

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 24, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. Robert Fenton, Jr.
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C St SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear President Trump, Secretary Mullin, and Acting Administrator Fenton:

We write to express our concerns regarding FEMA's decision to deny the State of Arizona's appeal for a Major Disaster Declaration following the devastating flooding that occurred in Gila and Mohave Counties in September 2025. Given the significant increase in verified damages documented since Arizona's initial request, we respectfully request that the administration reconsider its decision and provide a briefing to our offices explaining how the decision was reached.

As you know, central Arizona experienced historic rainfall and catastrophic flooding between September 25 and 27, 2025, that decimated public infrastructure and forced more than 180 residents to seek emergency shelter. The storms destroyed entire neighborhoods in Globe, Miami, Claypool, Hayden, and Winkelman, and compromised access to essential services including potable water, power, and wastewater systems.

Following preliminary estimates showing total losses of over \$33 million, FEMA concluded that the impacts of the floods did not exceed the capabilities of the State and local governments. Since then, Arizona's updated damage assessments have documented more than \$100 million in verified losses, far exceeding both the original estimate and the State's capacity to respond and recover. In light of these substantially revised estimates, we urge you to reconsider your decision.

As Gila and Mohave Counties continue rebuilding public infrastructure and preparing for the flooding risks that accompany each monsoon season, it is essential that affected communities have a clear understanding of how your decision was reached for both the original request and appeal. To that end, we request the following information, as well as a briefing to our offices, by August 7, 2026:

1. What documents, damage assessments, and analyses were considered when making the final decision?
2. Which official held delegated authority to recommend and to decide, and what was the recommendation at each level?
3. Did the deciding official's recommendation align with career staff's technical assessment? If they diverged, what was the documented basis for such departure?
4. What specific finding did FEMA make for each factor the agency must consider in evaluating the request?
5. What statewide per-capita impact figure did FEMA calculate for this event, and what was the per-capita indicator amount that FEMA applied for the applicable fiscal year? How does Arizona's calculated per-capita impact compare to that indicator?
6. What county-level and local per-capita impact figures did FEMA calculate for Gila and Mohave Counties specifically, and for the affected communities? How did FEMA weigh damage to critical infrastructure under this factor?
7. Was the denial of the appeal based on the original or updated damage assessment? What is FEMA's process for validating updated damage assessments submitted during an appeal, and how was that process applied in this instance?
8. What quantitative measure of Arizona's fiscal capacity did FEMA use, and how does the verified updated damage assessment compare to that standard?
9. How did FEMA account for impacts on socially vulnerable, rural populations, and on affected Tribal nations, in assessing state and local capacity?
10. What specific evidence supported the agency's conclusion that Arizona and the impacted localities were able to shoulder the costs without federal assistance?
11. Please provide the timeline from request to denial to appeal, including whether any site visits were conducted, and whether senior FEMA or administration officials visited the impacted areas before the decision was made.
12. Please provide a list of any Major Disaster Declarations that have been declared since January 20, 2025, where the statewide per-capita impact, total verified damage, or state fiscal-capacity ratio was comparable to or less than those measurements for this disaster.
13. Has FEMA changed any guidance, internal threshold, or evaluation practice for Public Assistance declarations since January 20, 2025?

Transparency throughout FEMA's decision-making process is critical both for the communities recovering from these catastrophic floods and for state officials planning for future disasters. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working with you to ensure strong disaster recovery and preparedness for the State of Arizona.

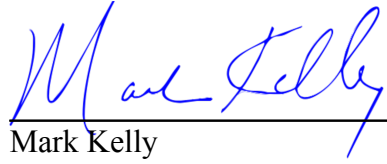
Sincerely,

Congress of the United States

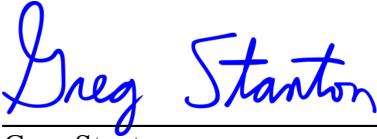
Washington, DC 20515



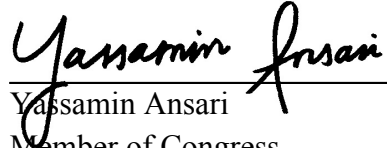
Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



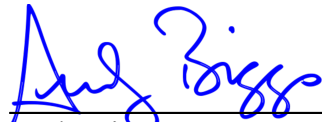
Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



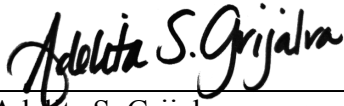
Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Elijah Crane
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Adelita S. Grijalva
Member of Congress