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United States Senate

May 16, 2019

The Honorable Peter Gaynor
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

I write in support of the State of Montana's request for disaster assistance in responding to severe weather that impacted multiple counties across Montana earlier this spring. Should the President grant Montana's request for a major disaster declaration, I urge you to expedite resources to assist the affected areas.

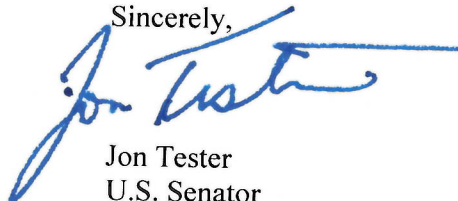
Since February, Montanans have been dealing with severe weather. In February, temperatures averaged between eight and twelve degrees Fahrenheit below normal, while barren ground led to deeper than normal frost depths. By the end of March, a warmup led to rapid runoff across frozen soil. As a result, when the snow began to melt with warming temperatures, much of the snowmelt ran into streams and rivers instead of the topsoil. This, in addition to above average snowfall, led to widespread flooding that damaged roads, culverts, and private residences.

The counties affected by these severe weather events include Daniels, Lake, McCone, Park, Powder River, Stillwater, Treasure, and Valley. Montana Governor Steve Bullock requested on May 9, 2019, that a major disaster for the State of Montana be declared, as the State is in urgent need of federal assistance.

The amount of resources required to meet the needs of our communities as they recover from this storm outstrips the ability of our State and local governments to pay for these damages. Because of the number and magnitude of emergencies and disasters within the last two years, including severe wildfires, winter storms, flooding, and drought, the costs of responding to these needs exceeds Montana's ability to shoulder these costs alone. These communities urgently need federal resources in order to help them restore their infrastructure and way of life.

Delays in funding to these Montana counties would be extremely harmful to affected small businesses and communities. Should the President approve the Governor's request for a major disaster declaration, I ask that you consider his requests as soon as possible. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester
U.S. Senator

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