

September 2021



# Frankly Speaking...

## Congresswoman Frankel Statement on Terrorist Attack in Afghanistan

**West Palm Beach, FL** –Congresswoman Lois Frankel (FL-21) released the following statement in response to the terrorist attack outside the Kabul airport which killed and injured dozens of people, including U.S. servicemembers.

“I join those condemning the horrific attacks that claimed so many innocent lives, including those of American servicemembers. As the mother of a U.S. Marine veteran who served in Afghanistan, my heart is grieving for the families of those who were injured or killed,” **said Rep. Frankel.** “Like so many Americans, I am grateful to our military, and our diplomatic and intelligence communities for their courage and patriotism.”

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## Tax Cut for Families with Children Second Round Goes Out Next Week

**West Palm Beach, FL** – On Friday, August 13th, Congresswoman Lois Frankel (FL-21) was joined by two moms to highlight the importance of the new monthly Child Tax Credit payments, which serve as a crucial tax cut for families with children. The Joint Economic Committee released a [study](#) showing these monthly payments pumped \$18.6 billion into local economies nationwide in July. In Florida, this tax cut for working families put nearly \$1 billion into families pockets, benefiting 3.6 million children. Based on the July payments, the study estimates the monthly payments will continue to pump billions of dollars into local economies each month.

The second round of payments went out on Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup>. Eligible parents not yet receiving these payments are urged to sign up with IRS today.

Rep. Frankel will be joined by local mothers who have benefited from the tax cut:

- Maria Hernandez
- Victoria Ward

Parents who filed taxes in 2019 or 2020 and non-filers already signed up will automatically receive payments monthly. Families who do not normally file taxes can still receive money using the [IRS' Non-Filer Sign Up Tool](#). Parents can receive up to \$300 per month for each dependent in their household under the age of 18, including children, adopted children, step-children, and foster children.

The credit provides a total of \$3,600 for children 5 and under, and \$3,000 for children ages 6 – 17.

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**Frankel: virus imperils our children; we must act**  
**U.S. Rep. Lois Frankel (D-West Palm Beach) Palm Beach Post Op-Ed**

Last week, I met virtually with local leaders and some of our best area physicians, including a pediatrician. They told us something that no one wants to hear: the virus is out of control in Florida and our children are in serious danger.

While we all hoped to have the COVID-19 pandemic behind us by now, we are still very much in the thick of it. With the rapid spread of the Delta variant, cases are going up, hospitalizations are going up, and Florida has become the epicenter of the pandemic. Each day, Florida seems to break new records, and not in a good way. Last Monday we had more than 28,000 new cases statewide and over 14,000 hospitalizations—both the most in a day throughout the entire pandemic. This is straining our health care system and causing serious staff shortages.

But that's only part of the story. This is not our old pandemic coming back, it's more infectious and attacking defenseless people we love the most—our children. Children around the country, including in Florida, are in ICU's, some on ventilators fighting for their lives. In Florida, more than 170 children are hospitalized.

The new COVID-19 variant is almost exclusively causing illness in unvaccinated people. And here's the thing, children under the age of 12 are not yet eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations. Doctors are telling us that our sons' and daughters' lives are being put in danger by unvaccinated people. They are spreading the virus to both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons, and that while mask wearing is important, the only way we are going to stop COVID-19 in its tracks is through vaccination.

The good news is that COVID-19 vaccines are safe, no cost, and easily available in our area. There is free daycare when you get your shot. And any time now the FDA will give them full approval. Unfortunately, the internet is full of misinformation and there are some whose allegiance is to politics instead of science.

In Palm Beach County alone, medical professionals tell us that we need to vaccinate at least an additional 250,000 people to prevent further community spread. Palm Beach County, our school board, and our cities have received millions of dollars from the federal government under the American Rescue Plan. I believe some of that money should be used to make this happen.

There is no knight in shining armor coming our way. It is my belief that every adult must take responsibility and take action. The President and some of our nation's largest employers have rightly begun requiring vaccinations for employees, and I believe our local leaders should consider taking similar measures to tackle this urgent challenge, including the following:

- Local governments, constitutional officers, and the school board could survey their workforce to determine who has been vaccinated. They could undertake an educational campaign and use incentives and disincentives to get unvaccinated employees to get life-saving shots. If that's not working, they could require all employees to be vaccinated or, alternatively, require regular testing of all employees not vaccinated and hire only vaccinated people. Where union concurrence is needed, contracts could be re-negotiated. Exceptions should be allowed to comply with disability laws and first amendment religious rights.
- All private businesses and non-profit organizations, especially child care centers, health care providers, and nursing homes could consider doing the same. Those worried about competitively losing employees should think about the alternative. One infected person can infect everyone in the room and endanger their families and customers and blow up their health insurance premiums;
- The state could allow private businesses (like cruise ships) to require proof of vaccination for customer service; and
- Every individual over the age of 12 should get themselves vaccinated and reach out to family and friends to do the same.

I've heard a variety of arguments against such policies. Some say it is overreaching and denying people's freedom to make their own medical decisions, or that it's illegal to require vaccination, or their employees will quit and go elsewhere. Here's my response: I believe vaccination against COVID-19 is not a punishment, it's life-saving. Vaccinated workers have the right to work in safe places. Children have no choice and depend on responsible adults. Neither federal nor Florida law prohibit employers from requiring the vaccination of their employees. For those concerned about their unvaccinated employees going elsewhere, I ask, do you really want your workplace filled with people who will endanger others and run up health care costs?

I know there are courageous local leaders who are reviewing their vaccine policies. My hope is that they will inspire and create a model that will save lives and livelihoods and the people we cherish the most—our children. We can beat this pandemic, rebuild our economy, and return to living our lives freely. But to do that, we must protect ourselves and our families against this virus with mask wearing, social distancing, and, most importantly, vaccination.

*Congresswoman Lois Frankel (D-WEST PALM BEACH)*

### **Rep. Frankel Statement on Passage of John Lewis Voting Rights Act**

**West Palm Beach, FL** –Congresswoman Lois Frankel (FL-21) released the following statement after voting to pass *H.R. 4, The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*, which will restore the power of the *Voting Rights Act* to protect the right to vote.

“We have seen a relentless assault on our democracy, with more than a dozen states, including Florida, taking steps to make it more difficult for people to vote,” **said Rep. Frankel**. “This bill sets the stage to prevent and challenge those who restrict access to the ballot box. It honors the legacy of the late, great John Lewis, and the many other civil rights leaders who put their lives on the line to make sure that all American voices are heard. I urge the Senate to take up and pass this legislation immediately.”

The *John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* passed the House by a vote of 219-212. It now goes to the Senate for consideration.

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### **Rep. Frankel Statement on Passage of Build Back Better Budget Resolution**

**West Palm Beach, FL** – Congresswoman Lois Frankel (FL-21) released the following statement after voting to advance President Biden's Build Back Better Plan.

“Today's vote paves the way for President Biden's Build Back Better plan, a transformative agenda that will deliver more jobs, tax cuts for working families, and lower costs for everyday Americans,” **said Rep. Frankel**. “The legislation makes access to child and home care more affordable while creating thousands of good jobs in the care industry. It expands the Child Tax Credit to deliver an extended tax cut for working families, and lowers the cost of prescription drugs. I look forward to voting for the final bill later this year.”

Now that the budget resolution has passed in both Chambers, the House Budget Committee will finalize the text of the bill, which will then come to the floor in the coming months.

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## **Rep. Frankel Announces Leadership Opportunity for Palm Beach County Students**

**West Palm Beach, FL** –Congresswoman Lois Frankel (FL-21) announced a new opportunity for high school students in Palm Beach County. Local juniors and seniors that want to get a glimpse of how the government works and hear from experts on various topics of interest are invited to apply to this year’s [Congressional Youth Leadership Council](#).

“I look forward to working with our local students as they learn and grow,” **said Rep. Frankel**. “This will be an exciting opportunity of civic engagement for our teens.”

The Council is an initiative that was created at the request of local high school students. It will give students the opportunity to learn more about Congress and the policy-making process. Council members will hear from community leaders and discuss issues that matter most to them. The students selected to form part of the Council will meet monthly with the Congresswoman, her staff, and guest speakers facilitated by the office of Rep. Frankel, all while following CDC guidelines. Students may receive community service hours or credits toward graduation for their participation.

In addition to discussing how a Congressional office operates, students will also participate in professional development opportunities, including how-to seminars on writing cover letters and resumes, and interview skills that will improve their skill sets for future endeavors.

The Council begins October 13th and ends in April 2022. Applications are open through **September 30th**.

For more information, click [here](#).

**Contact My Office 561 998-9045**

**Please reach out to us if you need help with a federal agency or want to leave me your opinion.**

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