

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2025

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

Dear Mr. President:

We write in support of Michigan's Major Disaster declaration request in response to widespread and severe winter storms during the period of March 28-30, 2025. The Governor has requested Individual Assistance (IA) programs for the counties of Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Crawford, Emmet, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, and Presque Isle, and the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, which have elected to join the State of Michigan as a part of that request. The Governor has also requested Public Assistance (PA) programs for the eleven aforementioned counties and the counties of Kalkaska and Mackinac, as well as the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians.

Starting on March 28, northern Michigan experienced extreme winter weather, including a prolonged period of freezing rain which resulted in severe ice accumulation. This caused widespread destruction to homes, businesses, and infrastructure, causing long-term power outages for hundreds of thousands of residents. This disaster also caused fuel shortages, communications disruptions, blocked highways/roads, and the amassment of large amounts of vegetative debris, leading to the National Weather Service ranking this incident among the most significant ice storm events ever in the disaster area. The affected counties also have poverty and unemployment rates that exceed the national average, and seven of the counties have a higher unemployment rate than the state of Michigan average. The disaster area also includes a significant population of individuals who are older than 65 years of age, have disabilities, or receive retirement income. As you know, these factors indicate that these communities are particularly vulnerable after disasters and increases the need for federal assistance to ensure equitable recovery.

The impacted jurisdictions have estimated the disaster caused over \$137 million in immediate response costs and damage to public buildings and infrastructure. While only a portion of these costs may be eligible for reimbursement, federal assistance is critical to ensuring that this fiscal strain does not negatively impact the availability of government services for citizens. Additionally, damage assessments conducted to estimate IA needs identified 12 destroyed homes, 257 homes with major damage, 280 homes with minor damage, and 28 affected homes in the disaster area. The Governor has estimated that individuals would be eligible for over \$2.3 million in Housing Assistance and Other Needs Assistance. This assistance is particularly important given that there are individuals who are uninsured or underinsured, whose employment has been directly impacted by or lost due to this disaster. The per capita indicator for the most impacted counties greatly exceeds the current level set by FEMA at \$4.72 with some counties greatly exceeding it. For instance, the recovery cost per capita for Otsego County is \$1,268.18 per county resident, which exceeds the countrywide per capita impact indicator of

\$4.72 by a factor of 269. The magnitude of damage for the state, which is still recovering from three other state-declared disasters occurring in the past 24 months, requires federal assistance to fully recover.

We commend the great work the federal government has done in helping Michigan recover from previous disasters. However, in the absence of a federal disaster declaration, Michigan will not have the capacity to ensure these communities receive the aid they need to fully recover. We urge your speedy approval of this request.

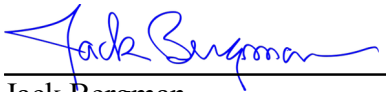
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary C. Peters", written over a horizontal line.

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elissa Slotkin", written over a horizontal line.

Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jack Bergman", written over a horizontal line.

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress