



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

September 30, 2020

The Honorable Donald Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Regional Administrator Tony Robinson  
FEMA Region 6  
Denton, Texas

RE: Request for Presidential Disaster Declaration—Major Disaster

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I respectfully request that you declare a major disaster for the state of Texas as a result of Hurricane Laura, which made landfall along the Texas-Louisiana border on August 27, 2020.

Beginning August 23, 2020, I took the appropriate action under state law with respect to then-Tropical Storm Laura by directing the execution of the state's emergency management plan and declaring a state of disaster for 62 Texas counties, including Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Sabine, and Shelby counties. On August 24, 2020, Texas received approval for a federal Emergency Declaration ahead of then-Tropical Storms Laura and Marco. Texas is grateful for your decisive action and for our partners at FEMA for quickly granting this federal Emergency Declaration.

Pursuant to 44 CFR § 206.36, I have determined that damages caused by Hurricane Laura were of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and affected local government, and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives and to protect property, public health, and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster. I am requesting Public Assistance (all categories) and Individual Assistance programs for the following counties:

Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Sabine, and Shelby counties.

I am also requesting the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program statewide.

As we assess damages to the other affected counties, I reserve the right to request assistance for additional counties in Texas.

The Honorable Donald Trump

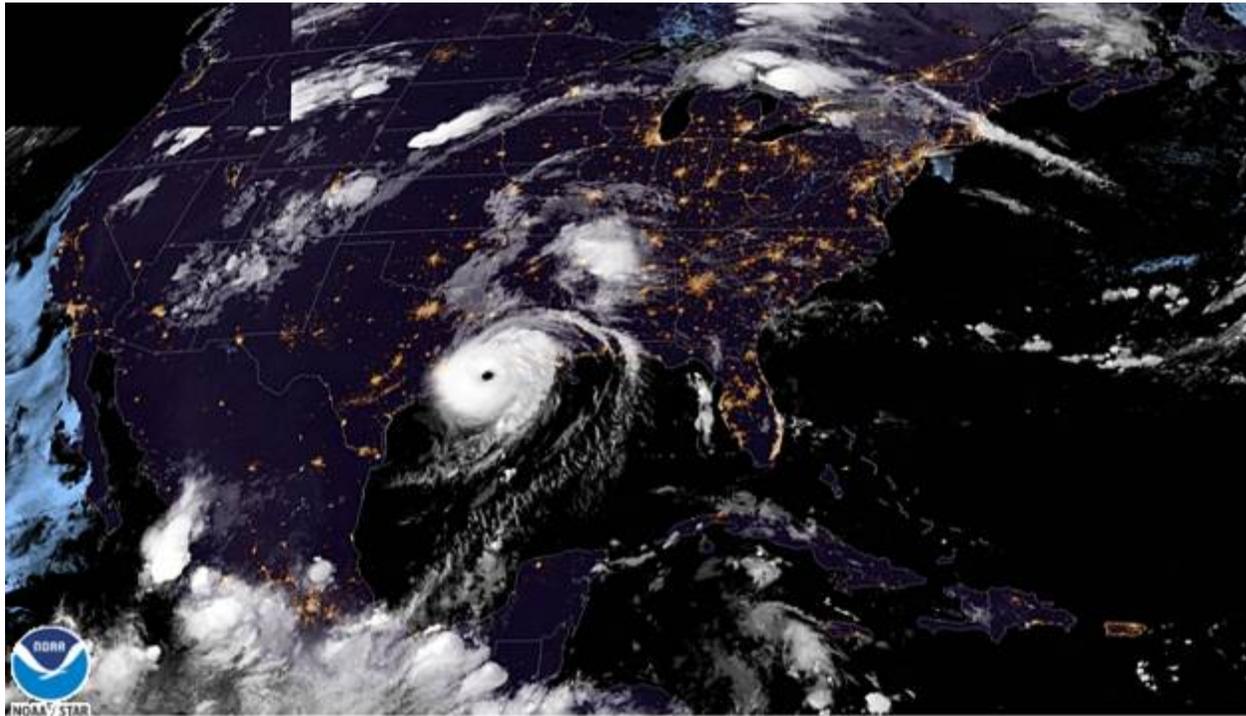
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In addition to Hurricane Laura, the State of Texas is currently engaged in response efforts for the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exhausted much of the state's resources. These response and recovery efforts are in addition to recovery efforts for Hurricane Hanna, which made landfall in Texas on July 25, 2020, Tropical Storm Beta, and five other major disasters over the last three years. The state of Texas has had more federal disaster declarations than any other state, which does not account for the numerous state disasters that did not meet federal thresholds and requirements. This includes Tropical Storm Imelda, which hit this area hard in 2019.

## **INCIDENT OVERVIEW**

The State of Texas responded to and is recovering from Hurricane Laura on two fronts. Not only are we responding to the continuing threats and challenges posed by Hurricane Laura, but we are doing so at the same time as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly affected certain facets of the response to this hurricane.

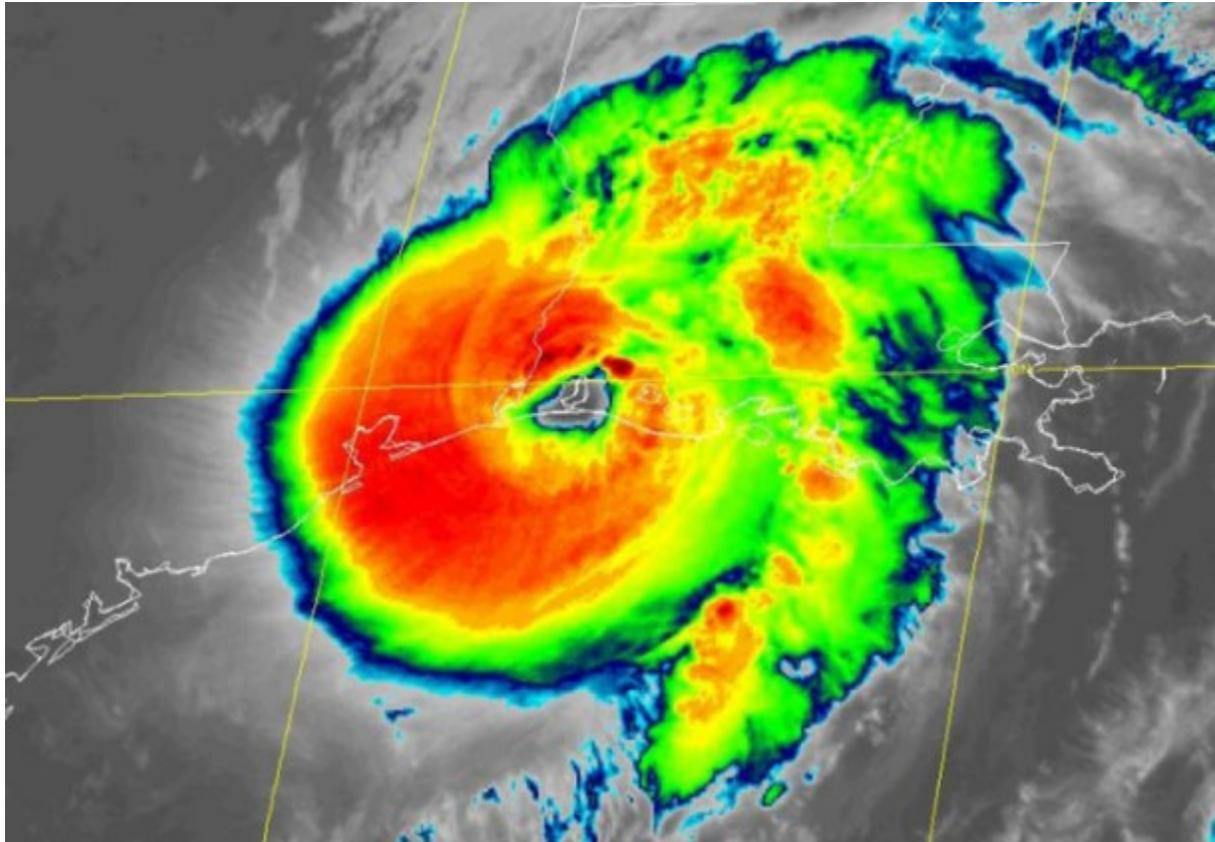


27 Aug 2020 04:46Z NESDIS/STAR GOES-East GEOCOLOR  
*Satellite imagery depicting Category 4 Hurricane Laura at landfall.*

Hurricane Laura made landfall as a Category 4, major hurricane on Thursday, August 27, 2020, along the Texas-Louisiana border. Thereafter, the storm continued along a northward trajectory along the state line, bringing destructive storm surge, damaging winds, and heavy rainfall to the state of Texas.

Hurricane Laura intensified within 24 hours from a Category 1 to a strong Category 4 storm on the Saffir Simson scale and made landfall with maximum sustained winds of 150 miles per hour. In terms of wind speed, it was the strongest storm to hit Louisiana since 1856, making landfall

only miles from the Texas state line. It was also the first major hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico during the month of August since Hurricane Harvey in 2017.



Ahead of Hurricane Laura, The National Weather Service predicted an “unsurvivable” storm surge, which, in turn, resulted in 24 jurisdictions issuing evacuation orders. In order to support Texas jurisdictions impacted by Hurricane Laura, the State Operations Center (SOC) moved to 24-hour operations on Sunday, August 23, 2020.

Regional shelter plans outside the path of Hurricane Laura were activated to support evacuees. With the current pandemic, special precautions needed to be taken, which meant utilizing non-congregate sheltering to prevent the spread of the virus while ensuring the basic life needs of the evacuees were being met.

At its peak, the State sheltered 7,413 Texans in non-congregate shelters across the state. Beginning on August 29, 2020, the State began repatriating Texans who were able to return to their homes safely, and this effort has continued through the date of this request.

In addition to the high number of Texans who sought shelter, thousands of evacuees from Louisiana sought shelter in Texas as well. As of September 28, 2020, the State of Texas is still housing 4,262 evacuees that cannot yet return home. This is resulting in over 1,615 hotel rooms being used daily to ensure COVID-19 safety measures are followed. In addition to the hotel rooms, the State is also providing meal and laundry services. In other scenarios, this would be unnecessary, as these services could be carried out in a mass care setting, but providing these

wraparound services during the pandemic is essential to ensure the basic needs of the evacuees are met.



The State of Texas continues to do everything possible to care for Louisiana residents displaced by Hurricane Laura. Many Texans along our eastern border are facing the same challenges as our neighbors in Louisiana, but they are doing so without the same level of support provided through the Major Disaster Declaration the State of Louisiana received on August 27, 2020.

## **RESPONSE OVERVIEW**

Due to this severe weather event, I declared a gubernatorial disaster for Anderson, Angelina, Aransas, Bexar, Bowie, Brazoria, Calhoun, Cameron, Camp, Cass, Chambers, Cherokee, Dallas, Ellis, Fort Bend, Franklin, Galveston, Gregg, Grimes, Hardin, Harris, Harrison, Houston, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Kenedy, Kleberg, Liberty, Leon, Madison, Marion, Matagorda, Montgomery, Morris, Nacogdoches, Newton, Nueces, Orange, Panola, Polk, Red River, Refugio, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Shelby, Smith, Tarrant, Titus, Travis, Trinity, Tyler, Upshur, Victoria, Walker, Waller, Wharton, Willacy, and Wood counties. In order to support Texas jurisdictions impacted by Hurricane Laura, the SOC moved to 24-hour operations on Sunday, August 23, 2020, and as of September 28, 2020, the State of Texas still has resources committed to Hurricane Laura recovery.

Multiple state agencies, local jurisdictions, volunteer agencies, and other stakeholders are working the recovery from Hurricane Laura. Below is a brief summary of the resources used in the state of Texas during response and recovery operations for Hurricane Laura:

- 56 Ambulances
- 24 Boats
- 166 Buses
- 23 Aircraft
- 163 High-Profile Vehicles
- Over 2,100 Response Personnel

## **State Agency Summaries**

### **Texas Division of Emergency Management, Texas A&M University System (TDEM)**

The SOC moved to Readiness Level II, Escalated Response Conditions. This resulted in the need for the SOC to be staffed 24 hours each day during the response. Daily operations staff process disaster declarations, letters to the Governor, Disaster Summary Outlines, and State of Texas Assistance Requests (STARs).

The State Management Team (SMT), along with activated members of the state's Emergency Management Council, conducted operations in the alternate SOC, which is in operation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the response, and continuing into recovery, TDEM District Coordinators and regional staff work closely with local emergency management partners to assist with any unmet needs and resources. SOC personnel continue to support recovery efforts.

### **TDEM Communications Coordination Group (CCG)**

The CCG is responsible for alerting the public and private sector as well as volunteer partners. Amateur radio operators worked with local jurisdictions and governmental agencies to provide communications support. FirstNet (AT&T) pre-staged deployed network assets to assist in ensuring communications continuity. Other telecommunications providers were prepared to deploy assets and provide services as needed to ensure the affected area would have voice, text, and data services available. The Commission on State Emergency Communications worked with the Public Safety Alerting Points (PSAPs) under their jurisdiction to ensure continuity. Coordination also took place with the FEMA Region 6 Regional Emergency Communications Coordinator to identify personnel that would be available to assist Texas if needed. Local jurisdictions and partner stakeholders tested alternate communications systems.

### **TDEM Disaster Recovery Task Force (DRTF)**

The DRTF began engaging disaster-impacted jurisdictions prior to Hurricane Laura's landfall, providing financial reimbursement and sheltering guidance. Following landfall, DRTF members began coordinating and participating in damage surveys as well as assisting local jurisdictions with unmet needs.

### **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife)**

AgriLife provided support to TDEM, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), TAMU VET, and local jurisdictions. Additionally, extension personnel were in contact with agency partners, stakeholders, and local partners to determine capabilities, respond to post-storm issues, and monitor the status of evacuation hubs for people and animals with TAHC.



#### **Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC)**

TAHC activated the Animal Response Operations Coordination Center (AROCC) for Hurricane Laura on August 27, 2020. In conjunction AgriLife, TAHC conducted animal surveillance in the impacted area.

#### **Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) Texas Task Force 1 (TX-TF1)**

TEEX TX-TF 1 personnel were assigned to the SOC for 24-hour operations. Additionally, a San Antonio swift water rescue boat squad assisted the Galveston Fire Department in evacuating 47 people from Gulf Coast Health Facility in Galveston to a San Antonio facility. TX-TF1 activated the following resources:

- Type-1 search and rescue (SAR) team activated
- Type-3 SAR team activated
- Swift water rescue (SWR) squads and SWR Managers activated
- Overhead Team activated

#### **Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS)**

TFS assigned 91 personnel and numerous additional resources to assist with the Hurricane Laura response. TFS provided planning, logistical, and other support to TDEM and local entities. Response activities included SITREPs, STAR processing, logistical support for shipping and receiving medical supplies, and incident management support.

#### **Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC)**

PUC worked to restore power to over 350,000 homes and businesses across 35 counties.

#### **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)**

TCEQ worked with local jurisdictions to ensure local drinking water systems functioned at acceptable levels. 171 water systems were assessed, and of those, 128 were operational, 47 were

operating on a generator, and 26 were non-operational. At peak outage, 32 water systems were under a Boil Water Notice and 39 others had notices following landfall but have since been rescinded. They are also conducting visible odor and emissions surveys in Jefferson and Orange counties and working with a contractor to provide air monitoring in the vicinity of facilities that were restarting operations. TCEQ also deployed their Mobile Air Monitoring Van after the storm. Twelve Temporary Debris Management Sites in Jasper, Newton, Orange, and Sabine counties have been authorized. TCEQ staff are conducting weekly inspections on all the approved sites.

### **Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)**

TDCJ set up a command center for Hurricane Laura to monitor the impacts. Three secure facilities, a portion of a fourth secure facility, and three residential facilities, all of which are in the affected area, were evacuated, including a total of 3,400 offenders and 200 clients. The relocation required personal protective equipment due to the ongoing pandemic; N95 masks and Vital Oxide foggers were utilized during and between transports.

### **Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)**

Personnel from DSHS were present in the SOC due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and staffing was increased in response to Hurricane Laura and the shift to 24-hour operations. In addition to monitoring hospital statuses and evacuations, DSHS also activated medical shelters in San Antonio and Austin. Over 570 medical patients were transported and DSHS conducted 171 medical evacuations.



The agency also deployed other resources, including 236 Emergency Medical Taskforce Members to assist in shelters, nurses to assist with medical evacuees, and two mobile medical units to support post-landfall activities. The State Medical Operations Center (SMOC), which was already active due to COVID-19, transitioned to 24-hour operations to assist with resources and unmet needs brought on by Hurricane Laura.



### **Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)**

TxDOT pre-positioned teams and resources ahead of Hurricane Laura in addition to having representation at the SOC. 120 TxDOT employees from districts outside of the affected area were assigned to the area to assist with debris removal and sign and signal repair. Courtesy Patrol was also made available to motorists evacuating and later returning to the area. TxDOT also worked to set up a detour on I-10 at the Louisiana border due to the closure of the highway in Louisiana.

### **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)**

HHSC provided liaisons to the SOC who collected, documented, and disseminated situational awareness information in addition to responding to inquiries and monitoring state requests for HHSC-provided assets. HHSC processed several STARs for resources, including items such as trailers of bottled water and trailers of bagged ice, which supported points of dispensing in affected jurisdictions. The Commission also answered 2-1-1 calls related to the hurricane. By the day of landfall, the hotline had already answered over 3,200 calls.

### **Texas Military Department (TMD)**

TMD activated over 1,200 personnel along with 134 HPVs, 70 HMMWVs, 10 rotary aircraft, and four fixed-wing aircraft in support of the response to Hurricane Laura. The State Air Operation was activated at Camp Mabry (Austin). TMD deployed personnel to protect life and property and to assist with search, rescue, embarkation hubs, ETN, evacuee shelters, PODS, and other missions.



### **Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)**

DPS rostered and staged Texas Highway Patrol (THP), Criminal Investigations Division (CID), Texas Ranger Division (TRD), Aircraft Operations Division (AOD), THP Tactical Marine Unit (TMU), and Infrastructure Operations Division (IOD) personnel in support of the Hurricane Laura response.

### **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)**

TPWD rostered and staged local resources in Southeast Texas to support rescue and recovery efforts in response to Hurricane Laura.

## **Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) Summaries**

Local, state, and national mission-driven organizations, including Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) member agencies and established Long Term Recovery Groups, have been engaged in response and recovery efforts for Hurricane Laura since prior to landfall.

### **The American Red Cross (ARC)**

The ARC is currently providing dormitory management to multiple non-congregate hotel shelters across the state. As of September 16, 2020, this included 46 non-congregate shelters with 2,810 rooms occupied by 7,116 clients. Additionally, the ARC provided meal services to affected Texans through partnerships, and water heater meals were also distributed from Emergency Response Vehicles (ERV). The ARC also participated in the damage assessments of the disaster-impacted area.

### **The Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army provided mobile feeding units deployed to impacted areas, and meals were provided to first responders at the Ford Park resource staging area and in Huntsville to support sheltering operations. Incident management teams and mobile feeding units/canteens were deployed to Beaumont and other affected areas after landfall.

### **Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC)**

SBTC has provided volunteers for one incident management team, two shower units, one 55 kW generator unit, a chainsaw team, three mass care feeding units, three shower/laundry units, and one laundry unit which supported a power line crew and first responders. This equates to 1,154 showers, 772 loads of laundry, 168 generator hours, 126 heavy equipment hours, 10,939 meals prepared, and 11,260 volunteer hours.

### **Other VOAD Members**

Additionally, VOAD member agencies provided tarps, hygiene kits, medicine, and medical supplies. Organizations have also helped with muck-and-gut operations, feeding, case management, damage assessments, and connectivity restoration.

The state agencies and VOAD organizations described above have been working tirelessly since Hurricane Laura made landfall, but the citizens and local governments in Southeast Texas are in desperate need of additional federal assistance to enable a quick and complete return to normalcy.

## **LOCALIZED IMPACT**

### **Recent Multiple Disasters**

Southeast Texas has seen more than its share of disasters in recent years. In the past 12 months alone, several of the counties impacted by Hurricane Laura have been involved in two major disaster declarations. Texans in Southeast Texas are continuing their fight against COVID-19 while still recovering from Tropical Storm Imelda, which brought devastating flooding and destruction to the area with no federal assistance for public infrastructure. Additionally, this region is still recovering from Hurricane Harvey, a disaster that to date has cost an estimated total of \$125 billion.

Considering the scope of these disasters and the recent economic issues caused by COVID-19, Texans affected by Hurricane Laura are in dire need of federal assistance. The constant barrage of disaster-caused damages on the community infrastructure and individual homes far exceeds the financial resources available to these communities to recover from another catastrophic event. Federal assistance is needed to supplement an already exhausted tax revenue for the communities who make far less than the median household income of \$63,000.

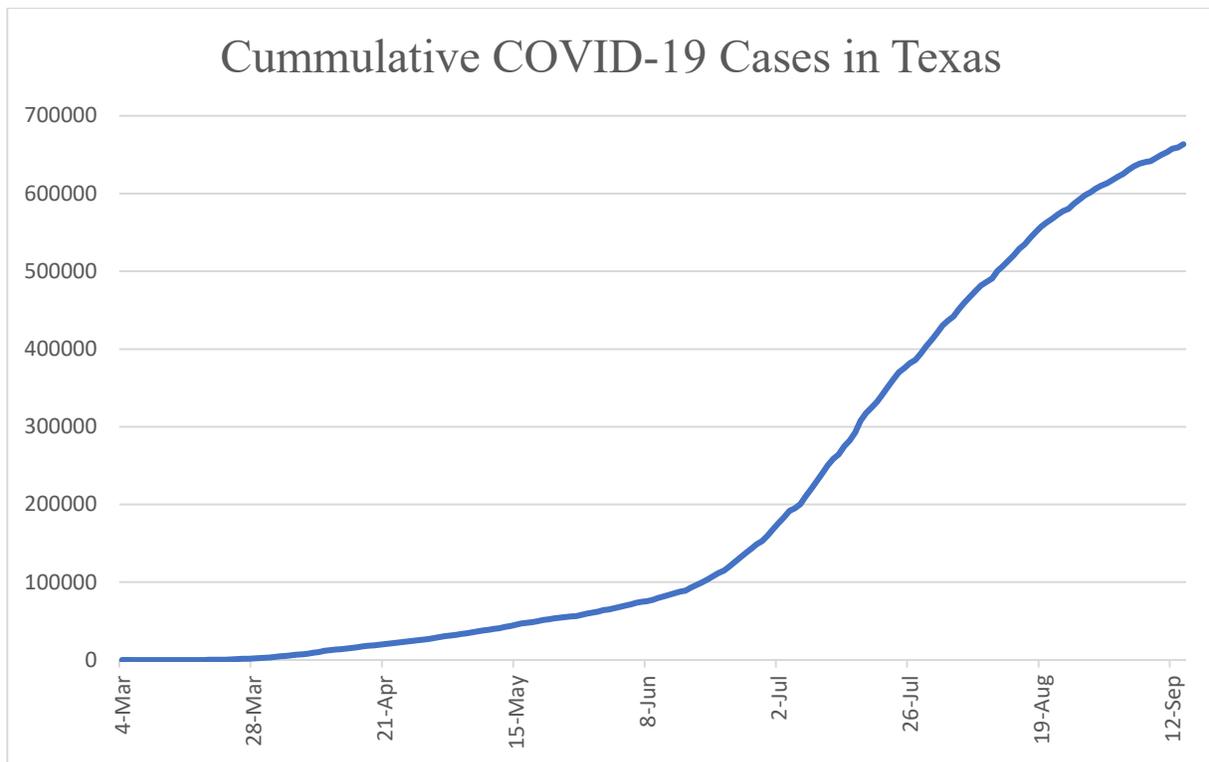
### **State Fiscal Capacity and Resource Availability**

The State of Texas is using its already limited resources to respond to Hurricane Laura. To date, the State has spent over \$51 million on the hurricane response. Additionally, a significant amount of State resources continues to be dedicated to the COVID-19 response, and the Texas SOC has been staffed and operational since March 12, 2020. Since the first cases of COVID-19 in the state, Texas state agencies alone have spent billions of dollars to combat the spread of COVID-19 and to take other appropriate measures in response to the pandemic. These costs continue to rise. This amount does not include amounts spent by local jurisdictions on COVID-19 which, as of the date of this letter, exceed \$373 million in FEMA Public Assistance costs alone.

### **Ongoing COVID-19 Response**

A large challenge for this hurricane was evacuation and sheltering operations for those affected populations given the current COVID-19 pandemic. To date, there have been over 735,000 cases of COVID-19 in the state of Texas and over 15,500 fatalities.

Considering the ability of COVID-19 to rapidly spread, the State and its jurisdictions took measures to evacuate persons while ensuring proper social distancing and make non-congregate sheltering possible for those who need refuge. This presents a unique challenge as more resources are needed to move Texans from affected areas and because additional space and special considerations are necessary for large populations to take shelter. Hurricane Laura has significantly impacted 10 counties in Texas, which have a combined population of over 1.2 million Texans. These numbers do not include the thousands of people who evacuated from Louisiana to Texas.



*Cummulative reported cases of COVID-19 in Texas.*

### **Ongoing Hurricane Hanna Recovery**

Since making landfall on July 25, 2020, the State of Texas has also been working on recovery from Hurricane Hanna. The impact area from this disaster spans across South Texas and further stretches the State's capacity to respond and recover from future disasters. Collection and review of damage assessments are still ongoing, and like other incidents, this has also required a special approach using additional resources to ensure that surveys and assessments take place in a way that mitigates the effects of COVID-19. To date, the State has expended over \$3.39 million in response to Hurricane Hanna, with local governments reporting expenses and damages totaling over \$80 million.

## **Volunteerism and Donations Impacts**

Due to the unprecedented nature of COVID-19, many volunteer organizations are facing challenges that did not exist before, many of which have been exacerbated by the concurrence of recent disasters in Texas and across the nation.

As a result of local and state guidance and ordinances related to social distancing, lack of access to personal protective equipment, a median age of volunteers that puts them in the high-risk category for COVID-19, and general societal anxiety, many voluntary agencies continue to experience a substantial decrease in both skilled and unskilled volunteerism rates.

Historically, Texas has had the good fortune of drawing upon the goodwill of the American people from non-impacted states during our natural disaster response and recovery operations, but COVID-19 is impacting the entirety of the nation and severely limiting the pool of volunteers on which VOADs can rely. In some instances where volunteers may be willing, many organizations have travel bans in place.

Additionally, volunteer organizations and Long Term Recovery Groups are having to cancel planned fundraising events, which is causing substantial economic hardship to existing programmatic operations.

The substantial economic impact that COVID-19 is having on individuals, the private sector, and philanthropic funders is causing nonprofits to struggle to raise the financial capital needed to support the unmet needs for Hurricane Laura response. Due to increased supply chain demand, many nonprofits that typically have robust access to in-kind donations are experiencing a steep drop in access to goods needed for response and recovery operations.

Currently, mission-driven organizations providing support for Texas communities impacted by Hurricane Laura, including VOAD member agencies, are experiencing limited capacity in feeding, bulk distribution, emergency food boxes, clean-up kits, personal care/comfort kits, disaster cleanup services, and immediate home repairs. It is important to note that each of these capabilities are dependent upon the goodwill of volunteers and the individual agency's COVID-19 guidelines.

## **Damage Assessments**

Immediately following Hurricane Laura's landfall, the TDEM DRTF began coordinating damage assessments with local jurisdictions in the affected areas. This involved surveying damage to public infrastructure as well as residences in the area. The DRTF also provided training and assistance in using the damage self-reporting app, which allowed for virtual preliminary damages assessments due to the ongoing pandemic. This is an important tool because FEMA is currently not deploying staff to conduct Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments due to COVID-19.

This stance makes certifying the true scope of disaster damages difficult for FEMA, but the State of Texas believes damages caused by Hurricane Laura are of such significance that federal assistance in the form of Public Assistance and Individual Assistance is warranted. Texas state

agency partners and volunteer organizations partnered with local jurisdictions and participated in reporting damages and capturing imagery across the disaster-affected area for reports to be validated and transmitted to FEMA.



