

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 6, 2024

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

Dear Mr. President:

We write to support Governor Whitmer's recent request for a Major Disaster declaration, including activation of all Individual Assistance programs, for Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Branch, and Cass Counties. We ask that you approve this declaration as soon as possible to direct federal resources towards the destruction caused by a series of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes in the southwest part of the state, significantly damaging homes, businesses, and the power grid in the area.

On May 7, 2024, a series of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes struck multiple counties in southwest Michigan, resulting in roughly sixteen people injured and significant damage, and in some cases complete destruction, to homes and businesses. The survivors—many of whom are low-income, uninsured and underinsured, and senior citizens residing in the area—will require federal assistance. Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs), which often produce underestimates, found over 750 homes eligible for FEMA assistance, with over 300 being destroyed or having major damage. Additionally, the PDAs found almost 40% of those are uninsured, with many more being underinsured.

The state, county, and local governments stepped up to meet this disaster with all available resources and authorities, despite being strained from numerous other recent severe weather events. Emergency first responders including brave volunteers, EMS, Michigan Task Force 1, and the Michigan State Police have been working on the ground since the event, providing lifesaving assistance in the face of cell service interruptions, downed power lines, and gas leaks. The efforts of these local jurisdictions helped to minimize damage and injuries, however, federal assistance will also be required to help the community fully recover.

Southwest Michigan is home to some of the most resilient and selfless citizens in our nation. Nevertheless, additional resources are needed so the residents and business owners in this community can recover from this disaster. Your approval of this request is urgently needed to cover a crucial gap in financial support for these efforts. Thank you for your swift attention to this critical matter.

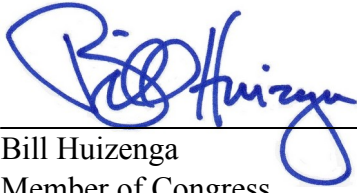
Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator

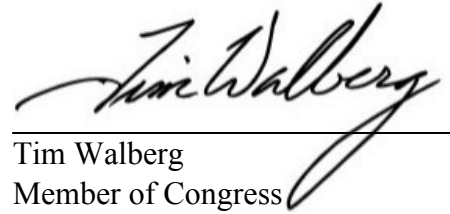


Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



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Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress



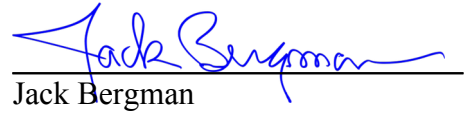
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Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress



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Lisa C. McClain  
Member of Congress



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Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress