

# SunSentinel



## Frederica Wilson: Sequestration is immoral; time to end it is now

Rep. Frederica S. Wilson  
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As I stood with the air traffic controllers at Broward's North Perry Airport, earlier this month, listening to serious safety concerns related to their control tower's proposed closure, I was reminded of an important saying in politics:

"Budgets are moral documents."

How we, as a nation, spend our money speaks volumes about how we define our values. This is truer now than ever as the sequester — a series of reckless across-the-board spending cuts set in motion by the tea party's debt ceiling debacle in 2011 — are starting to take effect.

It's immoral to defund an airport control tower due to the "sequester" when that decision will result in an increased likelihood of accidents, reduced pilot training capacity, and the loss of our first line of defense against emergencies in our skies.

It's immoral to allow the sequester's Medicare cuts to force doctors and administrators to turn away cancer patients at health centers.

It's immoral to allow the sequester's cuts to education to deny tens of thousands of young children the opportunity to attend preschool through Head Start.

It's immoral to allow the sequester's cuts to nutrition programs to deny thousands of seniors access to the Meals on Wheels on which they rely.

Last week, journalists Sam Stein and Amanda Terkel catalogued 100 such stories of sequestration causing not only economic

hardship but real hazards for people around the country. And these impacts are just the start. As federal agencies scramble to determine how to implement Congress's reckless cuts, people in our community are being blindsided

I am fighting tirelessly to protect South Floridians from these budget cuts.

My visit to North Perry Airport was part of a campaign — through fact-finding, speeches, official requests, and legislation—to save that control tower. The next day, we received some good news: we were successful in delaying the closure at least until the summer. I am committed to continuing this fight to keep the tower open and to stop any sequester impacts on South Florida's health facilities, education institutions, and jobs programs.

But we ultimately need to address the root cause of the problem.

We need to stop the sequester.

In Congress, I co-authored H.R. 900 — the Cancel the Sequester Act — to simply and immediately end this menace to our economy. While we have broad support from Democrats in Congress, not a single Republican has joined in support of the bill. I urge you call the Republican members of Florida's Congressional delegation, and demand to know how the sequester will affect our community. I urge you to ask them to support HR 900 to end the sequester.

This should not be a partisan issue. It's an issue of simple common

sense. All told, sequestration is expected to cost the nation more than two million jobs, including more than 79,000 right here in Florida.

There's ultimately only one way to reduce our deficits: We need to get everyone trained, working, and contributing to the tax base. We cannot fix our economy by laying off hard-working people like the North Perry air traffic controllers.

Don't let the sequester blindside you. Keep up the pressure on Congress to protect our communities and eliminate these reckless cuts.