

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

March 13, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We urge you to grant Governor Tina Kotek's formal request for a Major Disaster Declaration from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the State of Oregon and The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. On January 18, 2024, she declared a statewide emergency due to the deadly ice storms that have impacted nearly every county across the state. We strongly urge your administration to work with the Governor's office to ensure State, Local, and Tribal governments have access to all the federal resources available to respond to this deadly disaster.

The recent storm's effects stretched from northwest Oregon, across the Portland metro area, into the Columbia River Gorge, and down through the Willamette Valley. Effects of this storm have lasted from January 10, 2024 to January 22, 2024 – with temperatures remaining below freezing in several areas – and resulted in widespread damage, power outages that impacted nearly 100,000 people, and at least 13 deaths related to inclement weather.

We ask that you give full and fair consideration to the Governor's request for Public Assistance for eleven Oregon counties – Benton, Clackamas, Coos, Hood River, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Multnomah, Tillamook, Sherman, and Wasco – and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) statewide. These federal resources will help Oregon's State, Local, and Tribal governments respond to this pressing need in our communities.

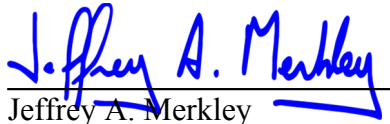
Furthermore, several counties in Oregon continue to recover from multiple severe weather events, including an atmospheric river that hit the Pacific Northwest and resulted in a series of storms starting on December 1, 2023 and lasting through December 12, 2023. These storms resulted in unprecedented rainfall, flooding, high winds, and dangerous landslides. All of which resulted in major roadways being closed, schools being shuttered, and even rail lines shutting down.

Nevertheless, throughout these deadly winter storms, as heavy rain, snow, and ice created hazardous conditions across various regions, our first responders braved the elements and continued to protect and serve their communities. Their work responding to emergencies and restoring power helped to save countless lives.

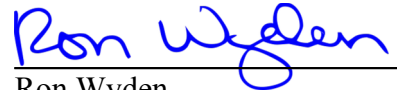
As climate chaos continues to worsen, and these deadly weather events become more common in the Pacific Northwest and across the country, we need to ensure communities are able to access the federal resources they need to equitably recover from these natural disasters.

Given the impact these storms have had on both the physical and social infrastructure throughout Oregon, we urge you and your administration to ensure the State, Local, and Tribal governments have all the resources they need to help Oregonians recover from this deadly natural disaster.

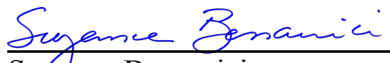
Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Cliff Bentz  
Member of Congress




Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress