Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 23, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Dear Mr. President:

We write to strongly support Governor Jared Polis' request on November 20, 2026 for a second Presidential Major Disaster Declaration (MDD) in response to historic, catastrophic flooding across Southwestern Colorado and the San Luis Valley. While the Governor previously requested an MDD for flooding that occurred October 22-25, a second 100-year catastrophic flooding event occurred between October 31, and November 3, 2026.

Under the second MDD request, the Governor seeks Individual Assistance (IA) for Archuleta, Conejos, La Plata, and Rio Grande Counties, and Public Assistance (PA) for Archuleta, Conejos, La Plata, Mineral, Montezuma, and Rio Grande Counties. We strongly support this request. To date, FEMA-validated PA damages exceed $28,531,989 and local damage reports identified over 2,000 damaged homes throughout the affected region.

The second flooding event began just days after the first, compounding damage, destroying temporary repairs, and significantly increasing risks to lives and communities. Flood levels eclipsed the previous incident, destroying entire homes, roads, bridges, and essential water and communications infrastructure. The second storm dropped more than 5 inches of rain on ground already saturated by the initial flooding. At the height of the flooding, mandatory evacuation orders affected over 6,321 Coloradans, with access cut off to more than 3,300 homes. Initial damage assessments have identified 271 homes that were destroyed or deemed uninhabitable. With winter conditions already descending on the region, nearly 1,000 residents need temporary lodging, and residents remain unable to access more than 450 homes.

The flooding's consequences are particularly severe in the region's rural and remote communities, where a single damaged bridge, road, or fiber-optic line can cut off access to grocery stores, medical supplies, internet, cell service, and clean water. For weeks, numerous families have been forced to drive over three hours for work, school, and critical needs. Many displaced residents are 65 or older or are impoverished, and fewer than four percent of households in Archuleta, La Plata, Rio Grande, and Conejos Counties carry flood insurance. The second flooding incident also devastated agricultural producers, damaging irrigation infrastructure and depositing debris on pastures and in ditches. These back-to-back storms have devastated entire neighborhoods and disrupted regional economies, leaving the families and workers of Southwestern Colorado and the San Luis Valley with limited resources to recover.

State, local and Tribal governments, along with emergency responders and partner organizations, are responding to damage and taking important damage mitigation measures but are stretched thin due to multiple historic flooding events occurring within days of each other. The State of Colorado, county and local governments, Tribes, and partner organizations have exhausted all

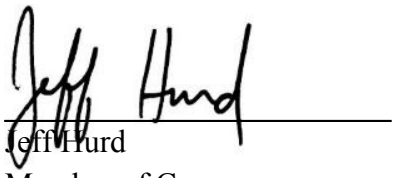
available resources for this disaster. In addition to our strong support for the Governor's initial MDD request, we urge you to expedite approval of Governor Polis' second request given these disasters are intertwined and provide the federal assistance these communities need to recover.

We look forward to working with you to assist the families, communities, and local governments of Southwestern Colorado and the San Luis Valley as it recovers from historic back-to-back flooding events.

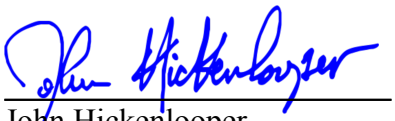
Sincerely,



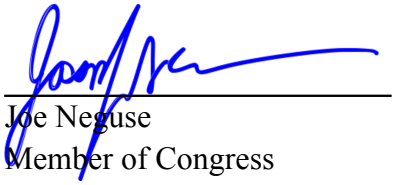
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Jeff Hurd
Member of Congress



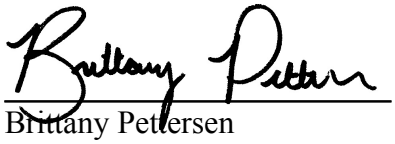
John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Gabe Evans
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



Lauren Boebert
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Jeff Crank
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress