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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2020

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The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

Thank you for your recent visit to Louisiana to witness firsthand the utter devastation that Hurricane Laura inflicted upon our state. Your presence brought much-needed attention to the suffering of Louisianians, and while national media outlets have largely moved on to cover other stories, the outpouring of support we received following your visit cannot be overstated.

I am, however, deeply concerned about Louisiana's ability to fully and quickly recover from this tragic event. As you know, Hurricane Laura ravaged the entire western portion of the state with sustained winds of over 150 miles per hour. Furthermore, it was recently determined that Laura was the most powerful storm to hit Louisiana in over 160 years and the fifth strongest hurricane to ever make landfall in the continental United States. It maintained its status as a hurricane even as it crossed the state line north into Arkansas.

Initial estimates indicate the total cost of the damage will range from \$8 billion to \$12 billion, and Laura's impacts will undoubtedly linger for years. Moreover, the storm could not have come at a worse time, as state and local resources were already stretched thin while Louisiana continues to struggle with the COVID-19 pandemic.

I fear that failing to acknowledge these unique challenges and take immediate action to mitigate their impacts will significantly hinder our recovery efforts. While it is true that Louisianians have unfortunately become experts at disaster response and recovery, I believe it is clear that the catastrophic damage from this storm eclipses the capabilities of state and local governments to meet their current obligation of assuming 25% of the recovery costs.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you use your existing authorities under the Stafford Act to provide 100% federal funding for the Public Assistance portion of the Hurricane Laura response effort.

Thank you again for all you have done for Louisiana and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Johnson".

Mike Johnson
Member of Congress