

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

May 29, 2019

President Donald Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the State of Arkansas, we are writing to support Governor Asa Hutchinson's request to declare a major disaster, pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act, as a result of the recent devastating flooding and severe storms across the state.

Currently, 15 counties are reporting damage from extremely heavy rainfall, both locally and upriver in the Arkansas River system, with multiple levee breaches across the state. Voluntary evacuations are currently underway across at least four counties, with shelters opening in the cities of Fort Smith, Conway, Altheimer and Wright. These facilities can only take in 755 Arkansans displaced by dangerously high waters.

Simply put this is a historic flood that demands the immediate attention of the federal government. Since May 21, 2019, the Arkansas River has seen levels rise at a historic rate, surpassing the record floods of 2015, 1990, 1941 and 1927. This unprecedented flooding is something unseen on the Arkansas River before. Long-term saturation will provide prolonged stress on the levee system, yielding devastating impacts to infrastructure and personal property if failure occurs.

As Governor Hutchinson noted in his request, there has been extensive damage across the state. Presently, the state is conducting broad flood fighting operations with multiple counties impacted, and considerable property and infrastructure damage either occurring or anticipated to occur. There are approximately 3,124 total structures with potential impacts, and this number will continue to rise as the flooding continues.

Due to the unknowns associated with this event, and the amount of rain and changing conditions, it is difficult to estimate the level of Direct Federal Assistance required. The activities listed below are our current estimates based on past experiences:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers - sandbags, self-contained pumps, damage assessment teams, power generation, technical assistance, mapping, GIS support, and inundation mapping
- United States Coast Guard - air transportation assets, technical assistance
- Civil Air Patrol - air assets
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service - wildlife management assistance and technical assistance

- United States Department of Agriculture - crop damage assessment, technical assistance water management and inundation mapping
- Federal Highway Administration - Emergency Relief Program
- Environmental Protection Agency – damage assessments, technical assistance
- National Guard – heavy lift helicopters, aerial imagery

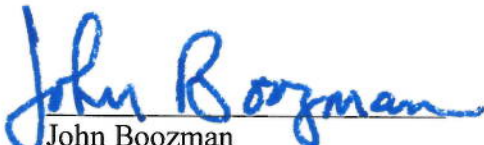
The resourcefulness and resilience of Arkansans in recent days has been impressive; however, as losses mount, the people of our great state hope the federal government will join in these restoration efforts.

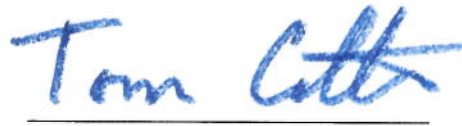
Federal government resources are critical in the immediate aftermath of this devastating storm, and coordination between the federal government and state and local officials is crucial to begin the process of recovery and rebuilding.


We are eager to assist in any way possible to ensure expedited evaluation of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices with any questions.

We thank you for the support you have already offered, and respectfully ask for your continued attention and assistance in providing the resources necessary to ensure the safety of Arkansans.


Sincerely,


  
John Boozman  
United States Senator

  
Tom Cotton  
United States Senator

  
Rick Crawford  
Member of Congress

  
French Hill  
Member of Congress

  
Steve Womack  
Member of Congress

  
Bruce Westerman  
Member of Congress

CC:

Lieutenant General Todd Semonite, Army Corps of Engineers

Admiral Karl Schultz, United States Coast Guard

Major General Mark Smith, Civil Air Patrol

The Honorable Greg Sheehan, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The Honorable George "Sonny" Perdue, United States Department of Agriculture

The Honorable Nicole Nason, Federal Highway Administration

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler, Environmental Protection Agency

General Joseph Lengyel, United States National Guard