



Congress of the United States

March 2, 2022

Chairman Patrick Leahy
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Vice Chairman Richard Shelby
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Kay Granger
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Chairwoman DeLauro, Vice Chairman Shelby, and Ranking Member Granger:

Thank you for your leadership and support for disaster recovery efforts. We write to request the Committee include supplemental disaster funding for the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program in the forthcoming omnibus appropriations bill. In October 2021, Congress provided \$5 billion for the program to address disasters that occurred in 2020 and 2021. Of that amount, \$2 billion is already allocated to disasters that occurred in 2020; the remaining \$3 billion is unlikely to cover the costs of disasters in 2021 adequately.

On December 30, the Marshall Fire rapidly destroyed 1,084 homes in Boulder County, Colorado within a 24-hour span. While our community remains strong and resilient in the face of this disaster, Boulder County estimates that the damages from the fire will exceed \$513 million. The recovery from this disaster requires additional funding to cover the unmet needs that persist despite the great efforts of our citizens.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) CDBG-DR program is funded through supplemental disaster appropriations that Congress passes to address unmet needs, especially for low- and moderate-income households. Moreover, the program provides communities with additional funding to address long-term disaster recovery needs. Qualifying communities endure a lengthy process of awaiting supplemental appropriations, developing rules and allocations for the use of funds with HUD, developing a community action plan, and finally spending the funding.

After careful consideration of our community's needs, we respectfully request your efforts to include supplemental CDBG-DR funding in the upcoming appropriations omnibus. The State of Colorado's estimates that there will be a \$267 million gap between the available funds and the costs to rebuild. CDBG-DR is one of the most effective federal programs for providing a lifeline to families and communities during a disaster recovery. However the lag in time in awaiting appropriations hinders communities' ability to rebuild in a timely, effective manner.

Congress relies on HUD to provide a projection of the annual scope of necessary relief in order to allocate funds for impacted communities. Due to the annual information sharing process and limited funds provided in 2021, we are concerned that there will be insufficient resources remaining for this disaster which occurred on the last two days of the year. Without an appropriation of additional CDBG-DR funds, we are concerned that our community's recovery efforts will be limited at best.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your efforts to ensure that Colorado and other states recovering from a disaster in 2021 have the necessary resources to repair and rebuild.

Sincerely,



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator