

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

November 20, 2020

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing as the Maryland Congressional Delegation to express our strong support for Maryland Governor Larry Hogan's appeal for the denial of a federal declaration of a major disaster for the State of Maryland as a result of the impacts from Tropical Storm Isaias. The federal government denied the State of Maryland's request on October 14, 2020. Given the massive impact that this flooding had on state and local resources in Maryland, we urge you to reconsider this denial, grant the appeal, and approve the provision of supplementary federal assistance, pursuant to the Stafford Act.

On August 3 and 4, 2020, Tropical Storm Isaias impacted Maryland with wind gusts up to 72 mph, spreading debris over roadways and across power lines, resulting in over 75,000 power outages and one fatality. The torrential rain – over nine inches in parts of Maryland – caused flooding which washed out roadways and bridges in multiple counties. Isaias spawned nearly a dozen tornadoes across the state, causing significant damage to public infrastructure and private property. Recovery efforts will include debris removal, as well as permanent work to repair infrastructure damaged by flooding and wind.

Calvert, Dorchester, and St. Mary's Counties bore the brunt of the tropical storm, with an estimated \$17 million in damages in those three counties as a result of Isaias. However, storm damage was reported through the entire state. For example, Charles and Cecil counties experienced extensive damage to roads and bridges, creating ongoing travel hazards.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has a significant impact on state and local governments responding to natural disasters during this ongoing pandemic. Due to travel and safety restrictions regarding COVID-19, many virtual damage assessments have resulted in a cumbersome data collection process and lower amounts of damages that could be verified by FEMA, as opposed to using the traditional physical inspection process.

We agree that supplementary federal assistance is necessary. We therefore urge you to expeditiously review and approve Maryland's appeal and grant a major disaster declaration for Isaias. Thank you for your timely consideration of this request, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

/s/ Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress

/s/ C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress

/s/ John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

/s/ Kweisi Mfume  
Member of Congress

/s/ Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress

/s/ Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress

/s/ Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

/s/ David Trone  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor, Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency  
The Honorable MaryAnn E. Tierney, Regional Administrator for FEMA Region III