

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 29, 2026

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in support of Governor Whitmer's June 23, 2026, appeal to the denial of the Major Disaster declaration request in response to tornadoes in Southwest Michigan on March 6, 2026. Tragically, the tornadoes resulted in the loss of four lives. In addition, the four tornadoes, ranging from EF-0 to EF-3, destroyed critical infrastructure, destroyed homes, displaced residents, and left considerable debris. The State of Michigan requested the activation of the Individual Assistance (IA) program for Branch, Cass, and St. Joseph counties, and of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Considering the devastating impact these tornadoes had on many individuals and households, supplemental federal assistance under the IA program is necessary to fill the gaps that state and local governments cannot meet to ensure a full recovery.

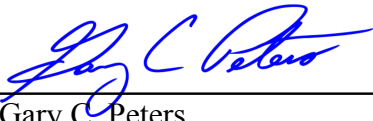
In the aftermath of the four tornadoes, the State of Michigan, local governments and volunteer groups responded on the ground to residents in need, however, the state does not have the resources to sufficiently help survivors fully recover. In addition to four recent disasters in the previous 24-month period, since this tornado, other disasters in Michigan have also occurred—including severe storms and flooding causing damage in 42 counties in April. Because of this, response and recovery capabilities in the state are overburdened and federal assistance is urgently required.

The damages are particularly concentrated in and around the communities of Edwardsburg, Union Lake and Three Rivers. The Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment conducted by federal, local, and state representatives concluded that over 30 percent of impacted households do not have insurance that appropriately covers the damages incurred by this disaster. Without federal assistance, this lack of insurance may force residents to occupy unsafe alternatives. Additionally, the areas affected by this particular disaster have a higher percentage of residents with incomes below the federal poverty line, are 65 years or older or 18 years and younger, have disabilities, and rely on social security and welfare programs. The survivors residing in the area need federal assistance to fully recover.

The degree of this disaster, coupled with multiple other recent disasters in Michigan, has surpassed the capabilities of the state and local governments. Therefore, we respectfully ask you

to reconsider the denial of a major disaster declaration to these communities in Michigan, and to approve this assistance to provide Michigan residents the necessary support to recover from this devastating and fatal disaster. We urge your speedy consideration of this request to approve the Major Disaster declaration and activate IA and HMGP. Thank you for your swift attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress

cc: Mr. Michael Chesney
Acting Regional Administrator
FEMA Region V
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