



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

August 31, 2023

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maggie Hassan
United States Senate
324 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ann Kuster
United States House of
Representatives
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chris Pappas
United States House of
Representatives
319 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Members of New Hampshire's Congressional Delegation:

I am writing to bring your attention to my concerns regarding the recent notice sent by FEMA to the states regarding the suspension of payments from the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) and the switch to Immediate Needs Funding (INF).

As you are aware, New Hampshire Communities suffered significant damage in the month of July due to flooding. Yesterday, the State requested a Disaster Declaration for this incident. If FEMA approves this request, New Hampshire municipalities seeking reimbursement will be forced to wait for assistance given FEMA's recent switch to Immediate Needs Funding. While FEMA has indicated that projects can continue through the process until funding becomes available, we anticipate that there will be an extensive backlog of projects to work through once the DRF is replenished. This potential backlog, coupled with the switch to INF, may cause delays for communities already struggling to recover financially from this event.

In addition to the July flooding, the State of New Hampshire has requested recovery assistance for the following in 2023:

- December 22, 2022-December 25, 2022, severe storm and flooding in Belknap, Carroll, Coos, and Grafton counties. The President approved the request for a disaster declaration on March 15.
- March 13-15, severe winter storm and snowstorm. At the initial conclusion of Joint PDAs, more than \$2,649,138 in damages were validated by FEMA. Unfortunately, the President denied that request and the State is currently appealing this decision.
- April 30-May 1, severe storm and flooding. On July 28, 2023, I submitted a major disaster declaration request. Though we did not exceed the Statewide indicator, the local impacts

in communities, especially within Carroll County, were significant. The Town of Ossipee had a total of \$1,188,207 in validated damages, \$271.78 per capita, and the Town of Madison had a total of \$116,215 in validated damages, \$45.31 per capita. This is significant considering these communities were impacted again during the July storms. A determination on this major disaster declaration request is still pending.

In addition, the State of New Hampshire continues to manage the recovery efforts for the following list of active disasters: FEMA-4329-DR (July 1, 2017-July 2, 2017, Severe Storm and Flooding in Coos and Grafton Counties), FEMA-4355-DR (October 29, 2017-November 1, 2017, Severe Storm and Flooding in Belknap, Carroll, Coos, Grafton, Merrimack, and Sullivan Counties), FEMA-4370-DR (March 2, 2018-March 8, 2018, Coastal Storm and Flooding in Rockingham County), FEMA-4457-DR (July 11, 2019-July 12, 2019, Severe Storm and Flooding in Grafton County), FEMA-4516-DR (January 20, 2020-May 11, 2023, COVID-19 statewide), FEMA-4622-DR (July 17, 2021-July 19, 2021, Severe Storm and Flooding in Cheshire County), FEMA-4624-DR (July 29, 2021-August 2, 2021, Severe Storm and Flooding in Cheshire and Sullivan Counties), and FEMA-4693-DR (December 22, 2022-December 25, 2022, Severe Storm and Flooding in Belknap, Carroll, Coos, and Grafton Counties).

Recovery plans and projects within several communities will be impacted until funding becomes available again, opening the possibility for additional damages should another significant storm event occur. Failure to fund local hazard mitigation plans can prohibit communities from accessing other federal grant programs, as well as FEMA programs.

I urge you to immediately address this delay in recovery efforts by supporting replenishing FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund through supplemental funding. This will allow the State of New Hampshire to continue supporting our local communities as they move through the recovery process.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu
Governor