

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 24, 2025

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write in support of the State of North Dakota's request for a presidential major disaster declaration submitted by Governor Kelly Armstrong on July 21, 2025. The major disaster declaration is being requested due to severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes as part of a derecho event that occurred on June 20-21, 2025, across southern, central, and eastern North Dakota. We appreciate your consideration of the State's request for assistance.

While the State of North Dakota put numerous resources and measures in place to protect its residents prior to, during, and after the derecho event, the storm system caused unavoidable damages to infrastructure and property, and tragically took the lives of 4 North Dakotans. The derecho event produced at least 20 confirmed tornadoes causing massive amounts of debris, including an EF-3 tornado near Enderlin that had a maximum windspeed of nearly 160 miles per hour. Baseball-sized hail fell in some areas of the state, and straight-line winds were recorded at speeds similar to those of a category 1 hurricane.

This disaster not only destroyed North Dakotans' homes and businesses, but negatively impacted our farmers and ranchers, as well as rural electric cooperatives. Critical buildings, equipment, silos, grain bins and elevators were damaged or lost just months ahead of the fall harvest. The straight-line winds were extremely harmful to electrical infrastructure. At the peak of the derecho, nearly 37,000 homes and businesses were without power, and in rural areas, service was disrupted for as long as a week. We are immensely grateful for the whole of government and community response to this disaster event. In particular, we appreciate and want to recognize the first responders and volunteers who worked through the night in dangerous conditions to help those in need.

According to the National Weather Service, the derecho classification is quite rare and reserved for the most intense, widespread and enduring severe thunderstorms. This particularly dangerous and far reaching storm system is estimated to have caused over \$11.7 million in damages – \$11.455 million has been already confirmed through FEMA Region VIII – which is approximately 8 times North Dakota's per capita threshold. In just the last three years, North Dakota has been approved for 6 presidential major disaster declarations as a result of severe weather events. This frequency has placed significant stress on State and local resources. As noted in Governor Armstrong's request, the State of North Dakota has a Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) available for disaster response, recovery, and mitigation activities. However, the size and scope of this derecho event would entirely deplete any available state and local emergency funds, leaving nothing available for future disasters or emergency response operations during the 2025-2027 biennium.

Since 2001, North Dakota has been a leader when it comes to State Led Public Assistance (PA). Under State Led PA, North Dakota has their own staff work with each impacted community, perform damage assessments, log damages as project worksheets, and submit them to FEMA for approval and funding. We believe our State is a great example of how to effectively and efficiently respond and recover from disasters.

While North Dakotans are extremely resilient, the June 20-21 derecho event has deeply impacted large portions of our state. As our communities and industries continue to recover from the storms, the State is requesting a presidential major disaster declaration for 19 counties. These counties include Barnes, Burleigh, Cass, Eddy, Emmons, Foster, Grant, Griggs, Kidder, McLean, Morton, Oliver, Ransom, Sheridan, Sioux, Steele, Stutsman, Traill, and Wells. We would also note that the counties of Mercer, Nelson, and Richland recorded damages and were impacted by the derecho event, but did not meet the per-capita thresholds required for a major disaster declaration. In line with previous requests, North Dakota is also asking to be designated as a Public Assistance Managing State, and that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program be implemented on a state-wide basis.

We support the State's request and urge you to approve it as soon as possible so the necessary Federal resources can be made available to North Dakotans. Thank you for your prompt attention to our request and do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven  
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator



Julie Fedorchak  
Member of Congress