

December 14, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Capitol, Room S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Capitol, Room S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
United States Capitol, Room H-305
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey:

In the wake of several unprecedented natural disasters, we are writing to urge both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to support supplemental funding for recovery efforts in Texas, California, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Specifically, targeted funding through the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is necessary to address the planning, technical assistance, infrastructure, and business and entrepreneurship needs of impacted communities as they relate to economic development.

The National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) identifies the U.S. Department of Commerce, through EDA, as the lead agency on the economic Recovery Support Function (RSF). In this role, EDA helps local, state, and tribal governments and the private sector access federal economic development assistance to support long-term community economic recovery planning, project implementation, and redevelopment. EDA provides lasting assistance years after a disaster to help communities as they work to make their economies more resilient against future disasters and disruptions.

Members of Congress and the Trump Administration recognize EDA's unique role in supporting rebuilding and development initiatives following a disaster. State congressional delegations have requested various funding levels for EDA to support economic recovery efforts including Texas (\$765.275 million), California (\$750 million), Florida (\$300 million), and Puerto Rico (\$228.75 million). In its \$44 billion supplemental funding request released on November 17, the Trump Administration included \$300 million for EDA versus the total requested by members of Congress and governors, roughly \$2.04 billion. We encourage you to include funding for EDA in the next congressional disaster relief package that is consistent with the requests from your colleagues and local officials. There is no agency better prepared to lead these efforts than EDA.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to partnering with you on assistance efforts to help citizens and communities recover from losses sustained by the natural disasters of 2017.

Sincerely,



Leslie Wollack
Executive Director
National Association of Regional Councils



Jeff Finkle
President/CEO
International Economic Development Council



Joe McKinney
Executive Director
National Association of Development Organizations



Matthew D. Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties



Nathan Ohle
Executive Director
Rural Community Assistance Partnership



Dan Berglund
President/CEO
State & Science Technology Institute (SSTI)