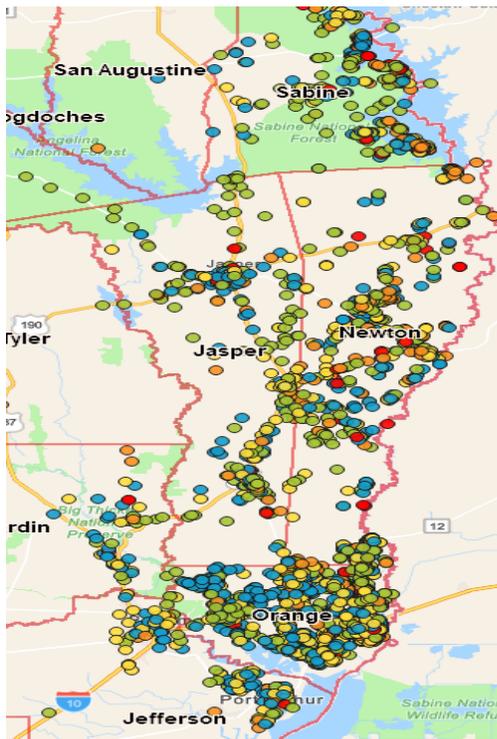
### **Damages to Public Property**

As Hurricane Laura approached the Texas and Louisiana coastlines, emergency protective measures were taken to ensure the safety of Texans. As mentioned in the summary above, several state resources, including a significant number of personnel, were mobilized. In addition to state and federal resources, local jurisdictions have incurred numerous expenses. To date, the requested counties and jurisdictions within have expended approximately \$6.97 million on Category B measures. The widespread debris caused by Hurricane Laura now has costs totaling over \$21.6 million, and damage in other categories for those jurisdictions is now estimated to be near \$39.3 million. This brings the total reported damages to public infrastructure in the disaster-affected area to \$61 million. This is shown in the table below.

County	A: Debris Removal	B: Emergency Protective	C: Roads and Bridges	D: Water Facilities	E: Buildings	F: Public Utilities	G: Parks, Rec, & Other	County Totals
Brazoria	\$ 40,000	\$ 249,360	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,300,000	\$ 5,589,360
Chambers	\$ -	\$ 573,888	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 573,888
Galveston	\$ 30,000	\$ 1,130,000	\$ -	\$ 1,900,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 4,070,000
Hardin	\$ -	\$ 249,968	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 249,968
Jasper	\$ 7,325,000	\$ 508,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,983,500
Jefferson	\$ 929,742	\$ 1,785,148	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 2,849,890
Newton	\$ 400,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 3,010,000	\$ 7,000,000	\$ 800,000	\$ 13,910,000
Orange	\$ 5,750,000	\$ 1,693,226	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,883,200	\$ 158,815	\$ 20,000	\$ 18,505,241
Sabine	\$ 6,987,579	\$ 84,558	\$ 22,784	\$ -	\$ 14,573	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,109,494
Shelby	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200,000
	<b>\$ 21,662,321</b>	<b>\$ 6,974,648</b>	<b>\$ 2,072,784</b>	<b>\$ 1,900,000</b>	<b>\$ 14,117,773</b>	<b>\$ 7,168,815</b>	<b>\$ 7,145,000</b>	<b>\$ 61,041,341</b>

Table showing total dollars of public property damage in the requested counties following Hurricane Laura.

### Damages to Homes



With the dangerous storm surge, high winds, and excessive rainfall, many homes in eastern Texas were damaged. The damage ranges from homes with shingles missing and vegetative debris in yards to home that were destroyed.

Of the damage surveys received and validated by TDEM, 642 residences were affected, 690 had minor damage, 376 sustained major damage, and 132 were destroyed. Many of the homes that were damaged or destroyed belong to Texans still feeling the effects of both Hurricane Harvey and Tropical Storm Imelda. This storm will be the third time in three years where many Texans in this area will need to repair their homes, or worse, start over again.

Affected Homes	Minor Damage	Major Damage	Destroyed Homes
642	690	376	132

Table showing numbers of homes in categories of damage.

## **Insurance Data**

Many of the destroyed homes in past federally declared disasters were in medium-income neighborhoods where survivors struggled to rebuild, make a mortgage payment, or pay rent in a market where there was a lack of affordable rental resources. The personal and economic impact to these communities means it will take them a significant amount of time and effort to recover. Long-term recovery from such devastation is the most difficult part of a disaster. Federal assistance will be key to a rapid and resilient recovery.

Of 3,713 self-reported damage surveys submitted to TDEM, 2,487 respondents indicated they were the property owner, 406 indicated they were renters, and the status of the remainder is unknown. Of this population, only 1,465 respondents indicated they were insured, 718 indicated they were not insured, and 304 people did not respond to the question. It should also be considered that even those who are insured may have losses not covered entirely by insurance.

	<b>Residences</b>	<b>% Insured</b>	<b>% Uninsured</b>	<b>% Unknown</b>
<b>Owner</b>	2,487	58.9%	28.9%	12.2%
<b>Renter</b>	406	17.0%	27.3%	55.7%
<b>Unknown Own/Rent</b>	820			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,713</b>			

*Table showing insurance data for homes taken from self-reported damage assessments following Hurricane Laura.*

In addition to homeowner's insurance, the following table shows the estimated total of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies in effect in the state-declared disaster counties.

<b>Estimated NFIP Penetration Rate</b>						
<b>County</b>	<b>(2019 Est.) Population</b>	<b>Est. Total Households</b>	<b>Est. Number of Insured Households in SFHA</b>	<b>% in SFHA</b>	<b>Est. Number of Insured Households in County</b>	<b>% Total in County</b>
Brazoria	374,264	118,762	59,975	50.50%	43,348	36.50%
Chambers	43,837	13,529	4,803	35.50%	4,911	36.30%
Galveston	342,139	119,181	69,483	58.30%	64,834	54.40%
Hardin	57,602	20,385	7,074	34.70%	3,221	15.80%
Jasper	35,529	12,583	1,472	11.70%	289	2.30%
Jefferson	251,565	94,002	50,949	54.20%	28,483	30.30%
Newton	13,595	4,978	772	15.50%	224	4.50%
Orange	83,396	31,989	14,203	44.40%	12,188	38.10%
Sabine	10,542	4,099	-	0.00%	4	0.10%
Shelby	25,274	9,292	139	1.50%	19	0.20%

*Table showing the Estimated NFIP penetration rates for affected counties (Data from FEMA Region 6).*

## **Disaster Impacted Population Profile**

Those living in the affected area contribute to the quickly recovering economies of Texas and the United States. The area is home to petroleum refineries, one of the busier ports in the United States, manufacturing companies, and much more. Unfortunately, for many, work slowed or came to halt as companies and businesses took precautionary measures prior to and following Hurricane Laura. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, an estimated 2,176 disaster impact claims have been received as of September 18, 2020. As noted previously, Texans living in the affected area are no stranger to disasters, but many citizens have reached their breaking point.

This part of the state is also home to many vulnerable population groups. In some of the affected counties, over 20 percent of households speak a language other than English at home. These language barriers can hinder Texans from accessing the emergency assistance they desperately need. In many counties, the percentage of the population over 65 years of age and with a disability is higher than 14 percent. Also, persons under the age of 18 and persons age 65 and older make up a significant portion of the disaster area, as outlined in the sections below.

### **Population Statistics**

Southeast Texas is one of the denser population areas in the state. Among the 10 counties for which federal assistance is being requested, the population exceeds 1.2 million Texans and is home to Texans of varying demographics. All requested counties have sizable populations below 18 years of age or persons aged 65 and older, both with and without disabilities.

<b>August 2020 Hurricane Laura</b>								
	<b>Persons Living Below Poverty Level as a percentage</b>	<b>Median Household Income in dollars</b>	<b>Percentage of Elderly (Age 65 and Older)</b>	<b>Percentage of Disabled Persons (Under the Age of 65)</b>	<b>Percentage Pre-Disaster Unemployment (June 2020)</b>	<b>Percentage of Persons 18 Years of Age and Younger</b>	<b>Percentage of Persons without Health Insurance (Under the Age of 65)</b>	<b>Percentage of Persons Speaking a Language Other than English</b>
<b>National</b>	10.5%	\$60,293	16.5%	8.6%	11.1%	22.3%	9.5%	21.5%
<b>Texas</b>	13.6%	\$59,570	12.9%	7.9%	8.4%	25.5%	20.8%	35.5%
<b>Counties</b>								
<b>Brazoria</b>	10.2%	\$48,632	8.8%	6.3%	9.3%	28.6%	16.4%	26.6%
<b>Chambers</b>	8.5%	\$76,850	12.0%	7.1%	10.4%	27.8%	15.1%	18.6%
<b>Galveston</b>	12.1%	\$69,369	14.9%	9.4%	9.5%	24.1%	17.4%	19.6%

<b>Hardin</b>	11.2%	\$37,612	12.2%	10.5%	10.2%	27.8%	15.4%	4.7%
<b>Jasper</b>	19.2%	\$46,088	20.2%	11.0%	12.0%	23.8%	16.7%	6.2%
<b>Jefferson</b>	18.7%	\$48,463	14.9%	9.6%	13.3%	24.1%	20.5%	22.9%
<b>Newton</b>	22.3%	\$40,950	21.2%	15.2%	12.0%	19.6%	19.6%	2.8%
<b>Orange</b>	13.4%	\$55,700	16.5%	12.0%	11.8%	24.8%	16.3%	5.9%
<b>Sabine</b>	17.6%	\$33,257	31.0%	18.1%	12.0%	18.1%	19.3%	3.8%
<b>Shelby</b>	20.6%	\$40,764	17.9%	14.4%	8.0%	26.0%	25.3%	19.7%

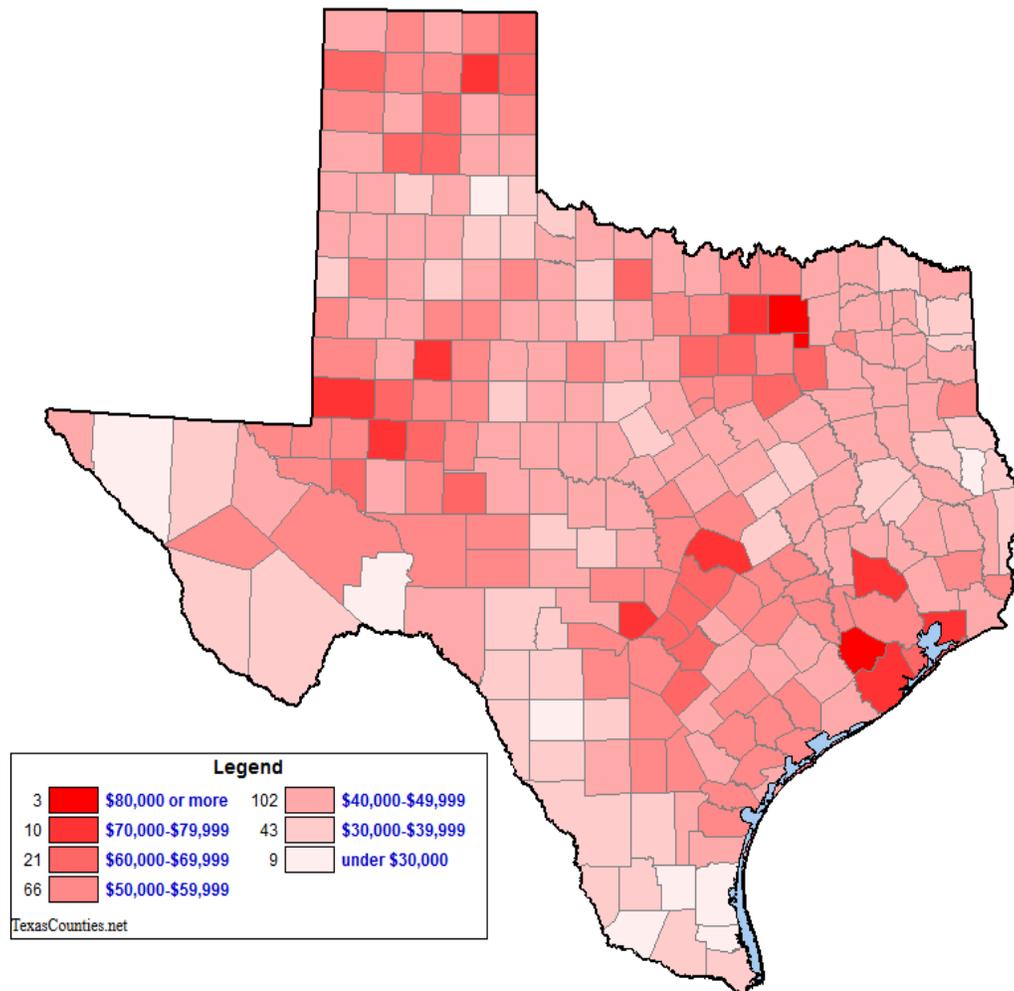
*Data from U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

*Numbers in red identify outliers from the national and Texas averages*

*\*Unemployment statistics for counties are from June 2020 averages*

### **Income and Poverty**

Based on U.S. Census data, Texas ranks in the bottom half (33<sup>rd</sup>) of the United States in median household income, totaling \$59,570.00. Compared to the median U.S. household income, Texans bring in \$723.00 less than the national average. The heat map shown below shows that 220 of 254 counties make less than the U.S. median household income.



According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, eight of the 10 counties impacted by Hurricane Laura have median household incomes less than the national median household income of \$60,293.00. In addition to incomes lower than the median household income, many residents in the affected area rely on assistance for nutrition. The 10 counties included in the request for federal assistance are within Texas' 1<sup>st</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 36<sup>th</sup> congressional districts. According to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the percentage of households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in these districts all range from 13 to 14 percent.

### Disaster Related Unemployment

In recent measures taken to combat the spread of COVID-19, including the alteration of business operations, there have been wide-felt economic impacts in the state of Texas. This has led to a record number of unemployment claims filed by Texans. Financial and economic loss has hit these communities hard, and damages brought on by Hurricane Laura only exacerbate ongoing issues.

Texans are resilient and will continue to meet the challenges brought by disasters head-on, but federal assistance is greatly needed in order to enable our communities to bounce back quickly. The state of Texas and these communities specifically are contributors and drivers of a strong American economy. Providing the assistance needed to allow these individuals and communities to swiftly and completely recover from Hurricane Laura will benefit the overall economic health of our country.

### **Closing**

We will rebuild and recover, but we are fatigued. The constant onslaught of record-breaking storms is affecting our first responders, depleting our resources, and causing undue mental and financial stress to Texans.

Pursuant to 44 C.F.R. § 206.35, I believe this incident is of such magnitude and severity that effective response is beyond state and local capability, and supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives and to protect property, public health, and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster.

As a result of this disaster, the State of Texas is specifically requesting a major disaster declaration for all categories of Public Assistance (PA) and Individual Assistance (IA), including the Individuals and Households Programs (IHP), Other Needs Assistance (ONA), Crisis Counseling, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Disaster Legal Assistance, and Disaster Case Management for the following counties:

Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Sabine, and Shelby counties.

Additionally, I am requesting the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program statewide and the U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Program for physical and economic loss for all counties requested.

I have designated Chief Nim Kidd as the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR) and Suzannah Jones and Mike Miller as Alternate GARs. Nim Kidd is designated as the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) and Suzannah Jones is designated as the Deputy State Coordinating Officer (DSCO) for this request. Chief Kidd will work with FEMA and will provide further information and justification on my behalf.

Sincerely,



Greg Abbott

Governor Enclosure: OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
 Federal Emergency Management Agency  
**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION**  
**MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY**

OMB Control Number 1660-0009  
 Expires 09/30/2019

1. Request Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Burden Disclosure Notice**

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.	2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). _____
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3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number
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5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number

6. Declaration Request For:  Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401)  Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_ or  Continuing

*If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).*

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

Drought     Earthquake     Explosion     Fire     Flood     Hurricane     Landslide     Mudslide

Severe Storm     Snowstorm

(rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning)     (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data)     Straight-Line Winds

Tidal Wave     Tornado     Tropical Depression     Tropical Storm     Tsunami     Volcanic Eruption     Winter Storm

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment\*

Individual Assistance    Dates Performed    **Requested** \_\_\_\_\_    **Start** \_\_\_\_\_    **End** \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

Public Assistance    Dates Performed    **Requested** \_\_\_\_\_    **Start** \_\_\_\_\_    **End** \_\_\_\_\_

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance  N/A     Individuals and Households Program     Crisis Counseling Program     Disaster Unemployment Assistance  
 All     Disaster Case Management     Disaster Legal Services     Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request\*.

*\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request*

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance  N/A  Debris Removal (Category A)  Emergency Protective Measures (Category B)  Permanent Work (Categories C-G)\* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request\*.

**Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity**

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold  harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

**Request for Direct Federal Assistance**

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

**Request for Snow Assistance**

N/A  I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request\*.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation\*  Statewide **OR**

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.  
All counties statewide.

12. Mitigation Plan Information\*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date October 2023 b. Type of Plan  Enhanced  Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies  I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs** for additional information in support of this request\*.

14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

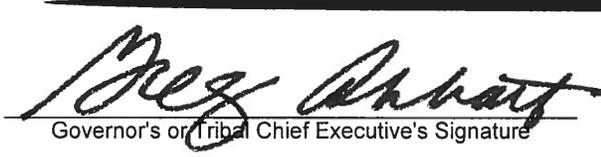
a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.

b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on Aug 22, 2020 in accordance with the Stafford Act.

c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

Cover Letter  Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)\*  Enclosure B (Public Assistance)\*  
 Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs)  Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)  
 Additional Supporting Documentation \_\_\_\_\_

  
Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

09/30/2020  
Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request