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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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November 12, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Deanne Criswell
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Administrator Criswell:

I write to request information regarding recent reports that a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) official instructed federal employees deployed to assist in the aftermath of Hurricane Milton to withhold disaster assistance from homeowners displaying political signs in support of President-elect Donald Trump.¹ These allegations of discrimination by FEMA employees based on the political beliefs of disaster victims raise serious questions about FEMA's ability to impartially administer disaster relief to Americans.

According to recent reports, a FEMA official directed relief workers in Florida to avoid homes with Trump campaign signs. While I commend you for your swift action to terminate the employee, this does not appear to be an isolated incident. It is alleged that FEMA workers received similar instructions when responding to Hurricane Helene in North Carolina.² This politically motivated discrimination is unacceptable and must be investigated to ensure that FEMA administers disaster relief funds appropriated by Congress fairly and transparently.

For this reason, I request the following information be provided in complete, original, and unredacted form no later than by 5:00 p.m. on November 26, 2024:

1. All records relating to this incident, including but not limited to:

¹ *Exclusive: FEMA Official Ordered Relief Workers To Skip Houses With Trump Signs*, Daily Wire (Nov. 8, 2024), <https://www.dailywire.com/news/exclusive-fema-official-ordered-relief-workers-to-skip-houses-with-trump-signs>.

² *Fired FEMA Worker Says Agency Also Avoided Pro-Trump Homes in Carolinas*, FOX SAN ANTONIO (Nov. 12, 2024), <https://www.foxsanantonio.com/news/nation-world/fired-fema-worker-says-agency-also-avoided-pro-trump-homes-in-carolinas-marni-washington-fema-trump-biden-political-federal-government-north-south-carolina-hurricanes-cleanup-aftermath>.

- a) Any communications, instructions, or directions given and received by FEMA employee Marn'i Washington between September 26, 2024 to present;
 - b) All records pertaining to the employment status of Marn'i Washington, including any disciplinary actions, reassignments, or terminations;
 - c) The names and titles of all FEMA and DHS employees involved;
 - d) All records relating to how FEMA and DHS became aware of this incident, including any internal or external reports made;
 - e) All records regarding any other involved employee(s), including relevant administrative and personnel records;
 - f) Any references to campaign signage in FEMA's response to Hurricanes Helene and Milton;
 - g) An estimate of the number of homes potentially bypassed due to this directive.
2. All records relating to any allegations of politically motivated discrimination by FEMA and/or DHS employees as it relates to disaster assistance between November 15, 2022, to present, including but not limited to:
- a) A detailed index of all allegations of politically motivated discrimination by FEMA and/or DHS employees as it relates to disaster assistance between November 15, 2022, to present including all disciplinary actions taken;
 - b) All documents and communications related to any references to political campaign signage in FEMA's disaster response;
 - c) All directives or guidance issued by FEMA officials from November 15, 2022, to present that reference political affiliations or expressions;
 - d) An estimate of the number of homes potentially bypassed due to any directives based on political affiliations or expressions.

I appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Rand Paul, M.D.
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs