

September 16, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
1236 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the members of our organizations in the many communities that have been impacted, thank you for your leadership in responding to Hurricane Ida. We know times like these are incredibly challenging for leaders in your position, and we stand ready to offer our assistance however we might be able. We write to you today to bring to your attention one timely and critical item: we urge you to include \$1 billion for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in a disaster recovery supplemental funding package responding to Hurricane Ida.

EDA has a long history of helping communities recover their economic vitality following disasters. The agency is included in the federal government's strategic plan for responding to disasters, the National Disaster Recovery Framework, where it is identified as the lead federal agency in the economic recovery function of the plan. EDA has recently received billions of dollars to help the nation's economy recovery from the calamity of the COVID-19 pandemic, but prior to that, they also received two large appropriations from Congress in 2019 and 2018 totaling \$1.2 billion. The agency does not receive nearly enough annual funding to support this critical recovery work and without a supplemental disaster appropriation from Congress, EDA may be sidelined during this critical period. Unfortunately, we don't have to look back too far into the past to see an example of this; super storm Sandy caused tens of billions of dollars in damages and lost economic activity in October of 2012 and the multi-billion-dollar federal response included no funding for EDA. Additionally, we urge you to include specific language directing up to 3 percent of funding be used by the agency to hire temporary staff to expeditiously and judiciously distribute and administer this supplemental funding. Flexible hiring authority has proven absolutely vital to providing the agency with necessary staffing to deliver on their disaster recovery obligations and it would not have been possible without your inclusion of this provision in the most recent disaster supplemental funding EDA has received.

Please consider including \$1 billion for EDA in a disaster supplemental funding package to support our economic development response to Hurricane Ida. Please let us know if you have any questions or if we can be at all helpful to you at this time.

Sincerely,

International Economic Development Council
National Association of Regional Councils
National Association of Developmental Organizations
National League of Cities
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
Council of State Community Development Agencies
Main Street America