

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 24, 2023

Madi Pluss
Region 8 Risk MAP Program Manager
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Denver Federal Center, Building 710
PO Box 25267
Denver, Colorado 80225-0267

Dear Ms. Pluss,

We write today to express our serious concerns with proposed changes to the City of Bismarck, North Dakota's preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). Proceeding with the current timeline will have devastating impacts on Bismarck's most vulnerable populations, and we therefore urge the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to abandon or at a minimum delay the implementation of these changes.

As you are aware, the City of Bismarck serves as the state capital for North Dakota and is home to a diverse and hardworking community. South Bismarck, where the new Federal flood risk map would have the greatest impact, represents a high poverty area, with an estimated 10 to 15 percent of families living in poverty. The area is also home to the region's primary homeless shelter as well as a permanent supportive housing facility. Adjustments to the FIRM would force these individuals and entities in the area to purchase costly flood insurance or force many to move.

The City of Bismarck has made great strides in flood mitigation and has plans to complete additional flood mitigation improvements that will benefit all the people of the city, including those living in South Bismarck. In fact, the City has recently submitted applications through FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant programs in order to assist with making these improvements. Providing the City an opportunity to implement these flood mitigation improvements will give the community their best chance at enhanced flood protection without increased household costs, and we therefore urge you to allow these improvements to be made prior to the preliminary FIRM changes taking effect.

We support the City's request to halt or at least delay implementation of the preliminary FIRM and urge your favorable consideration. 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