

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 18, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Republican Leader
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Thune:

We write to urge inclusion of supplemental disaster assistance appropriations in legislation providing government funding for Fiscal Year 2026.

In January 2025, the Eaton and Palisades Fires in Los Angeles County destroyed more than 16,000 structures, displaced tens of thousands of people, and took 31 lives. Since these devastating firestorms, federal, state, and local authorities have worked together to clear toxic hazardous waste, remove debris, and begin the process of rebuilding the communities of Altadena, Pasadena, the Pacific Palisades, and Malibu. This progress is made possible by the support and assistance provided by FEMA and other federal agencies pursuant to the Major Disaster Declaration on January 8th, 2025.

However, additional federal assistance is required to support California's ongoing recovery from these unprecedented firestorms. Accordingly, Governor Newsom has requested supplemental assistance totaling \$34.2 billion to replenish FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund and SBA's Disaster Loan Program, and fund other programs to support long-term recovery.

Included in the governor's proposal are also funding for Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and a request to increase the SBA Disaster Loan maximum lending limit for home reconstruction. These programs would support those who are uninsured or underinsured, and their inclusion in a supplemental is needed to augment the basic FEMA benefits package given the high-cost housing market in LA County.

And California is not the only state that is relying on Congress to pass supplemental disaster assistance. North Carolina Governor Josh Stein has requested \$11.5 billion in assistance as his state continues to recover from Hurricane Helene, which caused nearly \$60 billion in damage in North Carolina and killed at least 230 people across six states. And we must be prepared for future disasters as we enter hurricane season in the Southeastern U.S. and wildfire season across the West.

Accordingly, we urge you to ensure that Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations legislation include supplemental disaster assistance that meets the ongoing needs of disaster survivors across the country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judy Chu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad Sherman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress