

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

April 29, 2020

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

Dear President Trump,

We are writing in support of Governor Edwards' request for a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Louisiana as a result of severe storms and tornadoes on April 12, 2020.

As you know, on Easter Sunday a line of severe storms and tornadoes laid a path of destruction across north Louisiana, with the heaviest impacts coming from three tornadoes that struck Ouachita Parish. Due to restrictions in place as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, Ouachita Parish officials have been working alone on the ground to assess and report damages. They report that 116 single-family homes and twelve businesses have been destroyed or suffered significant damage. In addition, Monroe Regional Airport suffered damages that required a temporary closure and suspension of flights, and the Bayou Black Pumping Station, which prevents flooding in West Monroe, suffered severe damage to three of its pumps. The majority of survivors whose homes were destroyed or damaged lived in Section 8 housing and lack access to alternate housing arrangements. As a result, 273 of the survivors required sheltering across nine separate hotels to comply with social distancing guidelines. Local officials are working with the State to find long term housing for these survivors. However, without federal assistance many of them could be left homeless.

The assistance provided to date by your administration to fight COVID-19 has been critical in slowing its spread in Louisiana. However, our state resources are stretched thin from this fight, as well as from three major natural disasters in 2019 and a tornado that struck Rapides Parish on April 22, killing one Louisianan. The response to the tornadoes in Ouachita Parish, in conjunction with these events, has overwhelmed state and local resources. We ask that you grant Governor Edwards' request for a Major Disaster Declaration for Individual and SBA Assistance in Ouachita Parish, as well as for Hazard Mitigation statewide. Thank you for your continued support of Louisiana and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



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



John Kennedy  
U.S. Senator



Ralph Abraham, M.D.  
U.S. Representative



Steve Scalise  
U.S. Representative



Cedric Richmond  
U.S. Representative



Garret Graves  
U.S. Representative



Clay Higgins  
U.S. Representative



Mike Johnson  
U.S. Representative