

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 3, 2024

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Deanne Criswell
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management
Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

The Honorable Michael Regan
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. President, Secretary Mayorkas, and Secretary Haaland,

We write to demand in the strongest possible terms your support for communities devastated by Hurricane Helene by providing as much leniency as possible for federal requirements and regulations when communities rebuild, replace, or relocate structures.

As you are aware, Hurricane Helene made landfall in Florida as a devastating Category 4 hurricane and continued north significantly affecting Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. As early reports suggest, many communities have experienced once in a generation flooding in North Carolina.

With numerous Americans missing and the death toll reaching into the hundreds, it is imperative that state and local authorities have the resources necessary to communicate with and search for citizens. During this challenging time, the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act should be interpreted as loosely as possible, so the federal government provides *support*, not *interference* in the recovery effort.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) framework is often used by other federal agencies as an "umbrella framework" for other relevant federal requirements. Agencies, when applying the Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic

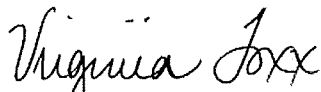
Preservation Act, Clean Water Act, or any other federal regulation that delays immediate relief should provide communities maximum discretion.

Significant damage has been reported to people's homes, highways, and businesses. Without maximum discretion on the NEPA framework, communities impacted by Helene will be unable to rebuild and return to normal. The federal government can support these communities by ensuring federal regulations are waived or interpreted to provide maximum discretion to state and local authorities, consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

On September 26th, President Biden issued an Emergency Declaration for Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. This declaration allows the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to coordinate all disaster relief efforts caused by this emergency. To maximize the support the federal government can provide, it should be the policy of FEMA and the Environmental Protection Agency to remove as many barriers as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this serious matter,

Sincerely,



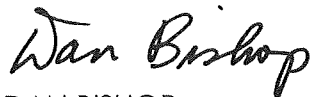
VIRGINIA FOXX
United States Representative



CHUCK EDWARDS
United States Representative



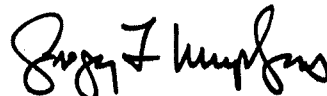
RALPH NORMAN
United States Representative



DAN BISHOP
United States Representative



PATRICK McHENRY
United States Representative



GREGORY F. MURPHY, M.D.
United States Representative



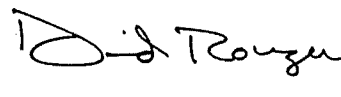
AUSTIN SCOTT
United States Representative



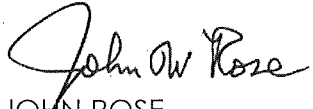
RICHARD McCORMICK, M.D.
United States Representative



WILLIAM R. TIMMONS, IV
United States Representative



DAVID ROUZER
United States Representative



JOHN ROSE
United States Representative



KAT CAMMACK
United States Representative



NEAL P. DUNN, M.D.
United States Representative



RICHARD HUDSON
United States Representative