

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2016

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in support of Governor McAuliffe's March 25th request for a major disaster declaration in response to the severe storm and tornadoes on February 24th. The deadly storm caused significant damage throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, and federal assistance is urgently needed.

On February 24th, Virginia experienced its deadliest tornado event in more than 50 years. A severe storm resulted in the formation of eight tornadoes, which tore paths of destruction across 12 localities. The storm caused extensive damage to public and private property in each of those localities. Tragically, five Virginians lost their lives and at least 45 more were injured during the storm.

The storm and tornadoes were especially destructive to three localities: Sussex, Appomattox, and Essex Counties. In those three counties, more than 80 homes were destroyed or suffered major damage and an at least 160 other homes were affected. At least 84 households are in need of temporary housing as they rebuild and repair their homes. The counties suffered more than \$2.19 million in damage to local businesses and nonprofits. Sussex, Appomattox, and Essex Counties are rural and high on the social vulnerability index, increasing their need for assistance in rebuilding.

Based on data from Virginia and FEMA's joint Preliminary Damage Assessment, Governor McAuliffe has determined that funding for storm recovery will far exceed state and local capabilities. The Commonwealth's need is furthered by a recent history of severe weather events, which have cost Virginia more than \$300 million in damage and recovery costs over the last two years. We strongly support his request for public assistance for the affected localities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Tim Kaine



Mark R. Warner



Robert J. Wittman



J. Randy Forbes



H. Morgan Griffith