

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 29, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
The United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write today to express our strong support for Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin's request for an Emergency Declaration for the Commonwealth of Virginia following the result of Post-Tropical Storm Helene beginning on September 25, 2024. The Governor has requested emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance program for the counties of Grayson, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe and the City of Galax.

On September 25, 2024, Governor Youngkin declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia in anticipation of the impacts of Hurricane Helene. This extreme storm event has produced catastrophic rainfall throughout Southwest Virginia, which has exceeded 12 inches in some areas. This rainfall has resulted in devastating flooding throughout the region creating dangerous storm surges and a historic flood crest on the New River. Currently, there are two confirmed storm-related fatalities. At the peak of the storm, over 240,000 Virginians were without power – all concentrated in Southwest Virginia. The loss of power has resulted in a lack of running water and other critical infrastructure, which has created an incredibly dangerous situation in the region for our constituents.

Federal assistance is required to assist the Commonwealth of Virginia in debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health, and safety in Southwest Virginia. Assistance is also required to support efforts to restore power to critical infrastructure, including drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities, hospitals, and emergency response centers. Additional resources may be required as power outages continue, water recedes, and other needs are identified.

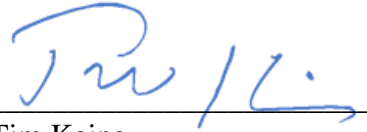
An Emergency Declaration would ensure the availability of key federal resources to support the Commonwealth's efforts to guarantee public safety and rapid recovery from the direct and indirect effects of this devastating storm event. Federal assistance is needed in Southwest Virginia to help our constituents recover from this debilitating natural disaster.

We thank you for your consideration of Governor Youngkin's request for an Emergency Declaration. We look forward to working with you, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other relevant federal agencies to ensure the Commonwealth of Virginia has the resources available to support our constituents following this tragic storm event.

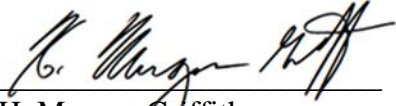
Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress

cc: Deanne Criswell, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency