

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 17, 2022

The Honorable Deanne Criswell
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Criswell:

Following Hurricane Katrina, the State of Louisiana received \$2 billion of FEMA Public Assistance that was allocated for post-Hurricane Katrina road and pipe repairs in New Orleans. Recently, we learned that the City of New Orleans will be unable to spend all of the allocated funds before the federally imposed deadline. To address such situations, 44 CFR 206.204(d) allows FEMA to extend project deadlines if (1) requested by the recipient (in this case, the State of Louisiana) and (2) submitted to the Regional Administrator. Accordingly, we are writing to alert you to this matter and to seek your support for extending the deadline.

As required by regulation, the State of Louisiana's extension request includes a "detailed justification for the delay and a projected completion date." However, just a cursory understanding of Hurricane Katrina's magnitude and impact on New Orleans, as well as subsequent storms and events make a compelling case why the requested extension should be granted.

When Hurricane Katrina ripped through the Gulf Coast in August 2005 with maximum sustained winds of 175 mph, it killed 1,833 people. It took some 43 days after Katrina made landfall for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to pump the last of the floodwaters out of the city. Even a month later, up to 600,000 households were still displaced, and by the fall of 2006, less than half of the residents had returned.

In the more recent years, New Orleans' rebuilding has been challenged by the COVID pandemic and the unprecedented 2020 hurricane season that included Hurricanes Ida, Zeta, Barry, and Laura. Despite all of the above challenges, New Orleans has made progress in completing work, which has previously been a bolstering factor in FEMA's granting of extensions.

Finally, New Orleans' need for an extension has been expected by FEMA for some time. Within the Joint Infrastructure Recovery Request ("JIRR") Report of 2019, it is noted that FEMA is aware a further extension of JIRR funds are likely. "FEMA extended the work deadline for the JIRR program projects through June 30, 2023 as established per PW 21032, 21033 (DAC) and 20908 (ADA). Moreover, FEMA acknowledges an extended schedule to 2025 based

on schedules established during the formulation of PW 21032 and anticipates time extensions will be required to complete the work.” (p. 4).

We request the August 2023 deadline be extended in order to fulfill much needed maintenance to roads and pipe repair in New Orleans. A notice will be sent to the state to submit a formal request for your approval. Thank you for your continued attention to hurricane recovery efforts in Louisiana. We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John Kennedy
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy
United States Senator



Troy Carter
United States Congressman