

# Congress of the United States

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 14, 2016

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to request that you promptly consider Governor Scott Walker's request for a major disaster declaration for the State of Wisconsin as a result of the severe storms and flooding that occurred from September 21-29, 2016.<sup>1</sup> We support the Governor's request for Public Assistance (PA) for Adams, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties, as well as Hazard Mitigation Assistance statewide.

Beginning on September 21, 2016, a round of severe storms produced over 10 inches of precipitation in some areas, resulting in widespread flash flooding in west central and southwestern Wisconsin. Due to high rainfalls from the previous month, the area also experienced mudslides and washouts.<sup>2</sup> After the rain ceased, the flooding continued throughout the region for approximately one week.

Multiple roads and bridges were damaged, significantly affecting local communities and residents.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the event damaged over 485 homes and caused tens of millions of dollars in public infrastructure damage.<sup>4</sup> Sadly, the event claimed the lives of two Wisconsinites in Vernon County.<sup>5</sup>

A number of significant events occurred in Wisconsin this past year, including severe storms and flooding that occurred July 11-12, 2016, which received a major disaster declaration on August 9, 2016.<sup>6</sup> Since that time, the state has provided assistance to two counties in response to flooding on August 11, 2016; provided assistance to one county in response to flooding on September 8, 2016; and deployed the National Guard in response to civil unrest in Milwaukee on August 14, 2016.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from the Honorable Scott Walker, Governor, State of Wisconsin, to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States (Oct. 11, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>6</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Wisconsin Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4276), *available at* <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4276>.

<sup>7</sup> Letter from the Honorable Scott Walker, *supra* note 1 at 4.

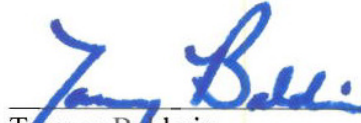
The joint federal, state, and local Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) for PA conducted from October 4-8, 2016 supports a major disaster declaration.<sup>8</sup> The total cost statewide for eligible public damage is currently estimated at \$11,340,370.<sup>9</sup> This amount exceeds the threshold the Federal Emergency Management Agency uses to indicate a major disaster in Wisconsin. In addition, many of the counties exceed the county indicator, in some cases by a significant margin.

In light of the substantial damage and the estimated costs, we support the Governor's finding that the disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response and recovery is beyond the available resources of the State and local governments, and that Federal assistance is necessary. We ask that you promptly review the request for assistance in a manner consistent with all laws, rules and regulations and declare a major disaster declaration for the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Ron Johnson  
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker



Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



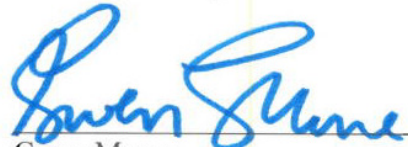
Sean P. Duffy  
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



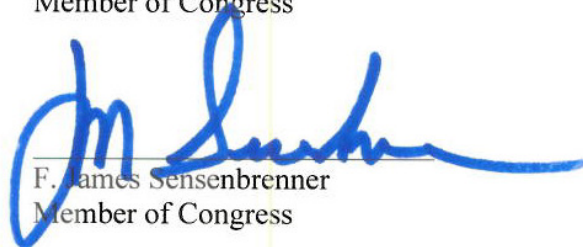
Glenn Grothman  
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



Reid J. Ribble  
Member of Congress



F. James Sensenbrenner  
Member of Congress

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 4. See also Table A-1 (Enclosure B).