

As we've heard the gentleman from Maryland say many times, ``Representative" is not just a title. It's our job description. We need to hear from our constituents. And our constituents have told us over and over again this year what they want. They want middle class tax relief.

They want a farm bill. They want the postal service fixed so it can pay its bills. They want passage of the Violence Against Women Act. It's a long list of things that they feel we can do to help Americans.

We've had an opportunity to hear from people because the leadership sent us home a month and a half ago where we could hold town meetings while they allowed us to do nothing here. We heard from our constituents very clearly--not just from a small segment, not just from a few special interests, not just from a few percent for whom everything seems just fine, thank you. But we heard from all sorts of Americans who say, Help. Please. Get to work.

You've heard this is the least productive Congress in a generation, in a long generation; and that's by design. The majority sets the schedule. They scheduled very few days in session, very few committee hearings, very few markups.

So even the do-nothing Congress, as my friend from Missouri said, even the Congress that Harry Truman called the do-nothing Congress was much more productive than this one.

So why did the majority close up shop and head home until after the election? Well, the answer I think is pretty clear: they want to campaign. They've decided with their dismal record they need a little more time to campaign, a little time to explain why they cast 302 votes to limit protections for clean air and clean water and good land. They need a little more time to explain why the farm bill, to help the areas that have been hit by drought, to help the farmers that need crop insurance, hasn't been passed. To be sure, it's going to be hard to campaign on the record that they've compiled, and maybe they need a little extra time.

We don't need extra time to hear from our constituents about their needs and what they want us to do.

## Remarks on the Do-Nothing Congress

Friday, 21 September 2012 00:00

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I stand with my friend Mr. *Hoyer* and all of us on this side of the aisle, to return to Washington any day, any night to do the work that the American people hired us to do--to be their representatives.