

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 7, 2023

Mr. Robert J. Fenton  
Region IX Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Sent via electronic mail

Dear Administrator Fenton,

We write to support Monterey County's request that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maintain the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) located at Pajaro Park in Pajaro, California until the current July 20, 2023, deadline for individuals and households to apply for Individual Assistance (IA) under the California Winter Storms DR-4699-CA disaster declaration.

We applaud FEMA's recent decision to extend the deadline for disaster victims in designated California counties, including Monterey County, to apply for IA. This decision will allow our constituents to continue to receive the assistance they need as they recover from significant flooding and other damage. We urge you to build upon this decision by maintaining the DRC in Pajaro Park, or at another nearby location, through the new IA deadline.

The flooding in Pajaro not only damaged residences but has created significant health risks for many residents who have returned to their homes. Because of the risks of mold and potential exposure to hazardous waste in the flooding, many residents remain or were recently displaced. As a rural, low-income, minority community, Pajaro disproportionately faces barriers to applying for assistance. In-person options at the DRC to apply for assistance, receive updates on applications, or navigate the appeals process are important for the community to recover. The DRC is a particularly important option for those who may experience barriers to accessing telephone or online options, including those who speak Spanish or Indigenous languages or experience a digital divide.

We appreciate your consideration of Monterey County's request to maintain the DRC in Pajaro until July 20, and look forward to continuing to work together to assist California communities in recovering from the devastating storms.

Sincerely,



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress