

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 10, 2022

President Joseph Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

The people of Louisiana were hit by 18 months of unprecedented disasters. Severe flooding and subsequent wind damage caused by Hurricanes Laura, Marco, Delta, Zeta, and Ida caused nearly \$150 billion in damages to our state. Congress responded by providing \$5 billion in disaster relief aid through the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief (CDBG-DR) program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs (HUD). The purpose of CDBG-DR funding is to provide states and local communities with the tools necessary to recover from these disasters by focusing on housing and infrastructure needs.

As you know, two key agencies impact the delivery of CDBG-DR funds. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides disaster data that allows HUD to make its determinations, and HUD determines eligibility and ultimately distributes the funds. It is our understanding that nearly \$3 billion of the \$5 billion set aside for disaster relief for natural disasters in 2020 and 2021, including Hurricanes Laura, Delta, and Ida, is sitting untouched at HUD. The delay in allocating these funds is attributed to an expired data-sharing agreement between HUD and FEMA that significantly impairs FEMA's ability to share damage assessments with HUD. These damage assessments evaluate the scale of destruction caused by natural disasters and, thus, allow HUD to determine which communities to deliver the funding to. Unless this data is shared, HUD will continue to hold money that could be used to help communities recover from these disasters.

Six months have already elapsed since Congress appropriated this funding, and both HUD and FEMA remain in a stalemate. Unfortunately, without a solution in sight, Louisiana families are left paying the price for bureaucratic red tape. These funds are the lifeline our people need to get back on their feet and address the dire housing situation caused by these storms. We humbly request that you direct HUD and FEMA to quickly forge a data-sharing agreement between the two agencies. In the event that other significant obstacles are preventing the deployment of this aid, we ask that HUD explain those to us and work with the Louisiana

delegation to promptly address these concerns. Your attention to this matter is vital to all those who continue to suffer from national disasters.

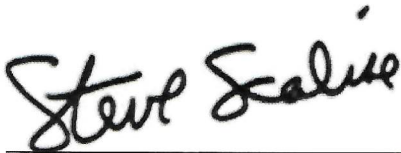
Sincerely,



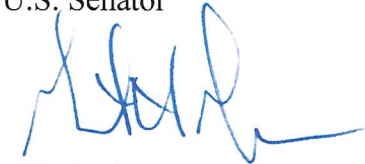
John Kennedy
U.S. Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
U.S. Senator



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



Garret Graves
Member of Congress



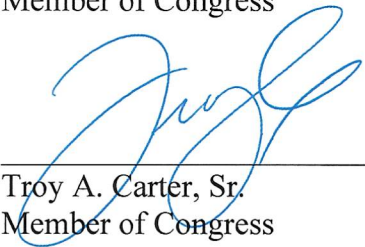
Clay Higgins
Member of Congress



Mike Johnson
Member of Congress



Julia Letlow
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Shalanda Young, Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget
The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge, Secretary for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs
The Honorable Deanne Criswell, Administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency