

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

March 21, 2017

President Donald J. Trump  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write you in support of the State of California's request for a Major Disaster declaration to provide much-needed federal assistance to address the damages resulting from multiple atmospheric river storm systems that struck the state February 1 through 23, 2017. The statewide impact of the February storm systems had devastating effects in 48 of California's 58 counties, and resulted in eight storm-related fatalities and the evacuation of several hundred thousand California residents and businesses.

After several years of drought, California experienced the heaviest periods of precipitation in its history in the first two months of this year. During the days between February 1 through 11, 2017 and February 15 through 22, 2017 California exceeded 80 daily precipitation records as a result of atmospheric storm systems, most significantly affecting the northern two-thirds of the State. Coupled with the damage resulting from the January storms, these conditions resulted in 48 counties declaring local emergencies with verified damages significantly exceeding their per capita indicators.

In addition to extensive emergency response costs, the State experienced significant damage to public infrastructure including roads, bridges, flood and water control structures, and other public facilities as a result of the February storms. Throughout February multiple levees were overtopped and breached, mud and rock debris damaged roadways and bridges, and heavy winds coupled with severe rainfall resulted in widespread power outages affecting over 110,000 households and businesses. The storm also caused a train derailment, which led to the closure of more than 50 interstate and state routes, leaving many communities isolated and needing water rescue teams and air medevac assistance.

The State has determined that the magnitude and severity of the atmospheric storm systems are beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments to address, and supplemental federal assistance is necessary. The request we write in support of was made by Governor Edmund G. Brown under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for the federal assistance already provided to the state for the damages resulting from atmospheric river storm systems in January. We fully support the State's most recent request for a Major Disaster Declaration, and thank you for your timely consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

cc: Robert J. Fenton, Jr., Acting Administrator, FEMA  
Dr. Ahsha Tribble, Acting Regional Administrator, FEMA Region IX

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