

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 15, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to thank you for approving Governor Whitmer's request for a Major Disaster declaration for the State of Michigan. Your swift consideration and approval of this assistance will allow communities to begin to recover from the recent flooding and storms in Michigan. We will continue to partner with you to address the needs of these impacted communities.

As you know, on June 25 and 26, 2021, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties faced severe storms and widespread flooding, which had a devastating impact on homes and businesses throughout the region. Federal, state, and local officials working on the ground conducted assessments from July 8 to July 10, and determined the level of damage necessitates federal assistance.

The initial Preliminary Damage Assessment has only identified a fraction of actual damaged homes caused by the storms. The Governor estimates that more than 68,000 individuals may require assistance. Multiple homes are uninhabitable, and without assistance, many families cannot afford to make critical repairs. As noted in the Governor's request, few of the affected households have flood insurance that covers the damages most commonly incurred during flooding. According to the Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments, even the homeowners with "minor" damage sustained destruction to critical parts of life such as health, transportation, and financial security.

Additionally, both Wayne and Washtenaw Counties have more residents living in poverty than the national average, making them particularly vulnerable after a disaster. As the Governor noted, multi-generational living in Wayne County's vibrant Hispanic and Arab-American communities is very common and basements often serve as essential living spaces for members of the family – making the impact of flooded basements and displacement even more devastating. Nonprofits are doing their best to assist affected homeowners, but without sufficient federal resources, it will be nearly impossible to make the repairs quickly enough to ensure each displaced family has a safe home.

The people of Michigan are resilient, and we commend the work of federal, state, and local officials in providing much needed assistance. Thank you again for your Major Disaster declaration. We look forward to working with you and Federal Emergency Management Agency officials to ensure the safety of all those affected by the flood.

Sincerely,

/s/ Senator Debbie Stabenow

/s/ Senator Gary C. Peters

/s/ Member of Congress Brenda Lawrence

/s/ Member of Congress Daniel T. Kildee

/s/ Member of Congress Debbie Dingell

/s/ Member of Congress Rashida Tlaib

/s/ Member of Congress Andy Levin

/s/ Member of Congress Elissa Slotkin

/s/ Member of Congress Haley M. Stevens