

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

September 7, 2021

Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Administrator Criswell:

We write to urge you to include Essex, Hudson and Union counties in the federal disaster declaration following the Tropical Storm Ida floods. None of the counties, which suffered significant damage, were included in the original declaration issued September 5, 2021 despite Governor Murphy's request for a presidential disaster declaration covering all 21 counties in New Jersey. We are pleased to see that FEMA has been deployed to these counties to assess the damage, and we respectfully ask that you quickly include them in the current disaster declaration.

In Hudson County alone, some preliminary estimates for damages to public property is already exceeding \$35 million, and this number does not include the damages caused to residential homes and private businesses. There have been five deaths in Union County and four deaths in Essex County, with countless injuries that followed along with the flash floods that came and changed the lives of thousands of New Jersey residents.

So far, 27 lives in New Jersey have been lost due to Tropical Storm Ida, which is more fatalities than in any other state in the Northeast.<sup>[1]</sup> We understand that the damage and recovery assessments will continue, and it will take some time for final estimates to be released. We respectfully request that you act as quickly and as swiftly as you possibly can, so that we can bring the necessary relief to the local governments, small businesses, and families in urgent need within Essex, Hudson, and Union counties.

---

<sup>[1]</sup> 'Governor Murphy Provides Update on Preliminary Fatalities from Tropical Storm Ida,' *NJ.Gov*, Sept. 3, 2021, <https://www.nj.com/news/2021/09/idas-nj-death-toll-rises-to-27-among-deadliest-in-state-history.html>

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and your timely consideration of this request. We look forward to hearing from you and ensuring that New Jersey Families get the relief they need.

Sincerely,



Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



Tom Malinowski  
Member of Congress