

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 24, 2023

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write in support of the State of North Dakota's request for a presidential disaster declaration submitted by Governor Doug Burgum on March 21, 2023. North Dakota experienced power outages and significant impacts to electrical infrastructure due to freezing fog that was followed by an ice storm. The unique weather pattern created devastating impacts throughout the State by downing power lines and making roads unsafe. We appreciate your consideration of the State's request for assistance.

From January 16, 2023, to January 20, 2023, dense freezing fog infiltrated North Dakota, icing over power lines, roadways, trees, and critical infrastructure. Typically, North Dakota experiences one day of dense freezing fog in the month of January, but North Dakota was impacted by this fog for more than half of the month. The lingering fog increased damages the longer it was present, and at some points resulted in freezing drizzle that further harmed power lines and critical infrastructure.

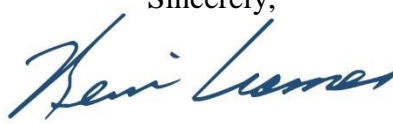
Following this winter weather phenomenon, electrical cooperatives worked diligently to restore power to residents facing freezing temperatures. At the same time, the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives noted that it is struggling to keep up with the continual weather patterns that are destroying power lines and electrical infrastructure. As a result, North Dakota continues to work to harden infrastructure, promote resiliency, and mitigate potential damage in future disasters. While these efforts continue, unlocking Federal assistance via a presidential disaster declaration is critical for North Dakota's recovery. Therefore, the State of North Dakota is requesting a presidential major disaster declaration for seven counties due to the winter storm, including the counties of Burke, Divide, McLean, Nelson, Renville, Sheridan, and Walsh.

We support the State's request and urge you to approve a presidential disaster declaration as soon as possible so that the necessary Federal resources can be made available to assist North Dakotans. Additionally, we urge you to designate North Dakota as a Public Assistance Managing State so that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program may be implemented on a statewide basis to improve resiliency in the long-term. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven
U.S. Senator



Kevin Cramer
U.S. Senator



Kelly Armstrong
U.S. Congressman