

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

April 7, 2017

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

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you to approve as quickly as possible the federal major disaster declaration requested on April 5, 2017 by Washington Governor Jay Inslee.

Between January 30 and February 22, 2017 Washington state experienced a series of powerful winter storms that resulted in heavy snow, rain, snowmelt, flooding, mudslides, landslides, and high winds. Over the course of the incident period, the state sustained a sequence of record or near-record meteorological conditions that matched or exceeded similar events in 1996 and 1985.

The January-February winter storms had a profound effect on the health and safety of our constituents. Throughout Eastern Washington, over 750 roadways suffered severe damage from multiple freeze/thaw sequences and erosion—the most extensive damage to the region's road network in over 20 years. The Cascade Mountains witnessed substantial snowfall between February 4 and 10 that triggered the first simultaneous closing of all three mountain pass highways in nearly a decade. In Western Washington, sustained winds of 40 mph and gusts of 60 mph led to a loss of power for over 100,000 customers and the discharge of hundreds of millions of gallons of untreated and/or limited treated wastewater directly into the Puget Sound after the King County West Point Treatment Plant's sewer system failed. Across the state, dozens of landslides damaged private homes, property, and possessions. In aggregate, Governor Inslee estimates that these storms and their immediate effects impacted over 6.7 million Washingtonians and cost the state over \$27 million.

The January-February winter storms are the latest in a series of significant disasters that Washington state has experienced over the past two years. Since August 2015, Washington state has had to grapple with four major disaster declarations, one emergency declaration, 19 Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAGs), and 43 state fire mobilizations. While Washington state's first responders reacted to these disasters professionally and courageously, the events triggered by the January-February winter storms exhausted the already-strained capacities of local communities and state agencies.

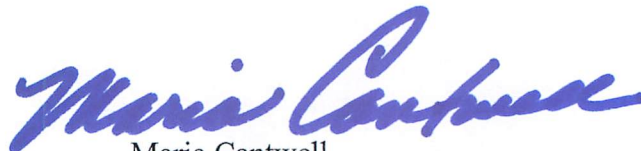
Consequently, we fully support Governor Inslee's request for a major disaster declaration for the January-February winter storms that includes Public Assistance and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator




Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



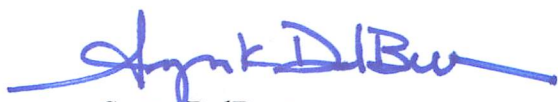
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



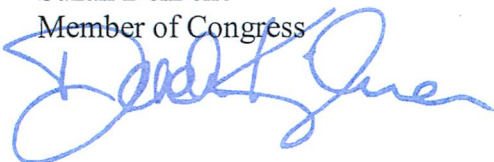
Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



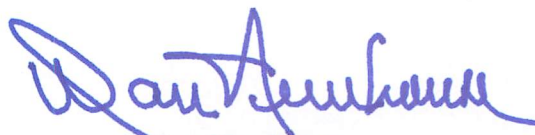
Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Denny Heck
Member of Congress



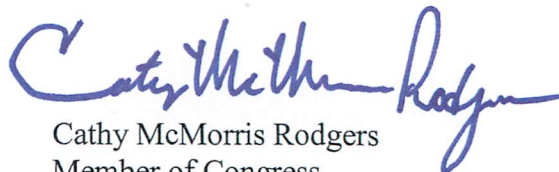
Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress