

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

July 21, 2016

The Honorable William Craig Fugate  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate:

We write in support of the State of Montana's request for Public Assistance for Fallon County and Hazard Mitigation statewide as a result of a tornado on June 11, 2016. The damage from the tornado was widespread and destroyed homes and barns, damaged public infrastructure – including utility infrastructure, and deposited approximately one hundred tons of hazardous debris into nearby Lake Baker.

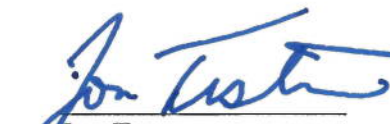
In the early evening of June 11, 2016, an unstable atmosphere combined with a cold front across eastern Montana to produce severe thunderstorms. One severe thunderstorm produced a tornado which touched down in Fallon County shortly before 7:00 pm. The strongest portion of the tornado was classified as an EF-3, which includes wind speeds ranging from 136-165 mph, and occurred within a square block of the town of Baker. The tornado remained stationary over this area for a short period of time, but resulted in significant damage. Moreover, the tornado dumped an estimated one hundred tons of debris into a nearby lake, including building materials, small outbuildings, and trailers.


The State is in urgent need of federal assistance. Fallon County was severely impacted by this tornado and Montana Governor Steve Bullock requested that a major disaster for the State of Montana be declared as of June 11, 2016.


The amount of resources required to meet the needs of our communities as they recover from this disaster outstrips the ability of our State and local governments to pay for these damages. The State of Montana remains committed to providing all available resources to assist Fallon County, but the damage caused cannot solely fall to the State alone. The communities urgently need federal resources in order to help them restore their homes, their infrastructure, and their way of life.

Delays in Public Assistance funding to Fallon County and Hazard Mitigation funding for the State of Montana would be extremely harmful. We ask that you approve the State of Montana's funding request as soon as possible and thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Tester  
U.S. Senator

  
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Steve Daines  
U.S. Senator

  
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Ryan Zinke  
U.S. Representative