
Charles R	MI
Lynna T	MI
Roxanne G	MI
Sherri H	MI
Cheryl L	MI
Melissa K	MI
Pamela L	MI
Katherine G	MI
Mike M	MI
Linda S	MI
Karen F	MI

John F	MI
Pamela M	MI
Barbara U	MI
Tommy B	MI
Barb C	MI
Mary Katherine F	MI
Deborah C	MI
Patricia R	MI
Amanda W	MI
Crystal V	MI
Rebecca S	MN
Mary N	MN
Lon L	MN
Tracy W	MN
Missy C	MN
Maria A	MN
Susan S	MN
Linda J	MN
Snowell E	MN
Tracy W	MN
Kim H	MN
Cheryl B	MN
Eileen J	MN
Pam F	MN
Crystal U	MN
Valarie Jean H	MN
Cristina O	MN
Jane R	MN
Marcia S	MN
Mary R	MN
Ashley M	MN
Carrie B	MN

Johann H	MN
Jen E	MN
Jymie J	MO
Cathy L	MO
Douglas R	MO
Loretta D	MO
Donna D	MO
Angela G	MO
Rae G	MO
Dale G	MO
Latrena M	MO
Carolyn C	MO
Cassandra P	MO
Sylvia G	MO
Amy M	MO
Shelly P	MO
Raymond P	MO
Catherine H	MO
Gayle B	MO
Latrena M	MO
Lynda S	MS
Cindy B	MS
Stacy S	MS
Dawn F	MS
Janice M	MS
Dena V	MS
Steven G	MS
Keshawn W	MS
DeAnna B	NC
John W	NC
Juanita W	NC
Chris S	NC

Karen E	NC
Becca L	NC
Kyshanna P	NC
Karen E	NC
Crystal R	NC
Sophia S	nc
Deb H	NC
Catherine K	NC
Deborah B	NC
Pamala J	Ne
Shannon B	NE
Charles Y	NE
Bronwyn S	NH
Florence J	NH
Tony L	NH
Kathleen O	NJ
Esther H	NJ
Stephan B	NJ
Diana G	NM
Ellery W	NM
Brenda H	NM
Martin L	NM
Omar H	NM
Garry L	NM
Beverly H	NM
Jill M	NM
Paula M	NM
Anthony B	NM
Jill M	NM
Jason R	NM
Penni A	NV
Laurie W	NV

Yvonne S	NV
David H	NV
Jeannette W	NV
Dennis H	NV
Lisa R	NV
Elizabeth J	NV
Dennis H	NV
Neil B	NV
Darla S	NY
Gervin F	NY
Daniel S	NY
Kelly C	NY
Daniel S	NY
Hernando C	NY
Amy B. S	NY
Amy S	NY
Sandra L	NY
Evelyn N	NY
Sandy R	NY
Erika S	NY
Mark S	NY
Danielle P	NY
Kelly C	NY
Christina W	NY
Henry C	NY
Valerie R	NY
Wendy N	NY
Sandra S	OH
Rebecca B	OH
Sue S	OH
Sarah P	OH
Sarah B	OH

Madonna W	OH
Tammy L	OH
Brent P	OH
Linda Rae L	OH
Alexa W	OH
Leighann V	OH
Kim S	OH
Helen A	OH
Mark W	OH
Mary L	OH
Brandi J	OH
Jay B	OH
William C	OH
Alexa W	OH
Virginia A	OH
Helen E	OH
Sandy B	OH
Latasha H	OH
Angela B	OH
Cathy Jean H	OH
Tonia K	OH
Katrina T	OH
Robin B	OH
Michael P	OH
Hope M	OH
Ned R	OH
Edward V	OH
Laura B	OH
Paolo C	OH
Gail C	OH
Marilyn P	OH
Clarissa W	OH

Elsa C	OH
Lisa W	OK
Don C	OK
Anna B	OK
Florence F	OK
Veronica G	OK
Anita J N	OK
Mary A	OK
Kayla T	OK
Anna B	OK
Wendy F	OK
Ileene S	OK
Amber H	OK
Annjannette G	OK
Amanda C	OK
Paula W	OK
Jackie M	OK
Katherine D	OK
Carol T	OK
Michael C	OK
Cindy H	OK
Patricia H	OK
Tabby S	OK
Angel B	OK
Jacqueline S	OK
Virginia M	OK
Denise R	OR
Anna L	OR
Rich P	OR
Marjorie W	OR
Rachel S	OR
Leslie G	PA

Jeannette S	PA
Chandler M	PA
Heidi L	PA
William D	PA
Billie G	PA
Aimee L	PA
Cheri B	PA
Scott H	PA
Charles M	PA
Stacie M	PA
Barry M	PA
Billie G	PA
Aimee L	PA
Phil M	PA
David B	PA
Linda H	PA
Timothy H	PA
Althea W	PA
Lori M	PA
Phil M	PA
April D	PA
Thomas D	PA
Trudy B	PA
Julia P	PA
Tracey G	PA
Gloria B	PA
Linda O	PA
Amanda H	PA
Maria D	PA
Mindy F	PA
Megan H	PA
Angelica P	PA

Mary M	PA
Jim K	PA
Ann F	PA
Kim S	PA
Laura D	PA
Loni N	PA
Lynda A	PA
Lisa S	Pa
Andy D	PA
Bethany Z	PA
Teresa R	PA
Joseph S	PA
Sharon W	PA
Leslie G	PA
Randy K	PA
Lynn S	PA
Kassie G	PA
Ruthie S	PA
Lorna A	PA
Eileen S	PA
Barry M	PA
Geralyn S	PA
Cindy F	PA
Wendy H	PA
Steven W	RI
Kim W	RI
Kristin S	RI
Jennifer A	SC
Jo R	SC
Brenda Ann C	SC
Roxanne J	SC
Elvi B	SC

Jeanne B	SC
Melissa N	SC
Tammie B	SC
Teresa W	SC
Michaele B	SC
Tim O	SC
Chelsea K	SD
Larry W	SD
Rhonda T	TN
Rebecca G	TN
Robert S	TN
Kenneth H	TN
Dixie H	TN
Linda M	TN
Bobby N	TN
Teresa J	TN
Harriet T	TN
Kim B	TN
Angel E	TN
Amber B	TN
April M	TN
Kim B	TN
Amanda B	TN
Sherry D	TN
Robin S	TN
Laurie N	TN
Zerelda T	TN
Mary C	TN
Linda C	TN
Adrema H	TN
Rochelle H	TN
Patricia C	TN

Rhonda L	TN
Barbara S	TN
Phyllis R	TN
DJ C	TX
John W	TX
Mary B	TX
Elizabeth J	TX
Ronald C	TX
Jeffery C	TX
Madeleine M	TX
Mili P	TX
Walter L	TX
Daniel C	TX
Debra M	TX
Joanna B	TX
Maya D	TX
Lois B	TX
Meri H	TX
Wendy F	TX
Debra C	TX
Ellen J	TX
Wanda E	TX
Peggy B	TX
Wina F	TX
Venus R	TX
Diane B	TX
Paula G	TX
Sherry G	TX
Wina F	TX
Lisa R	TX
Nita G	TX
Lisa R	TX

Sandra K	TX
Christina D	TX
Elizabeth D	TX
Lisa R	TX
Vada R	TX
Gary C	TX
Delana J	TX
Jessica L	TX
Felisa C	TX
Danieljay S	TX
Andi C	TX
Lesa B	TX
Patricia P	TX
Tamia M	TX
Gladys R	TX
Norma K	TX
Tiffany D	TX
Kimberly L	TX
Jennifer B	TX
Brandi D	TX
Lesha S	TX
Sandra C	TX
Christina J	TX
Sharon J	TX
Lisa T	TX
Casey F	TX
Fred G	TX
Tammy C	TX
Kayla C	UT
Debbie T	UT
Julie S	UT
Megan K	UT

Bill H	VA
Kyle C	VA
Bonnie R	VA
Sheila D	VA
Kimberly B	VA
Lillian F	VA
Reva T	VA
Lucinda S	VA
Samantha W	VA
Debra J	VA
Marquita W	VA
Rachael H	VA
Dillan K	VA
Jennifer S	VA
Denise R	VA
Beverly H	VA
Lisa H	VA
Richard C	VA
Debra M	VA
George R	VA
S O	VA
Kimberly B	VA
Sheila D	VA
Rebecca H	VA
MaryJane B	VA
Gloryanne M	VA
Robert C	VA
Molly J	VT
Lorena R	WA
Stephanie M	WA
Bob W	WA
Jeannie S	WA

Roy P	WA
Sabrina K	WA
Nilda H	WA
Brenda G	WA
Kathy W	WA
John M	WA
Glenda L	WA
Christy S	WI
Gene N	WI
Stacie R	WI
Bill J	WI
John B	WI
Barb T	WI
Michael W	WI
Wanda S	WI
Courtney H	WI
Jenny S	WI

Regina C	WI
Paul F	WI
Miriam V	WI
Dan C	WI
Betty S	WI
Sherry J	WI
Patricia W	WI
Peggy M	WI
Daniel M	WI
Brenda H	WI
Debra H	WI
Marina M	WI
Gaile H	WI
Teresa C	WI
Jay V	WI
Franklin S	WV
Tawyna B	WV

Ruth M	WV
Vernon D	WV
Clarence F	WV
Lucille S	WV
Shawana S	WV
Dale W	WV
Casey S	WV
Charlotte L	WV
Sharon G	WV
Susan J	WY
Joy C	WY
Elizabeth H	WY