

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

May 21, 2019

The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor  
Acting Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20472

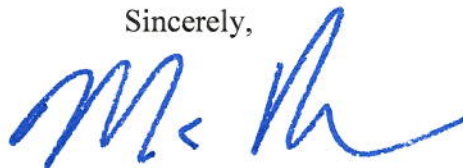
Dear Acting Administrator Gaynor:

As you know, recovery efforts following Hurricane Michael have been extremely difficult for Northwest Floridians, and the federal government must work with local communities in response to the unprecedented devastation. One area that continues to affect the health and safety of residents in the Panhandle is private property debris removal. While I am grateful for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agreeing to extend the program for 60 days, I write to express concern with regard to the high rate of denials of applications for assistance. Communities continue to struggle with the large amount of debris from private property, and local officials indicate that this poses a significant health and safety threat to the public-at-large. Thus, I request for FEMA to work with localities to swiftly reconsider, and approve, applications for private property debris removal.

With the debris posing an increased threat for wildfires, it is critical that FEMA takes into account the extraordinary circumstances our communities face, and work with local officials to protect the public health and safety of residents. The longer we wait for debris to be removed, the greater that threat increases for unsafe and unsanitary conditions for remaining survivors. Thus, I respectfully request you work with state and local communities to consider and approve these applications in a timely manner.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator